

**LIFE AND LETTERS
OF SIDNEY RANKIN
DREW**

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Life and Letters of Sidney Rankin Drew by Mrs. Sidney Drew

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MRS. SIDNEY DREW

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S. Rankin Brew

Life and Letters
of
Sidney Rankin Drew

Edited by
MRS. SIDNEY DREW

1921
THE CHELTENHAM PRESS
New York

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LUCILE McVEY DREW**

To An Aviator

*Tell them, O skyborn,
That I died with high romance to wife;
That I went out as I had lived—
Drunk with the joy of life.*

*Yea, say that I went down to death
Serene and unafraid,
Still loving song, but loving life more
Of which song is made.*

HARRY KEMP

In Memoriam
Sidney Rankin Drew

*A gallant spirit, heroic in passing
on to the great adventure,
rendering to his country the
supreme sacrifice.*

New York, N. Y.
Sept. 19, 1891

Montdidier, France
May 19, 1918

Preface

IT was the desire of my husband, the late Sidney Drew, to publish for his son's friends a small volume of his letters written during service in the Lafayette Flying Corps. In accordance with those wishes I have endeavored to put into some semblance of form a story of Sidney Rankin Drew's experiences, ambitions and tribulations.

To his father he told them all. I have never known such camaraderie as existed between these two.

In the intimate personal problems of his every-day life—in the more serious ones which had to do with his ambitions and work, he consulted his father.

The son was an indefatigable but deliberate worker and every story, every play he wrote or every manuscript he adapted for the screen, was created, thrashed out or built anew with his father as his confidant and adviser.

He was brilliant to a degree, inheriting not only the histrionic ability of the Drews but the literary talent of his mother, who was Gladys Rankin, herself an author of distinction and a member of an illustrious stage family, the daughter of McKee Rankin and Kitty Blanchard.


Young Drew wrote a number of short stories and one of the best one-act plays ever produced, called *What the Moon Saw*. He was an excellent actor but had forsaken temporarily both the stage and the screen and for several years previous to his entering the great arena where the game of war was played, he wrote and directed motion pictures, being considered among the foremost few.

Many theatrical and motion picture men—actors—writers—producers, made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War. They left an atmosphere of tinsel, calcium lights, and grease paint for the stern reality and the thundering darkness of the front line in France. They all fought alike and fought well. The first one to go "West" was my husband's son.

Sidney Rankin Drew was the last of his line, almost the last member of the family of illustrious actors who bear that name. He was the first American actor killed in the World War.

Post No. 340 of the American Legion, which represents the affiliated amusement industries, has honored his memory by naming the Post for him. It is for the benefit of the S. Rankin Drew Post that this book is published, as many of young Drew's friends agreed that his letters would make an interesting volume even if compiled on a more pretentious scale than his father had intended.

In the *Life and Letters of Sidney Rankin Drew* you will read the stories of his adventures, his experiences in the army, his general outlook on life and above all you will discern his fine spirit, his splendid patriotism, and his idolatrous love and respect for his father.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sidney Rankin Drew", written over a horizontal line.

ONE HUNDRED COPIES OF THIS EDITION HAVE BEEN PRINTED

OF WHICH THIS IS NUMBER 50

New York, N. Y., April 15, 1921