

THE FATHER OF A SOLDIER

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649257294

The father of a soldier by W. J. Dawson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

W. J. DAWSON

**THE FATHER
OF A SOLDIER**

THE FATHER OF A SOLDIER

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

*ROBERT SHENSTONE:
A NOVEL*

THE BODLEY HEAD

*THE FATHER
OF A SOLDIER*

BY W. J. DAWSON

LONDON: JOHN LANE, THE BODLEY HEAD.
NEW YORK: JOHN LANE COMPANY
MCMXVIII

THE FATHER OF A SOLDIER

THE HIGHER CHOICE

*At last the tragic hour arrives :
Wilt thou be faithful to thy soul
And live the only life that lives,
Or that which mortals call the whole ?*

*In thee, behind all smiles and mirth,
There lurks in being's inmost cell
A Power, a something not of earth,
Steadfast, serene, unconquerable.*

*Thou recognizest life and death,
Thou movest in thy right of will,
Subdued by love, yet with free breath
Obeying higher promptings still.*

*This is the Power I cannot touch,
Which flashes on me unsubdued,
Nor should I love thee half so much,
Nor half so deeply, if I could.*

*That thou art mine is partly true,
With me thou art content to dwell ;
A closer vision tells me, too,
That thou art wholly God's as well.*

The Father of a Soldier

THE PARTINGS

I

I HAVE just returned from the Docks, and have seen my son off for his third trip to the trenches.

Beside the landing-stage lay a ship strangely camouflaged, ás if a company of cubist artists had been at work upon her. She looked like an old lady of sober habits, who had been caught in the madness of carnival, and dressed as a zany. She was adorned—or disfigured—by stripes of colour that ran in all directions, splashings of green, splotches of grey, curves of dull red, all mixed in uttermost confusion and with no discernible design. I was told that this

THE FATHER OF A SOLDIER

extraordinary appearance was designed to give the ship invisibility : thus clothed she would flee like a ghost over the grey perilous waters, a phantom thing of blurred outlines, as if evoked from the waters themselves.

There was none of the cheerful bustle one usually sees on a departing ship. Tired men, with keen, searching eyes, stood at the gangways, scrutinizing each passenger as he came aboard. There were very few passengers—a little group of officers in khaki, a haggard-eyed elderly man who carried a conspicuous portfolio, and two women in black, cheerfully adorned in the American fashion with large bunches of violets fastened to their waists. At a little distance from the gangway, sitting on a bale of merchandise, was an American soldier and his wife. She was quite young, with fair, wheat-coloured hair ; her face was pale and drawn, and her fingers twitched as she talked. Those twitching fingers were never still. They beat a tattoo on the bale, opened and