LITTLE MAGAZINES AND
CANADIAN WAR POETRY 1939-1945
WITH SOME REFERENCE TO
POETRY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

by

JOANNE MEIS
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Department of English

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, Canada

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While English First World War poetry moved from extolling the Victorian versions of chivalric values to the "debunking" realism of some of the soldier poets, Canadian First World War poetry failed to exhibit any such development. Canadian First World War poets write a colonial interpretation of what the English inspirational war poets produced, and they did not express any disillusionment with the military-religious dogma of the war. During the Second World War, some Canadian poets produced poetry of a similar type to that which they wrote celebrating the first. But the war years saw the development of a group of young "modernist" poets who followed up the first modernist movement of the Montreal group and New Provinces, and when these poets wrote about war, the idealization of the conflict was not among their aims. Thus in Canadian war poetry the split between idealization of war and its realistic appraisal does not occur until the Second World War. The realistic appraisal of war on the part of the new poets takes many directions, but their poetry holds in common a refusal to accept any idealized version of the conflict.
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I. INTRODUCTION
The position of Canadian poets writing about war in the twentieth century is unique because in neither of the two major conflicts in which Canada has been involved has there been any actual fighting done on Canadian soil. This results in certain problems, the most important of which is that it has been much easier for Canadian writers to avoid coming to terms with the philosophical and ethical problems raised by Western society's increasingly technological brand of warfare. In the First World War, it was easier for Canadian writers to see only the patriotic glory of the "Cause" and to miss what would be so much more obvious to a writer in England: that this war showed unmistakable signs of being a new war, a kind of war in which personal heroism counted for less than nothing, and in which economics was more influential than honour. In the Second World War, though Canadian literature had developed somewhat in the interim, it was still easier for the nature poet in Canada to hold to his rocks and woods as a sure refuge from which to wave his feeble flag of encouragement; it was easier to sing hymns of praise to the patriotic concepts of democracy and empire when the bombs were falling somewhere else.

Every war or rebellion produces its share of verses of one kind or another, and Canada has been no exception. Canadians have written verses about the politics of Upper and Lower Canada, about the uprising led by William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis Papineau, about the Riel Rebellion and about the Boer War. Most of these are verse satires, and a few, notably those dealing with the Riel Rebellion, are battle hymns of a highly self-righteous nature. The focus of this paper, however, is on the Canadian poetry of the First and Second World Wars.

Canadian poetry in the First World War revealed the attitude of most Canadian writers to be basically colonial. The idealism of the
English soldier fighting for his country is in Canada transformed into a kind of patriotic filial piety. The uniformity of the Canadian response to the First World War, which never progressed beyond the emptily patriotic, forms a contrast with the much discussed change in sensibility which occurred in English poetry during the same conflict. Canadian poetry of the Second World War falls into two groups, owing partly to the literary associations of the writers and partly to their attitudes towards the war, though the two are very closely related. At the time of the Second World War there was in Canada a group of poets whose choice of form and diction was highly traditional, usually modelled on the best of the English poets of the late nineteenth century, or, at second hand, on the Canadian nature poets of the same era. Many of these "traditionalists" had some literary reputation before the war, and they wrote about war as another subject to be dealt with by any poet worthy of the name. In these poets is found a sensibility somewhat similar to that of the traditional English poets of the First World War: they treat war as a necessary but glorious evil, an opportunity for man to demonstrate his capacity for heroism; their purposes in writing are usually either commemorative or morale-building and inspirational. Except for a few light verses, humour and irony are not to be found.

In contrast to these poets were another group, which the traditionalists labelled "modernist" or "experimentalist", though many of the poets involved were well established and widely recognized, and the poetry they wrote was by no means avant-garde. The "modernists" often showed the influence of contemporary British or American poets and were much less bound to a choice of form than the traditionalists: they chose from a greater variety of forms or else made their own to suit the material, and they used a wider range of the possibilities of language, not being bound to a particular
style which was considered "poetic", as the traditionalists so often were. Their attitudes towards the war were as various as the forms of their writing: the only characteristics they had in common in this respect concerned what they were not trying to do with their poetry: they were not trying to give expression to patriotism as an end in itself; their poems always had something more specific to say. Also, in general, though not without exception, they were not writing out of a desire to glorify the fighting of a war. Among these poets there was the ability to see the irony of war, resulting in poems of satire, black humour, and ironic vision.

The poems investigated in the section on the First World War are from anthologies, mainly that of J. W. Garvin. The poems investigated in the "traditionalist" section of Second World War poems are from several anthologies and The Canadian Poetry Magazine. The section dealing with "modernist" poetry of the Second World War deals with the poems from some of the Canadian literary magazines that were publishing or began publishing during the war: the literary section of the Canadian Forum, Contemporary Verse, Preview, First Statement, and Direction. Due to considerations of length this paper has been unable to concern itself with the hundreds of individual volumes of war poetry which came out during the war years, the several anthologies of "modernist" work which came out late in the war and in the years immediately after, or with the many war poems that appeared in popular magazines and newspapers. However, the sources chosen do provide a reasonably accurate sampling of the kinds of war poems that Canadian poets were writing at the time.
II

CANADIAN POETRY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR (WITH SOME REFERENCE TO ENGLISH POETRY OF THE SAME PERIOD) AND "TRADITIONALIST" POETRY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR
In 1931 F. R. Scott published his synthesizing article, "New Poems for Old" in *The Canadian Forum*. The first section of this article, "The Decline of Poetry", deals mainly with English poems of the First World War. Scott uses these poems to exemplify the archaic sensibility of most of the writers of that time - their inability to see the conflict in any but the most poetically embroidered and patriotically glorified terms. Scott points out that the realism of such disillusioned writers as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen was the living response. The traditional patriotic poetry was dead because it was based on a purely poetic tradition rather than on a living poetic response to the real world.

Scott sees the traditionalist response as arising from the popular ideals bred in the days of the British Empire:

> Then came the war. Immediately the little band of English singers, in common with prelates and potentates of every kind, arose as one man to proclaim its faith in the stock-in-trade ideals of the European nation-state of 1914—tribal god, crusading country, glory of warfare, honour of dying etc., etc.

and he quotes examples from the work of some of the people who produced poetry of this patriotic stamp: Rupert Brooke and some of the established poets, Herbert Asquith, Thomas Hardy and Henry Newbolt. Scott's main objection to these poets is to the attitude towards the war which they express, rather than to their poetic techniques, which he does not mention. These poets insist on glorifying the war, and on selling Britain's involvement in it as a religious crusade against the forces of evil. Of Rupert Brooke, Scott says:

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1 The article was in two parts: "The Decline of Poetry", 11: 123 (May, 1931), 296-8, and "The Revival of Poetry", 11:124 (June, 1931), 337-9.

Rupert Brooke, not having slept in Flanders mud, likened the soldiers to 'swimmers into cleanliness leaping', and saw fit to thank God for matching him with this hour; though just why God should get the thanks and Germany nothing but blame is not quite clear....3

The response to the war which Scott identifies in his article is easily recognizable in the poetry of that time; but as well as expressing shibboleths completely in line with popular ideas of the patriotic Cause, this kind of poetry is also closely associated with certain poetic techniques. Loyalty, outrage, and determination were usually expressed in exclamations, and the structure of a given poem often hangs on one or two ringing exclamatory lines. A good example of this exclamatory technique is found in the second stanza of John Freeman's "Happy is England Now":

Happy is England now, as never yet! And though the sorrows of the slow days fret Her faithfulest children, grief itself is proud. Ev'n the warm beauty of this spring and summer That turns to bitterness turns then to gladness Since for this England the beloved ones died.4

In this stanza the whole verse is an explanation of the opening exclamatory line, which states that the war makes England happy rather than sorrowful, a very rhetorical inversion, which the stanza goes on to explain.

Another characteristic technique of the poets of the patriotic response is the frequent use of abstractions, of which Thomas Hardy's "Men Who March Away" is a good example.

