

**THE WAR POEMS
OF SIEGFRIED
SASSOON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649755752

The war poems of Siegfried Sassoon by Siegfried Sassoon

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

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

**THE WAR POEMS
OF SIEGFRIED
SASSOON**

THE WAR POEMS OF SIEGFRIED SASOON

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE OLD HUNTSMAN" AND "COUNTER ATTACK"



LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN

PR 6037
A 38 W 3
1919
MAIN

DANS la trêve désolée de cette matinée, ces hommes qui avaient été tenaillés par la fatigue, fouettés par la pluie, bouleversés par toute une nuit de tonnerre, ces rescapés des volcans et de l'inondation entrevoyaient à quel point la guerre, aussi hideuse au moral qu'au physique, non seulement viole le bon sens, avilit les grandes idées, commande tous les crimes—mais ils se rappelaient combien elle avait développé en eux et autour d'eux tous les mauvais instincts sans en excepter un seul; la méchanceté jusqu'au sadisme, l'égoïsme jusqu'à la férocité, le besoin de jouir jusqu'à la folie.

HENRI BARBUSSE.

(*Le Feu.*)

NOTE

Of these 64 poems, 12 are now published for the first time. The remainder are selected from two previous volumes.

CONTENTS

I

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| PRELUDE : THE TROOPS | 11 |
| DREAMERS | 13 |
| THE REDEEMER | 14 |
| TRENCH DUTY | 16 |
| WIRERS | 17 |
| BREAK OF DAY | 18 |
| A WORKING PARTY | 21 |
| STAND-TO : GOOD FRIDAY MORNING | 24 |
| "IN THE PINK" | 25 |
| THE HERO | 26 |
| BEFORE THE BATTLE | 27 |
| THE ROAD | 28 |
| TWO HUNDRED YEARS AFTER | 29 |
| THE DREAM | 30 |
| AT CARNOY | 32 |
| BATTALION RELIEF | 33 |
| THE DUG-OUT | 35 |
| THE REAR-GUARD | 36 |
| I STOOD WITH THE DEAD | 38 |

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| SUICIDE IN TRENCHES | 39 |
| ATTACK | 40 |
| COUNTER-ATTACK | 41 |
| THE EFFECT | 43 |
| REMORSE | 44 |
| IN AN UNDERGROUND DRESSING-STATION | 45 |
| DIED OF WOUNDS | 46 |

II

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| "THEY" | 47 |
| BASE DETAILS | 48 |
| LAMENTATIONS | 49 |
| THE GENERAL | 50 |
| HOW TO DIE | 51 |
| EDITORIAL IMPRESSIONS | 52 |
| FIGHT TO A FINISH | 53 |
| ATROCITIES | 54 |
| THE FATHERS | 55 |
| "BLIGHTERS" | 56 |
| GLORY OF WOMEN | 57 |
| THEIR FRAILTY | 58 |
| DOES IT MATTER? | 59 |
| SURVIVORS | 60 |
| JOY-BELLS | 61 |
| ARMS AND THE MAN | 62 |

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| WHEN I'M AMONG A BLAZE OF LIGHTS | 63 |
| THE KISS | 64 |
| THE TOMBSTONE-MAKER | 65 |
| THE ONE-LEGGED MAN | 66 |
| RETURN OF THE HEROES | 67 |

III

| | |
|--|---------------|
| - TWELVE MONTHS AFTER | 68 |
| - TO ANY DEAD OFFICER | 69 |
| - SICK LEAVE | 72 |
| - BANISHMENT | 73 |
| - AUTUMN | 74 |
| - REPRESSION OF WAR EXPERIENCE | 75 |
| - TOGETHER | 77 |
| - THE HAWTHORN TREE | 78 |
| CONCERT PARTY | 79 |
| NIGHT ON THE CONVOY | 81 |
| A LETTER HOME | 83 |
| RECONCILIATION | 87 |
| MEMORIAL TABLET (GREAT WAR) | 85 |
| THE DEATH-BED | 89 |
| -AFTERMATH | 91 |
| - SONG-BOOKS OF THE WAR | 93 |
| EVERYONE SANG | 95 |

I

PRELUDE : THE TROOPS

DIM, gradual thinning of the shapeless gloom
Shudders to drizzling daybreak that reveals
Disconsolate men who stamp their sodden boots
And turn dulled, sunken faces to the sky
Haggard and hopeless. They, who have beaten down
The stale despair of night, must now renew
Their desolation in the truce of dawn,
Murdering the livid hours that grope for peace.

Yet these, who cling to life with stubborn hands,
Can grin through storms of death and find a gap
In the clawed, cruel tangles of his defence.
They march from safety, and the bird-sung joy
Of grass-green thickets, to the land where all
Is ruin, and nothing blossoms but the sky
That hastens over them where they endure
Sad, smoking, flat horizons, reeking woods,
And foundered trench-lines volleying doom for doom.