

**EN REPOS AND  
ELSEWHERE OVER THERE:  
VERSES WRITTEN IN  
FRANCE, 1917-1918**

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En Repos and Elsewhere Over There: Verses Written in France, 1917-1918 by Lansing Warren  
& Robert A. Donaldson

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**VERSES WRITTEN IN FRANCE  
1917-1918**

BY  
**LANSING WARREN AND  
ROBERT A. DONALDSON**

*With a Preface by  
Major A. Piatt Andrew*



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TO  
THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE  
WHICH FOR THREE YEARS  
SO LOYALLY RENDERED SERVICE  
TO FRANCE

Houghton, Mifflin 50 per 18 .90

## PREFACE

*The verses here collected "need no bush." They evidence what they are — the reflections, now playful, now serious, of typical American youth upon the surroundings of life on the French Front. They were written by two members of one of the many volunteer ambulance sections of the American Field Service, who came to this organization from Leland Stanford University and who served in and with the French Army long before American troops were operating in France. Subsequently the sections of the American Field Service were adopted by the American Army, though left to serve with the French divisions, and the authors of these verses, along with many hundred other former volunteers, were enlisted as American soldiers.*

*Most of these verses were printed originally in the "American Field Service Bulletin," a small weekly published in France by volunteers of the Field Service for their own and their comrades' amusement. Not having been written for readers at home, but for the severely critical and somewhat blasé eyes of comrades, they contain few allusions to shot and shell, and the thrills and horrors of war. Journalists and novelists, writing for the home market, have naturally selected for description only the dramatic and heroic aspects of the war and have frequently conveyed an impression of life at the Front which, even though literally true of special times and places, is by no means representative of the normal experiences. The circumstances under which these verses were written are such as to give them a kind of documental value as true exhibits of a soldier's life and thoughts. They show, what the public seldom realizes, that the military drama includes only brief moments of intense and tragic action where heroism and valor are displayed, but that it consists mostly of inter-*



## Preface

*minable entr'actes in which much more commonplace virtues are called upon to play their part — such virtues as patience, self-control, cheerfulness, and a sense of humor.*

*"This war would be extremely drear  
If we had not long since begun  
To view events that happen here  
Transfigured by our sense of fun."*

*They show, too, beneath the light-heartedness that jests at everything — the light-heartedness typical of healthy-minded youth the world over, and fortunately as typical of our American soldiers as of the soldiers of France — the keen desire to voice the solemn meaning of this war, the meaning which, though often unexpressed, lies deeply rooted in the consciousness of all our troops.*

*"Come, come, O Bard, from out some unknown place,  
Come and record, in songs and words of fire,  
The noble deaths, the struggles of the race,  
The fight to check an Emperor's desire!  
Come, strike thy harp; the force of man is hurled; —  
Give us an Iliad of the Western World!"*

*Beneath an obvious contempt for rhetoric and heroics, which is equally characteristic of the soldier, is also revealed that love and admiration for France which grows every day more strong among all Americans who have had the privilege of knowing the soldiers and people of France during these prodigious years.*

*"You may take your men in khaki,  
Your men in brown and grey,  
They're first-class fighting soldiers —  
They'll prove it any day!  
We'll honor every one of them  
For all that they've been through,  
But you'll have to give the laurels  
To the Overcoats of Blue!"*

*"Oh, the Overcoats of Blue! The Overcoats of Blue!  
They're the finest fighting soldiers, are the Overcoats of Blue!"*

## Preface

*The romance and splendor of France's history, the unfailing idealism and unfaltering will of her people, the democracy, the comradeship, and above all the unvaunting but indomitable courage of her troops, have kindled something akin to veneration in the hearts of our soldiers. And every American soldier who has seen with his eyes the suffering so wantonly and brutally inflicted upon this gentle country by the Huns has also felt with Jeanne d'Arc something of that "grande pitié qu'il y avait au pays de France."*

*"Oh, it is n't in words that we show it, —  
They're too feeble to tell what we feel;  
It's down in our hearts that we know it,  
It's down in our souls that it's real.  
So we stick to our work as we find it,  
And forget the caprices of Chance,  
For we know that the price of the big sacrifice  
Is little enough — for France!"*

A. PIATT ANDREW

France, July, 1918