In our heart of hearts believing Victory crowns the just, And that braggarts must Surely bite the dust— Press we to the field ungrieving, In our heart of hearts believing Victory crowns the just.5

3 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 7.
This stanza is built around the two abstractions "victory" and "just", and the poem moves through stock descriptions of action: braggarts biting the dust, victory crowning the just, soldiers pressing to the field and so on.

Though some of the poets who produced this kind of work were established men of letters whose opinions of politics and international relations had been formed during the golden days of the empire, there were some of the young soldier poets whose response was equally patriotic.

Of these, Edmund Blunden has said:

Most of the younger men were influenced by Rupert Brooke's fervent patriotism and mystique of Youth. Men like W. N. Hodgson—who were apart at that time from the feeling of the mass of volunteers who had enlisted for various reasons, many of them fine ones, but not in a search for death—followed Brooke headlong to their deaths, for which they seemed almost anxious. They were conscious of belonging to what they believed was a generation of exceptional brilliance, and they may well have been right; they wanted to prove their worth in some really dramatic way. Even Owen, at the time, felt a sense of 'new crusades and modern knightliness'. It is difficult to overestimate the influence of Brooke; to his contemporaries he seemed to express perfectly the idealism of 1914.6

The fact that many of the young poets, who were actually involved in the fighting, sincerely believed that the cause for which they were dying made their deaths noble and heroic, and revived the concept of honour in a world which had forgotten it, is expressed in their poetry as an idealism which is often of religious intensity. Brooke, of course, is the best example of this fervour. In the last stanza of his famous "The Dead" the fallen soldiers are elevated to Christ-like heroism.

Blow bugles blow! They brought us, for our dearth, Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain, Honour has come back, as a king, to earth, And paid his subjects with a royal wage;

6 "Foreword", Ibid., pp. xxii-xxii.
And nobleness walks in our ways again;  
And we have come into our heritage.  

Here again are the techniques associated with the patriotic response: the  
abstracted qualities of Holiness, Love, Pain and Honour, the ringing ex­  
clamation "Blow bugles blow!" and the stock poetic construction of  
"coming into a heritage."

Most of the poetry of patriotism of the First World War was, of  
course, written during the war's early years. After two million men had  
died at Verdun and in the valley of the Somme without ending the stalemate  
of the trenches, many of the idealistic soldier poets were dead, and some  
of the established poets had changed their minds about the nature of war,  
or of this particular war, at least. Rudyard Kipling wrote at the  
beginning of the war:

For all we have and are,  
For all our children's fate,  
Stand up and take the war,  
The Hun is at the gate ...

But later, after the futility and waste of the war became apparent, and  
after his only son was killed at Loos, Kipling's official hatred for Germany  
gives way to angry irony in "A Dead Statesman":

I could not dig; I dared not rob;  
Therefore I lied to please the mob.  
Now all my lies are proved untrue  
And I must face the men I slew.  
What tale shall serve me here among  
Mine angry and defrauded young?

The soldier poets who dealt realistically with the horror and  
brutality of the war debunked the patriotic poetry of their contemporaries.

7 Ibid., p. 48.  
9 Gardiner, op. cit., p. 148.
Wilfred Owen in particular, of course, saw his task to be just such a denial of the official propaganda of the military and political establishment. F. R. Scott, in his article, points out that this shift in sensibility was inevitable, and also, ironically, one of the few positive developments associated with the war:

But this attitude could not and did not survive. The early form of patriotism was soon shot full of holes. The futility of the whole arbitrament of the war very soon became apparent, and intelligent people began to realize that heroism and sacrifice shown by both armies proved not so much the nobility of man as his enormous capacity for patience under exploitation. This change of outlook, which was the sole contribution of the war to the cause of peace, found its way into poetry; compare the galahadism of Brooke with such typical lines as Siegfried Sassoon's—

O martyred youth and manhood overthrown
The burden of your wrongs is on my head.

and Wilfred Owen's

What passing bells for those who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.

From 'breaking and lance' to 'dying as cattle' -- that is the history of 1914-1918. The later poets were most concerned with the brutality, stupidity, and horror of battle and no longer found inspiration in the cause for which they were fighting.

Just as certain poetic techniques were frequently used in the war poetry of the patriotic bards who celebrated the glory of war, certain opposing ones are used in the work of the disillusioned soldier poets who described its horror and futility.

Imagism was a new movement at the time, exerting a vital influence on poetry. In some of the war poems the imagist credo is followed with rigour, and the image itself, with no comment from the author beyond his craft in making it, carries the message of the poem. Typical of this

10 Scott, loc. cit.
technique is Richard Aldington's "Sunsets":

The white body of evening
Is torn into scarlet,
Slashed and gouged and seared
Into crimson
And hung ironically
With garlands of mist.

And the wind
Flowing over London from Flanders
Has a bitter taste 11

In this poem only the word "ironically" intrudes upon the simplicity of the image to suggest the author's presence. The rest of the poem conveys its message of tender horror entirely through the image of the evening as a mangled corpse.

Often a poem consists of a simple described incident, with no comment from the poet, to show some aspect of death-in-life at the trenches. In poems of this type the implications of the incident, rather than the echoes of the image, are the poem's message. Typical is this short poem by Wilfred Gibson:

Breakfast

We ate our breakfast lying on our backs
Because the shells were screeching overhead.
I bet a rasher to a loaf of bread
That Hull United would beat Halifax
When Jimmy Sainthorpe played fullback instead
Of Billy Bradford. Ginger raised his head
And cursed, and took the bet, and dropped back dead.
We ate our breakfast lying on our backs
Because the shells were screeching overhead. 12

The recounting of such an incident implies that even simple human actions, such as raising one's head to answer a friend, can, in the distorted world of war, result in death. But the incident itself is presented with no comments, like a photograph that does not need a caption.

11 In Gardiner, op. cit., p. 109.
12 Ibid., p. 84.
Satire is also found frequently in the disillusioning poetry of the First World War. Sassoon, of course, is the most adept at this, as in his famous "Base Details":

If I were fierce, and bald, and short of breath,  
I'd live with scarlet Majors at the Base,  
And speed glum heroes up the line to death.  
You'd see me with my puffy petulant face  
Guzzling and gulping in the best hotel,  
Reading the Roll of Honour. "Poor young chap,'  
I'd say--'I used to know his father well;  
Yes, we've lost heavily in this last scrap.'  
And when the war is done and youth stone dead,  
I'd toddle safely home and die--in bed.  

The macabre details of slaughter are used in many poems to counteract the contemporary slogans glorifying war. Wilfred Owen, particularly, uses this technique. He is said to have brought with him to the hospital where he recovered from his first wounds a set of photographs of the mangled remains of the "heroes" at the front, to show to anyone who tried to cheer him with talk of the nobility of his own injury in the course of duty, and his poems often use similar shock tactics.

In English First World War poetry, then, as F. R. Scott points out, there is a definite shift in sensibility, a movement from patriotism (in poetry describing bloodshed as honour) to realism (in poetry which accepts no disguise for futile carnage. Each of these sensibilities commonly expresses itself by different means: the patriotic response by the exclamations of memorable slogans and glorifying abstractions, the realistic response by careful imagery, pertinent incidents, and the effective use of the macabre.

Scott does not mention Canadian poetry of the war in his discussion,

13 Ibid., p. 97.
since he is dealing with the developments up to 1931 in English poetry. But in the light of his remarks on English war poetry, one thing is very clear: Scott could have found no similar shift in sensibility among Canadian First World War poets. The Canadian bards were unanimous in their choice of the war as a new crusade of the twentieth century, and this acceptance of the Cause did not, apparently, change (as far as the poets were concerned) throughout the course of the conflict.

There is only one comprehensive anthology of Canadian First World War poetry, that edited by John W. Garvin and published in 1918.\textsuperscript{14} In a foreword, Garvin says of his volume:

\begin{quote}
As the poetic expression of a young nation, involved for the first time in a life and death struggle, it is unique, and has psychological and historic value.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

This is probably true, but one could wish that the poets of Canada had produced less of historic and more of poetic value.

There were no Wilfred Owens or Siegfried Sassoons among Canada’s First World War poets. The poetry is of a kind, expressing in often strained rhyme and metre, loyalty to Britain, hatred for the Hun, glory of death in battle, bravery of the women who have watched their menfolk march away, tribute to the dead, nobility of the military from generals to privates, and other allied emotions. The unquestioning acceptance of the war as a battle of good against evil often leads to such absurdities as the following stanza from Benjamin A. Gould’s “The Airman”:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Evidently he had seen the Hun}—
\textit{One of those blundering hussars,}
\textit{Prancing and gibing and grinning and laughing and bawling.}
\textit{Now he had changed sides}—
\textit{And he showed us his face}
\textit{With a smile full of poison and malice and rage.}
\end{quote}
I swoop, I dive, alert, alive,
And mock the German's hate sped hells;
With steady sight I guide the flight
Of our great civilizing shells.16

It is a triumph of patriotism over reason which allows the poet to refer to German shells as "hate sped shells" and to Allied ones as "civilizing".

On the home front, poetry also advocated the submission of truth to patriotism. Newspaper reports questioning the "honour" of some of the business deals made by avaricious Canadian businessmen and politicians with the military during the wartime boom provoked Clive Phillips-Woolley to enveigh against such disloyalty. He objects to an inquiry on war-time profiteering:

A curse on your vile commissions, that suggest and advertise theft,
While young men fight for your honour as the best of the old things left....17

It is interesting to notice that the poet curses the commission and the "advertisement" of the theft, rather than the theft itself. Also on the home front the expressions of joy in the honourable sacrifice of sons and husbands by Canadian women is sometimes almost bloodthirsty, as in Lucy Maud Montgomery's "Our Women":

Bride of a day, your eye is bright,
And the flower of your cheek is red.
'He died with a smile on a field of France--
I smile for his sake,' she said.

Mother of one, the babe you bore
Sleeps in a chilly bed.
'He gave himself with a gallant pride--
Shall I be less proud?' she said.

Woman, you sit and weep apart,
Whence is your sorrow fed?/

16 Ibid., p. 69.
17 "To the Papers and Politicians", Ibid., p. 181.
'I have none of love or kin to go--
I am shamed and sad,' she said.\(^{18}\)

To modern readers this particular poem presents a kind of surrealistic vision of a land of bloodthirsty harpies, shovelling hapless men into the incinerator and making an outcast of any one of their number who cannot produce a suitable victim for the rite.

The best poem to come from a Canadian during the First World War was probably John McCrae's famous "In Flanders' Fields". There at least the patriotic faith that the slaughter of the battles in Flanders was not in vain is beautifully expressed.

The rollicking poetry of action of which Canadians were at this time particularly fond suitably conveys the sheer physical exhilaration of a fight. For example Tom MacInnes\(^{19}\) "In the Fighting Top" gives a vivid picture of the destructive power of the shells and does not attempt to justify the destruction, thus avoiding the worst excesses of patriotism by concentrating on action:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{We're nigh enough for our little ones,} \\
\text{To reach and drop} \\
\text{The Huns!} \\
\text{We'll do them dead with a splatter of lead,} \\
\text{And the spit of our little artillery!} \\
\text{While the big ones down below} \\
\text{Go thud--thud--thud--} \\
\text{But O that smashing below!} \\
\text{Shrieks and groans,} \\
\text{And the decks are slimy with blood,} \\
\text{While stark bits of flesh and bones} \\
\text{Slip senseless into the sea!} \\
\text{Blood!}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p. 158.
\(^{19}\) It is interesting to notice that Tom MacInnes was still writing the same style of poetry for the Second World War: "Ballade of Friends" in the Canadian Authors' Association anthology *Voices of Victory* has the same enthusiastic approach and rollicking rhythm.
But what care we!  
High up with our little artillery  
We have our part to play:  
So fire away, my fighting top.  

The force of the rhythm and the vigorous use of alliteration contribute to the appeal of this poem, which is primarily musical. Though the poet could be charged, perhaps, with insensitivity to the deaths of his mates below, such questions do not arise as the reader is carried along by the rhythm's impelling flow.

On the whole, F. R. Scott's description of the little band of singers arising as one man to proclaim its faith in the ideals of the European nation-state applies just as aptly to Canadian First World War poetry as it does to the traditional verses produced by English poets early in the war. The chief difference seems to be that the Canadian war poets were much more emptily and crudely patriotic than the English traditionalists. Canadian First World War poetry was a weak echo of the poetry of an obsolete tradition in England. There the war poetry grew beyond the tradition. In Canada it showed no signs of progressing beyond adolescent imitation.

The beginning of modern poetry in Canada is often associated with the shortlived but defiant McGill Fortnightly Review. In this publication A. J. N. Smith made his first attacks in what was to be his long battle against the entrenched lifelessness of Canadian ideas of poetry. Here also the first poetry of F. R. Scott appeared. The Canadian Mercury, similarly short-lived, grew out of this beginning. The "Montreal Group", however, was the only sign of life in the Canadian poetical desert for more than ten years. A few landmarks appeared in the wilderness—the publication of New Provinces in 1936 being one of them. The Canadian Forum survived, and

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20 Ibid., p. 128.
published what modern poetry did appear, notably that of A. J. M. Smith, L. A. McKay, Leo Kennedy, A. M. Klein, and Robert Finch. R. R. Scott and A. J. M. Smith made a few important statements in the hope of encouraging Canadian writers to learn from the literary movements which were then in full swing in England and the U.S. But The Canadian Poetry Magazine continued to print its echoes of the nature poets of the 1880's. And during the economic depression of those years publishing was even less lucrative and publication even harder to obtain than it had ever been.

With the outbreak of the war, the bridgehead established for modern poetry by the Montreal group suddenly was no longer isolated. Modern poetry appeared in quantity. Four little magazines were established in rapid succession, each one an outlet for the work of well-developed poets who seemed suddenly to have come out of nowhere.

Contemporary Verse was the first to appear, late in 1941, declaring its intention to publish mainly modern poetry. It was published on the west coast, and perhaps because of this it was not the mouthpiece of any particular group, and as the literary hotbed of Montreal threw off its sparks, Contemporary Verse continued to publish both "native" and "cosmopolitan" alike. Preview and First Statement were both begun in 1942. The first issue of Preview appeared in March of that year, and First Statement shortly after. Preview poets were generally older, more established and experienced as artists than the rather rebellious beginners who associated themselves with First Statement, but all were, at the time, committed to poetry as an art and to society as being in need of drastic improvement. As time went on the interest in the social theme declined among some of the Montreal poets, and disappeared altogether among others. Direction was also avowedly iconoclastic. The magazine's first issue, late in 1943, began
with an outrageous cartoon of an imaginary workshop of the Canadian Authors' Association. *Direction* was put out from an R.C.A.F. camp at Outremont, Quebec for its first few issues, and then changed location from one camp to another as its publishers were transferred. It is Souster's work which dominates the magazine, though it published, after its first few issues, quite a variety of authors.

By the time the war had ended, much of the energy and vitality of this "poetry explosion" had expended itself, and both poets and critics seemed to be searching for a new direction in which to develop. During all this time of development in modern poetry, the "tradition", the last of the last dregs of late Romanticism, had continued to wither, but had not died. The Canadian Authors' Association still presided over its little protectorate of songsters, and *The Canadian Poetry Magazine*, whoever its editor, was supported by the association and had little choice but to publish their work.

With the outbreak of the war, the traditionalists shot off a volley of war cries, battle hymns, and military prayers which proved conclusively that nothing whatever had happened to their minds in the years between the two wars. A few voices are above the general low level, but on the whole the poets who followed the old tradition did so in mind as well as in poetic techniques. The decaying romantic sensibility was completely incapable of dealing with modern warfare, so the decayed romantics responded with ready-made patriotism and military-religious dogma left over from the First World War. Those who were less completely ossified attempted to mould the new theme of war to fit the kind of poetry they had been writing before.

The new poets of the forties and the few already established modernists responded to the war in an entirely different manner, and with
much more variety. Since most had, during the thirties, been involved with leftist political thought and activity, there is a current of this in the poetry: the war is sometimes seen as another variation of the class struggle, one more imposition of the bourgeois on the working class. Sometimes a uniquely Canadian sentiment views the war as a sort of bloody but distant rumbling, tainting all personal relationships. For those involved more directly the conflict is seen from its often trivial and mechanical underside: the private's-eye-view. Most often the relation between global war and an individual is the concern, and this became more pronounced as the concern with social action faded in importance during the war years.

In the early years of World War II, the traditional theorists of poetry in Canada had very definite expectations of war poetry: above all else, it had to be inspirational. The most conservative attitude is that expressed by Nathaniel Benson in his article "Famous Poems of the First Great War", which appeared promptly after the declaration of war in the October, 1939 issue of The Canadian Poetry Magazine. Benson's article consists chiefly in praise of and in quotations from the most idealistic and patriotic poets of the First World War: English, Canadian and American. The poems he commends most highly, those of Rupert Brooke, Alan Seeger, Laurence Binyon, John Masefield and John McCrae, among others, display the same attitude which F. R. Scott, writing eight years earlier, had called the "patriotic response", which "could not and did not last". But it is obvious that, in the mind of this critic at least, the attitude did last. Benson explicitly states that the idealism of the patriotic poets of the First World War is still valid:

21
4:2 (October, 1939), 5-12.
The passage of twenty-five years with their attendant stresses and varying trends of expression has in no way dimmed the lustre of Brooke's lines. They ring out again with the familiar golden note of crusade and courage, more loudly now, in these days when England and her Empire face a more rapacious ring of foes than they did in 1914....The soldiers of England in 1939 are still impelled onward by the ideal so magnificently expressed by Rupert Brooke in 1914.22

Apparently Benson had not read, or did not consider worthy of mention, the war poems of Owen, Sassoon or Graves. He also obviously believed that the complex public feeling accompanying the conviction that war was the only way to stop the spread of Hitler's regime amounted to the same gallantry and love of country expressed by Brooke; a belief that shows that certain aspects of the history of the years between the wars and of the Great War itself escaped his attention. Beyond the above statement, Benson does not go into specific detail about what kinds of poetry he would hope for from this new war, but his own verse is ample proof that restatements of First World War patriotism quite satisfy his ideas of what a poetic response to World War Two should be.

Another statement about the duty of the poet in wartime is made by Clara Bernhardt, who expresses her opinion in two articles: "The Poet's Function"23 and "Calling All Poets".24 She does not express such a decisively patriotic response as Benson does, but she insists on the poet's duty to provide "spiritual leadership". Her main argument in both articles is centred on Harriet Monroe's statement:

22 Ibid., p. 5.
23 C.P.M, 4:3 (December, 1939), 5-10.
Humanity cannot move faster or further than its greatest souls. The poet is not a follower but a leader. Poets and artists are makers of spiritual forces, leaders of men's imaginations. Clara Bernhardt emphasizes the idea of poets as leaders, and goes on to demand that they "keep alive spiritual values and by the light of their own spirits...give light unto others", a view that is very close to the Victorian expectation that the poet perform the function of a prophet or seer, dispensing his wisdom and advice to guide public tastes and morality. Such emphasis on the public duty of the poet can only be maintained at the expense of two other aspects of poetry: the aesthetic existence of the poem, and its function as an expression of the poet's emotions. Bernhardt minimizes these considerations. About the aesthetic existence of a poem, she says:

Art for art's sake is not enough. Few works of art can claim complete justification in the creative impulse which engendered them .... Contrary to the observation of William Butler Yeats that "...it is not the business of the poet to instruct his age", I believe that it is the poet's function to point the way to better things.

Concerning the poet's expression of his own emotions, she reconciles "spiritual leadership" with the lyric impulse by declaring that the poet whose self-expression does not provide positive spiritual leadership is not a "great soul" and therefore, not really a poet. She deplores the expression of futility and alienation and looks for those who are unaffected by it or who have overcome it:

...here and there are a few inspired souls who have not bowed their knees to the modern Baal, Futility...

26 "Calling All Poets", p. 5.
and she accepts only those poets who, "instead of losing their faith in God and man, have found it."\(^{28}\) The main thing Clara Bernhardt expects of poetry during wartime is inspiration.\(^ {29}\)

Nathaniel Benson and Clara Bernhardt both emphasize the importance of poetry during wartime as a public morale-raiser—Benson leaning towards patriotic grandeur and enoblement of the Cause, Bernhardt towards "spiritual values" behind the conflict. And certainly the poets of Canada followed the advice of these critics. The pages of *The Canadian Poetry Magazine* and the popular anthologies of war poetry, not to mention the poetry corners of the newspapers, were full of poems whose only purposes were patriotic and inspirational.

The response to the war advocated by Nathaniel Benson was not long in coming. By the time the January, 1940 issue of *The Canadian Forum* was published, Earle Birney had already found plenty of material for his lampoon, "To Arms with Canadian Poetry",\(^ {30}\) especially, as he points out, in "the traditional poetry-corners of our daily newspapers." The *Montreal Gazette*’s offerings are singled out for special "praise" in Birney’s article, which advocates just such poetic patriotism as Nathaniel Benson supports. Birney goes so far as to recommend the establishment of a "Poetry Control Board" to ensure that those disloyal poets who continue to write nature poetry, or treasonable ones who express doubt in some of the time-honoured clichés of


\(^{29}\) A theory very similar to this is expressed by the editors of *Voices of Victory*, the Canadian Authors’ Association’s anthology of war poetry. They give as their reason for publishing the book the need for a "spiritual challenge" from Canadian poets to "despots and tyrants". Snorts Earle Birney in "Advice to Anthologists", his review article on this anthology, "This raises false hopes of the ability of dactyls in repelling tanks."

\(^{30}\) *CF* 19:228 (January, 1940), 322-4.
war are effectively suppressed. A good example of Birney's technique in this article is his commentary on two of J. E. Middleton's poems which were published in *Saturday Night*:

One is happy to record that at least one Canadian periodical is giving space to the poets who fully understand their duty. In the Toronto *Saturday Night*, Mr. J. E. Middleton publishes a well-merited "Protest" against those who "when Hell is loose again...prate learnedly of Peace!" The first phrase is perhaps a bit unfortunate, since our scald has not clearly confined the boundaries of Hell to enemy territory, but Mr. Middleton clarifies his vision in the following week's issue of the same journal, by an elegy in memory of the missing seamen of H.M.S. Courageous. They are pictured as marching up the "golden way" and receiving a blessing from the wounded hand of Christ himself. This satisfactorily establishes the partisanship of Heaven in the present war and helps to reestablish that grand tradition of piety which made Canadian poetry of 1914-18 forever memorable.31

With such delightful (if rather weighty) irony, Birney takes the patriotic sentiments of his "scalds" to their logical conclusion, showing how ridiculous such simplistic responses are in terms of a modern conflict.

But Birney's criticism notwithstanding, a great deal of the poetry written in Canada about the war was of the very type he lampoons. There was a poetic sensibility which saw the war as a simple conflict between good and evil, with the forces of Heaven ranged on the Allied side and those of Hell with the Axis power, a sort of conglomeration of the *Iliad* and *Paradise Lost*. This vision of the war, of course, resulted in dignified poems replete with abstractions, since Love, Pity, Justice, Freedom, and Democracy on the Allied-Heavenly front could be easily opposed to Hatred, Cruelty, Injustice, Tyranny, and Despotism on the Axis-Hell front. Poets who persisted in seeing the war in these black and white terms usually became so engrossed in the abstractions that their poetry became

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31 Ibid., pp. 322-3.
completely removed from any contact with the actual events and human experiences of the time. It is a moot point whether the vocabulary of standardized cliches inherited by these poets from the First World War resulted in their simplistic vision or whether their simplistic vision resulted in the use of the cliches. As far as the poetry is concerned the end product is the same: war poetry like that of Sir Charles G. D. Roberts.

Roberts' war poetry is a good example both of the kind of poetry Birney satirizes and of the kind of war verse which would be approved by Nathaniel Benson and Clara Bernhardt. Nathaniel Benson would admire Roberts' war poetry for its "golden note of crusade and courage" and Clara Bernhardt would approve of the "ideals" and spiritual forces which Roberts brings into his verse. Roberts' work at the time was something of a centre of controversy as it was such a good example of the kind of work the younger poets wanted to avoid. John Sutherland, in an article in Direction, 32 attacks Roberts' reputation not only on the basis of the war poetry he was writing at the time, but also in relation to such often anthologized favorites as "The Pea Fields" and "Tidewater".

Roberts' most famous war poem is probably "Canada Speaks of Britain". This was the title poem of a Ryerson poetry chapbook of Roberts' war verse; it was printed as a frontispiece to the Canadian Authors' Association's anthology Voices of Victory, and it was one of the poems which Sutherland singled out in his article:

This is that bastioned rock where dwell the Free
The citadel against whose front in vain
Storm up the mad assaults of air and sea
To shatter down in flaming wreck again./

This, this is Britain, bulwark of our breed,
Our one sure shield against the hordes of hate.
Smite her, and we are smitten; wound her, we bleed,
Yet firm she stands and fears no thrust of fate.

Stands she, and shall;--but not by guns alone,
And ships and planes and ramparts. Her own soul
That knows neither to bend nor break,--her own
Will, hammered to temper,--keeps her whole.

She calls, And we will answer to our last breath--
Make light of sacrifice, and jest with Death.  

Sutherland's particular comments on "Canada Speaks of Britain" have to do with rhetoric. He objects that what are often praised in Roberts as examples of technical skill and innovation are merely rhetorical devices—for example the separation of "own" from its object "will" by a line break, and the irregular metre of "our last breath", are special effects, adding to the rhetorical illusion of the poem but having nothing at all to do with what the poem says.

Sutherland's complaint that "Canada Speaks of Britain" consists almost entirely of rhetorical effects is easy to substantiate. But this poem appears only mildly rhetorical when it is compared with some of Roberts' other war verse, such as "To France, June, 1940" which appeared in The Canadian Poetry Magazine. The first lines of this poem are bombastic in the extreme, and the rest of the poem follows suit:

Not upon thee the same, not upon thee,
O France, our France, from whose bright loins are sprung
The half of all our sons,—not upon thee...

The use of archaic diction found in the phrase "not upon thee" is maintained throughout, presumably for the dignified Biblical flavour it gives the poem, and the phrase "not upon thee" itself becomes affected through needless repetition. The abstractions in which the poem begins, the vague

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33 Voices of Victory, ed. Canadian Authors' Association (Toronto: MacMillan, 1941), p. xi.
34 5:1 (September, 1940), 13.
personification of France as mother of half of Canada's "sons", continue as Roberts speaks of France's "pride brought low", her "soul enchained", and her "glory eclipsed".

Rhetorical effects dominate another of Roberts' contributions to the war effort, "Resurgant: A Song For the Nations Submerged". This poem has an orchestral overlay, with an unidentified trumpet call punctuating the stanzas:

> Oh, clear and high summons the trumpet
> Before the gates of Dawn.

These lines have no connection with the rest of the poem, as it provides no context for a heavenly trumpet blast, which must be considered as the ultimate rhetorical attention-getter. In this poem, too, an artificially pretty poetic distance is added by such anachronisms as "byre" and "stead" for "barn" and "farm".

But the chief fault in Roberts' constant use of rhetorical effects, which Sutherland fails to emphasize sufficiently, is not so much the use of rhetoric itself as the fact that there is no point for the rhetoric to get across; the rhetoric has no function except the decoration of empty phrases. What do the poems say? In "Canada Speaks of Britain", that Britain suffers no damage or fear as a result of vain attacks. When the British were putting old cars in fields so they could not be used as landing strips, drilling civilians with broomsticks for lack of rifles, enduring air raids by night and counting casualties by day, to say that even a personified Britain fears nothing and is not damaged is patently ridiculous.

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35 Saturday Night 57:44 (July, 1942), 1.
In "To France, June, 1940" the rhetoric interferes drastically with the meaning of the poem, but it appears that Roberts is referring to the collaborationist officials of France, and saying that they are a stain on the "Honour" of that country, whose honour is nevertheless not stained because eventually France will be freed. Considerations of "Honour" were alien to the situation in which France found itself once its main lines of defence had proved no obstacle whatsoever to the German Panzer divisions.

In "Resurgant: A Song For the Nations Submerged" he says simply that the conquered countries are still defiant—in twenty-seven lines, with thirteen commonplace metaphors, and three trumpet calls. It is obvious that Roberts has nothing to say. Each of these poems boils down to the most ordinary of patriotic sentiments, which are inflated with rhetoric, padded with commonplace metaphors and peppered with grandiose archaic expressions. Basically the problem is with the reason these poems were written: Roberts wanted to write something inspirational, though he actually had nothing to say about the war. Consequently he was left trying to produce something from nothing which resulted in the decorated hollowness of these poems.

The anthology for which Roberts' "Canada Speaks of Britain" formed the frontispiece, *Voices of Victory*, is an excellent source of traditional and also simply bad Canadian war poetry. In this collection the aims of Nathaniel Benson, "golden notes of crusade and courage", are generally sought after, though not all aim for the pomposity of Roberts. Some of the more personal expressions, however, replace pomposity with sentimentality.

*Voices of Victory* was "conceived and brought to fruition", in the words of its preface, by the Toronto Poetry Group of the Canadian Authors' Association. Since its subtitle is *Representative Poetry of Canada in*
Wartime, one might expect that some care would have been taken to include a cross-sectional sampling. The preface describes how the selection was done:

...the Poetry Group of Toronto Branch, Canadian Authors' Association, sponsored a Dominion-wide poetry competition. Prizes were donated...for the three best poems submitted. Honorable Mention in the form of publication in this volume was accorded to twenty other entries adjudged next in order of merit....

The judges were chosen not only for their literary discernment, but, also, because of their location geographically....

Canadian poets who are widely recognized as established craftsmen were invited to contribute to this collection....

Members of the Poetry Group who originated the idea and assumed responsibility for publication of the volume are represented by poems selected by three Toronto judges. 36

Earle Birney, one of the original judges, has this to say about the compilation of the Anthology in his article "Advice to Anthologists": 37

The truth is that the "Poetry Group of the Toronto Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association", which fathered the enterprise, was driven by the not unnatural determination to see itself between covers. To make sure that it would, it not only ran a preliminary national competition for which its own members were eligible, but arranged a complicated plan so that any grouper who did not win one of the three awards or one of the twenty honorable mentions, might, nevertheless, be heard among the Voices, and among the best of the vocalists. The scheme involved a second division after the prize lyrics, made up of one verse from each of the "distinguished Canadian poets" invited to contribute, and one verse from each of the Toronto Group who had lost out in the competition... The plan threatened to go haywire when the committee of judges who consented to select the best poem submitted by each member of the Group, for inclusion in the volume, threw out all the poems of nearly half the organized laureates, as unworthy

36 Canadian Authors' Association, op. cit., pp. v-vi.
of publication. Some of the disappointed accepted the judges' decision; others managed somehow to appear, behind the judges' backs, with some of the faintest runes in the volume. I cite these sordid details not simply because, as one of the judges, I can vouch for them, but chiefly to show what happens when a chapbook is published not primarily for the good of literature, but for personal publicity and parish pump loyalties.38

As one would expect, after these complicated manoeuverings, the poetry included in the volume is extremely uneven in quality, more so even than a typical issue of The Canadian Poetry Magazine, which at this time displayed an amazing range in the quality of its verse. Also, many of the best writers are missing from Voices of Victory; as Birney says, not without some vituperation, "they are not in Toronto" and "Sir Charles G. D. Roberts hasn't got them on a list."39 No anthology claiming to be "representative" in 1941 can be excused for leaving out A.J.M. Smith, F.R. Scott, Robert Finch, Ralph Gustafson, and L.A. MacKay, to mention only a few. The anthology's claim to representativeness certainly extends only to those writers who associated themselves with the Canadian Authors' Association.

The prize poems and honorable mentions of the book vary in subject and technique but are uniformly sentimental. They range from varuous springtime ditties, such as Rita Adams' "Spring Fever"40 to staid sonnets, such as J. V. Hicks' "Unshaken",41 to what can only be called tearjerkers, such as Helen Ross' "Resurrection".42 The selections of the prize poems are most difficult to credit. "Recompense",43 the prize poem by Agnes Aston Hill, is a particularly implausible choice. It is a burbling overlush description of the English countryside, given on the pretext of listing

38 Ibid., p. 339.
39 Ibid., p. 339.
40 Canadian Authors' Association, op. cit., p. 19.
41 Ibid., p. 17.
43 Ibid., p. 1.
the things someone, presumably a dead soldier, will not return to. The final stanza is supposed to tie the description together, and supplies the poem's title:

But, though your singing heart will never leap  
With ecstasy again in England's dower  
Of deathless loveliness--this thought I keep--  
You shared the glory of her greatest hour  
Before your eyes were shuttered in long sleep.

This stanza, with its recourse to the popular slogan from Churchill's oratory (not that the oratory is weak--it is only misused in this weak poem) has not the sincerity or strength to give relevance to the preceding stanzas about "golden Junes" that "star the riverain with fragrant flowers" and the "silver-throated lark and missel-thrush". The poet seems to be much more interested in the English countryside than in anything else. There are other poems of this ilk in the anthology--the Canadians of this volume seem to be extremely fond of the English countryside. And all too frequently the foliage of the poetry decorates, as it does in this case, a mere war-time catch phrase.

Isobel McFadden, the creator of the second prize poem, "Canadian Crusade", appears to have the same difficulty in reconciling sweeping descriptions of landscape with an appropriate wartime sentiment, but the scenery in this case is Canadian rather than English. The idea of this poem seems to be to arouse Canadian national feeling, first by a sort of travelling post card depicting the coast-to-coast grandeur of the local scenery, and then by a call to Canadians to respond to "the challenge of a flag of scarlet wool" and leave behind their "adolescent past". Both the scenery and the challenge are phrased in a speechified and confusing manner. The scenery appears in a series of rhetorical questions: "How

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44 Ibid., p. 2.
shall they see the..." with appropriate details added. The different kinds of people who will "waken" to the challenge are listed next, in a number of lines that read like the program for an elementary school "People of Canada" pageant. Next comes an invocation addressed to more scenery, to "Startle the ears and cry where they are found." The last stanza is the triumph of the poem's capacity to embrace the irrelevant: a totally unexpected and unprepared for Christ image is added.

These two poems contain several of the typical weaknesses of many of the poems in the anthology. The most startling is that the poets have nothing to say; behind all the figures of speech there are only wartime slogans. The poets overdecorate; the language is full of stiffly classical personifications, over-used "abstractions", stock metaphors, and familiar similes: the decoration itself is trite. The most glaring fault in these two poems and in many of those in the anthology is lack of thought, in some cases so pronounced that one suspects the poets are lacking in intelligence. It would be to no purpose to discuss in detail the poems that share the faults of the first two prize poems, for as one progresses down the list of honorable mentions the faults merely become magnified. Neither would there be any point in commenting on those poems which follow the grand processional style established by Roberts' frontispiece poem. Fortunately there are fewer of these. There are, however, a few poems worth mentioning among the "Contemporary Canadian Poems" section of the book, which contains the contributions of the poets whose work was invited.

One of these is the best poem of Nathaniel Benson's sometimes pompous contributions to the war effort, "Marseillaise' for a Penny Flute". Perhaps

this poem is preserved by its subject matter from being overblown. The poet hears a penny flute playing the *Marseillaise* in Montreal, and reflects on the echoes of grandeur, now broken in France's occupation, evoked by the melody. The "strange, awakening, pulse-hastening glory of summons" is powerless in "the dumb inglorious present". Benson cannot resist a few hackneyed lines, such as "an impure blood has overlowed the furrows", which is intended as a play on the words of the anthem, and "The crash of one of the great lamps of freedom", which is too strained a metaphor for the simple context in which it occurs. But in general this poem is well-realized and contains a subtle, many-faceted response to a memorably presented incident. Benson seems not to have tried, in this poem, for the "crusade and courage" and "Shining idealism" which he described as essentials of the best in war poetry.

Audrey Alexandra Brown, one of the most interesting of the regular contributors to *The Canadian Poetry Magazine*, contributed "Withdrawal from Crete", and Mary Elizabeth Coleman, another frequent contributor to the same magazine added one of her dramatic monologues, "For This Freedom Too." Both these poems are competent, but unexceptional. Dorothy Livesay's "The Child Looks Out" is a memorable piece, and probably the best poem in the book. Its subtle use of metaphor and sensitive evocation of the often overlooked bewilderment of even the happiest of childhoods is as out of place amid the shouting which dominates the volume as a phalarope in a flock of domestic geese. Instead of frayed expressions from the rag bag of

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46 See p.
47 Canadian Authors' Association, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
48 See p.
49 Canadian Authors' Association, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
50 Ibid., p. 74.
the Victorians, this poet presents the reader with lines in which the connotations and echoes of every word are put to use, as in a passage such as:

...the child in cities, towering up
A stifling reach of stair, gains window-seat:
What consternation puckers up his eyes,—at space
Unplanted, seed unwanted, wars unwarranted—
Consuming his small, thankless growing place.

The child "towers" up the stairs: to him every step is a climb in itself, and he does "tower" as each climb is added to his altitude. The stairs are a "stifling reach", so far it seems from the bottom to the top. The figure also alludes to the power of growing things as reflected in the generation of children who have grown up in the stifling atmosphere of the industrial city. But the stairs are also the child's growth towards a "window seat"—a place where he is old enough to look out, beyond himself and see the world as something apart from himself. The negation that the child sees is emphasized by the sound of the repeated "un" prefix and the emphatic alliterated "w" of the three accented syllables in the line. The use of "growing place" for the child's immediate world draws in again the connection between the inexorable growth of a plant and the maturation of the child.

Lloyd Roberts' "Tis Only Man Who Wars"\textsuperscript{51} is interesting because of its theme. The piece is basically a nature poem, a series of descriptions of the sights and sounds to be found in Canadian woodlands. But throughout the poem the contrast is drawn between the peace of the woodlands and their animal inhabitants and the far-off wars of man's world. Opposition of the tranquillity of nature with the chaos of man's world is quite a common theme in Canadian war poetry, and appears again and again in a great variety of

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 83.
forms and from many different writers. Its expression ranges from the crudity of this poem, where nature operates as a kind of drug which the poet administers in large doses, declaring that it will somehow make war go away; to the kind of synthesis achieved by Earle Birney in such poems as "Hands" and "Dusk on the Bay".\(^\text{52}\)

Aside from a few poems, then, **Voices of Victory** is the offspring, bred true to type, of the Canadian Authors' Association. Besides Earle Birney, F. R. Scott criticized the anthology,\(^\text{53}\) but Scott did not infuse his review with wit; he finds **Voices of Victory** genuinely discouraging, and expresses surprise that so little of the political and social, not to mention literary, upheaval of the time has intruded upon the coteries of the Canadian Authors' Association's poetry groups:

> A dead tradition of poetic writing, on the other hand, reflects nothing but the attitudes of the past, expressed in the cliches of the past. The surprising thing is how long such sterility can live and go on reproducing itself...

To read **Voices of Victory**, described as "Representative Poetry of Canada in Wartime", ... is to find oneself buried in just this kind of tradition.\(^\text{54}\)

F. R. Scott, of course, requires that poetry be socially conscious as well as artistically valid, and finds the lack of social awareness in **Voices of Victory** even more depressing than its artistic sterility.

What is more discouraging is the utter lack on the part of these Canadian writers of the sense of impending change, of the need for democratic advance, and of any new outlook on the contemporary world. Judging by this volume, nothing has altered in the realm of poetry or politics since 1914. Needless to say there is no new style or diction, no venture in original modes of expression.\(^\text{55}\)

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\(^{52}\) See p. 94.

\(^{53}\) "A Note on Canadian War Poetry", *Preview* 9 (November, 1942), 3-5.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 3.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 4.
Another anthology which should be mentioned as a comparison to *Voices of Victory* is George Herbert Clarke's *New Treasury of War Poetry*.\(^{56}\) Though Clarke's selection does not include any of the new Canadian poets, or any of the "Montreal Group", he is more discerning in his choices than the Canadian Authors' Association showed itself to be with its anthology. Clarke included established Canadian, English, and American poets in the *New Treasury*, which was the last of a series of three treasuries of war poetry which he compiled. The Canadian poets Clarke includes in his Second World War Treasury are Audrey Alexandra Brown, Arthur S. Bourinet, Duncan Campbell Scott, E. J. Pratt, Earle Birney, Mary Elizabeth Coleman, Arthur Stringer, J. E. Middleton, Charles G. D. Roberts, Agnes Aston Hill, Nathan Ralph, and himself.

Besides "Withdrawal From Crete", two of Audrey Alexandra Brown's poems are included: "Reported Missing"\(^{58}\) and "The Phoenix",\(^{59}\) both of which are from her book *Challenge to Time and Death* which contains some other war poetry as well. Both poems in Clarke's anthology show her gift for evocative descriptions of exotic or spectacular beauty. "The Phoenix" includes, besides its basic theme, which is a rationalization of man's willingness to die in war, many lines such as "That sardonic topaz eye,/Ringed with transparent gold" and "Russet and olive and emerald-hued between/ Hedges of quicker green" which give the poem the richness one associates with this poet, but which interfere with the thought of the poem by their very effectiveness.

\(^{56}\) (Boston:Houghton-Mifflin, 1943).

\(^{57}\) Ibid., p. 82.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 137.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 243.
The poem is charming and beautiful, but avoids the reality of the war. The same general approach is shown by Audrey Alexandra Brown's other poem in this anthology, "Reported Missing". Of its eight stanzas four are occupied entirely by a description of the "realms of sky" through which the airman's soul travels before reaching "the windless ocean of eternity". The descriptions of clouds and dawn are very appealing and attractive, but they tend to separate themselves from the airman and his death, which is glossed over—"death itself has made him free of death."

Facile patriotism characterizes the selections by Roberts, D. C. Scott, Arthur Stringer and A. S. Bourinot. Roberts' poem is the familiar "Canada Speaks of Britain". Duncan Campbell Scott's "Hymn for Those in the Air" is of the same type. It is a dignified and predictable hymn, which, once launched, proceeds on its ponderous way until it arrives at a suitable finale. Arthur Stringer's "Taps at Twilight" is also his contribution to Voices of Victory. It is a highly conventional Memorial Day poem, with strong echoes of "In Flanders' Fields" to which it forms a kind of sequel. The poem reuses the ideas and expressions of McCrae's poem and produces a very ordinary patriotic poem, though it avoids the most blatant clichés. Stringer wrote several long verse narratives of wartime stories which show the same straightforward skill with words. Arthur S. Bourinot, who during the war years produced a veritable river of war poetry, is represented in Clarke's anthology by "Sleeping Now in Coventry", a simple ballad-like lament for the victims of the blitz of that city. The "sleeping"
people are described in terms of the stereotypes of English citizens: the lad who "strolled English lanes/With lilac sweet", the girl who knew "the quiet of an English home", the man whose hands are "gnarled with toil". Bourinot, predictably, adds a plea for vengeance to the tail of his innocuous rhyme to complete the pattern of his patriotic formula.

These poems are patriotic exercises, done with varying degrees of skill. But they all stop short of any real poetic response because the poets are expressing patriotic sentiment for its own sake.

After reading these contributions it is a surprise to discover that Clarke has included Earle Birney's "On Going to the Wars" among his selections from the Canadian poets. Birney does not belong to the same school as Roberts, D. C. Scott, Benson and Bourinot, and his poem displays an entirely different sensibility to the war, though its regular metre and rhyme and its obvious relation to the Lovelace lyric are traditional characteristics. But the poem contains that doubtful, contemplative sense of moral relativity—the line "And war, it's true, fouls both the flesh victorious and the flesh it slays" is an example—which it is the continual endeavour of the facilely patriotic poem to repress. Not that it is without flaws: the poem has some rather strained rhymes, such as "...I go that we may breast/Again the Dorset downs in zest", and shifts too sharply from English background to Canadian motivation. But in comparison with Clarke's other selections, "On Going to the Wars" is refreshingly direct.

The poets chosen by George Herbert Clarke are, as a rule, members

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64 Ibid., p. 233.
of a group of well-established poets who contributed frequently to The Canadian Poetry Magazine. This was another official publication of the Canadian Authors' Association, an institution which, according to the evidence in the selection of poems in Voices of Victory, in the essays and minutes published in The Canadian Author and Bookman and in the critical selections in The Canadian Poetry Magazine itself, fostered an attitude towards the war in which none but the most emptily eloquent patriotic expressions would be acceptable. During the war years the magazine underwent numerous changes of editorship. E. J. Pratt resigned as editor in 1943, and when Nathaniel Benson, the next candidate for the office, could not take the job, Pratt was succeeded by a management committee, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, Amabel King, and finally Watson Kirconnell.

Through all these disruptions the stated policy of the magazine changed very little. The editors ostensibly all conceived of the magazine's purpose in terms of the quality of the poetry rather than the form. The Canadian Poetry Magazine was to be eclectic concerning the form of the poetry it published. But of course this policy was open to interpretation. E. J. Pratt gives a good summary of his idea of the function of the magazine in his review of the first issue of Contemporary Verse in the December, 1941 issue:

We welcome the appearance of this little sheaf of verse which constitutes Vol. I, No. 1 of another Canadian quarterly. It is not brought out in competition or in conflict with The Canadian Poetry Magazine, as its main concern is with contemporary techniques, while our own magazine, representing a national organization, has tried to preserve a balance between tradition and modernity. Moreover, we hail any progressive effort which would freshen the quality of our national verse.65

65 6:1, p. 47.
Pratt's editorial policy did allow of some 'experimental' verse, as the Canadian Authors' Association insisted on calling anything showing an influence more modern than the Georgians. Under his editorship some of the new poets who eventually made a revolution in Canadian poetry were published: Floris Clark McClaren, Kay Smith, P. K. Page, Miriam Waddington, and Louis Dudek all appeared. But by 1943 when Sir Charles G. D. Roberts and Amabel King took over the editorship, the new little magazines had taken over as the main outlets for the new poets. Only Miriam Waddington continued to publish regularly in The Canadian Poetry Magazine. Whether this absence on the part of the new poets was due to their exclusion by the new editors or to their simply not submitting their work is difficult to tell, and probably a combination of both factors was in operation. Amabel King, however, makes a statement which at least implies a certain prejudice against all but the most standard verse forms in the first of the two issues which were under her temporary editorship:

There have been quite a number of letters from rather disgruntled members of the old school who would like to see free verse barred from the Canadian Poetry Magazine. To them we have this to say: We are living in 1944, not in the days of Keats or Tennyson, although we reverence their tradition, and are inspired by it, but poets, thinking as 1944 individuals, must express themselves in the tempo of their own times. Sometimes that expression comes in rhyme, sometimes in verse that is called "free"—but that does not include chopped-up prose, for which there is no place in the Canadian Poetry Magazine. The distinguishing feature of free verse, when compared with chopped-up prose, is rhythm, which must be present in all poetry worthy of the name.67

The title poem of the volume Still Life and Other Verse is one of Pratt's few poems about the art of poetry; significantly, it poses images of monumental destruction against the fragile formulae of romanticism. Pratt's much-discussed concern with things on the monumental scale, which Fred Cogswell, in his article, "E.J. Pratt's Literary Reputation" (Canadian Literature 19 (Winter, 1964), 6-12), labels "gigantism", has probably some basis, as this poem demonstrates, in a reaction to the poetical minutiae which he must have continually encountered as the editor of CPM.

671:3 (March, 1944), 6.
The crudest response to the war in the pages of the *Canadian Poetry* Magazine is, of course, that expressed by Benson, Roberts, Bourinot, and their followers. These patriots do not completely dominate that magazine, but their work and work like it appears quite frequently. Nathaniel Benson for example, accompanies his backward-looking article "Famous Poems of the First Great War" with the poem "A Canadian to America!" Benson has hit on the stunning novelty of having the ghosts of Washington and Lincoln express their disgust with American isolationism. He then goes on through several hortatory stanzas of invective, all in rhymed iambics in alternating three and four-foot lines. The braying tone of Benson's admonishments is only accentuated by the sing-song of the metre:

Hitler has mocked your ideals so long  
And spat in democracy's face,  
Shrilling his lusty tyrant-song  
With another in Caesar's place.  
When their eagle legions take the sky,  
Blood will besmear your face.

Benson's formula here seems to be to rhyme his propaganda, add a few stock metaphors for trim, and present the whole as poetry.

There does not seem to be much point in discussing other examples of the Bensonesque in war poetry. Suffice it to say that during the war years, every issue of *The Canadian Poetry Magazine* was graced with one or two contributions of this kind. From such dignified and empty rhetoric it is a short step to the "inspirational" war poems of the type advocated by Clara Bernhardt. Dorothy Dumbrille is a good example. One reviewer said of her work that it was "calculated to incite enthusiastic war effort." Certainly the poetry itself was not short on enthusiasm. In the December, 1941 issue she ends a poem entitled "Destiny" thus:

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68 *C P M*, 4:2 (October, 1939), 22-3.  
69 *C P M*, 6:2 (April, 1942), 43.  
70 *C P M*, 6:1, p. 21.
I am an instrument of God;
My heart is sure; my way is clear.
I press on, to Eternity.
Be still my soul! I hear! I hear!

Here can be seen the religious tone, the ringing imperatives, the sprinkled exclamation marks which are characteristic of the "inspirational" war poetry encouraged by the Canadian Authors' Association. Not one trace of thought mars the high polish of this expression of the poet's devotion.

Other such examples are not hard to find. Robina Monkman's "The France I Knew"\(^1\) is less hortatory, but just as reliant on the hackneyed military-religious symbols of war as a crusade:

...And the France I knew will not despair;
The Flower of Britain still sleeps there,
Embalmed in poppy shrines,
And she will never bow the knee,
Nor change her lovely Fleur-de-Lis
For a dark, distorted cross—not while the flame
Blows skyward on the grave that bears no name.

Here again the soldiers are "sleeping", and the First World War is called up as a sentimental rallying point. The poet makes a kind of garden flower out of the Fleur-de-Lis by calling it "lovely", and adds a travelogue touch in "poppy shrines".

There are some poems definitely worth considering in the same pages, however. Often the contrasts between the poems in one issue are startling in the extreme. Printed on adjacent pages one finds Verna Loveday Harde "All Valiant Dust"\(^2\) which sets off in the best traditions of the Canadian Authors' Association with descriptions of the current enemy as "Moluch", complete with "hounds of war", "dripping jaws", and "babes thrown to...hungry depths" being printed side by side with Margaret Avidon's

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\(^1\) C P M, 6:2 (April, 1942), 26.
\(^2\) 4:3 (December, 1939), 17-18.
exquisite "Gatineau" with its atmosphere of pervading desolation in a landscape which reflects from human life only "The bleak unconscience of a world/Intent on suicide." The restraint of Margaret Avison's poem creates a silence that is almost palpable amidst the din of the more usual contributors.

Sometimes also, a writer whose work is usually unoriginal in thought and unexceptional in technique contributes a startlingly good stanza or two. Robina Monkman is one of these. She had four war poems published in The Canadian Poetry Magazine between 1940 and 1942. These are "When a Mother Has Need of Her Sons", "Paris", "St. Paul's", and "Synopsis". The first three of these poems are what their titles imply. "When a Mother Has Need of Her Sons" is a description of the grand and universal response accorded Britain in her hour of need by the members of her former empire. Transplanted Englishmen all, they "hasten, brother by brother,/ To their tryst at the hallowed Abbey's altar stone." "Paris" is a lament for the tourist-bureau Paris, that vague elegant lady who appears in this poem wearing "A wreath of tender song", and whose "days were golden with a silver rim". Paris' "lovely light is quenched" and her "bright name" is "tarnished". This poem, incidentally, appears beside Birney's "Dusk on English Bay"; another pair of strange companions in this journal. "St. Paul's" declares that the symbol of the cathedral will not be destroyed, even though the building itself may be, all in suitable figures of speech. This time it is the altar of St. Paul's which receives the poet's favourite adjective, "lovely". All three are hackneyed and conventional with no expression of anything but public patriotism on the part

73 4:3 (December, 1939), 19.
74 4:4 (May, 1940), 22-3.
75 5:1 (September, 1940), 24.
76 5:2 (December, 1940), 23.
77 6:3 (October, 1942), 17-18.
78 5:1 (September, 1940), 26.
of the poet, and no originality in language or technique, though the rhyme and metre are technically quite skilful. But "Synopsis", the last of the four, with all its faults, is at least a poetic statement.

Perhaps it is because the poet sets out to make a synopsis that she exhibits so much more control over her medium than in her other work. Here there are no wasted lines making predictable metaphors—every line adds to the effect of the poem. Some of the two-line stanzas are cryptic and biting:

When flesh and steel come into close conflict
Steel is the proven master—The ghettos of Warsaw were over-full.

We were cutting diamonds in Amsterdam—
"How red the tulips are today!"
We watched them dissolve and flow by between the dykes.

Unfortunately the poet cannot resist her favourite adjective: she uses "lovely white lilies...trampled in the mud" as her metaphor for the defeat of Belgium. Though trampled lilies are as well-used a symbol as are tulips for Holland, the dissolving red of the tulips is original and arresting. The poem is also marred by Robina Monkman's obsession with the mythical chivalry of warfare: "Sir Lancelot...unhorsed in the lists/By a surprise thrust of his adversary" is a clumsy personification. The poem recovers with Hitler represented as stepping out of one of his own furnaces:

Shadrach, trim in a suit of ersatz asbestos
Steps jauntily from the furnace door,
Doffs his mask, grins at the crowd, and shouts "Heil!"

The irony of Hitler as an old-testament hero in a suit of modern asbestos is intriguing. Unfortunately the poem also ends on a strident note:
Mephistopheles adds "little yellow devils" to speed up the tempo of his bloody music.

The work of Mary Elizabeth Coleman is of a much more consistent quality. She is a frequent contributor to The Canadian Poetry Magazine
during the war years, mostly of poems which were later collected in her book
*For This Freedom Too*. All her contributions are thematically concerned
with the effect of war on individuals, and all take the form of dramatic
monologues, as do her four war poems in *The Canadian Poetry Magazine*.

"News From a Nation At War" is an extract from the gossipy correspondence
of an English housewife. "Waiting" is the semi-conscious thought of a
woman waiting for her man to return from a bombing raid over Holland. "The
Cost" is the story of a Viennese professor who was forced to flee from
the Nazis after he was betrayed by his son, and "A Very Ordinary Man" is
the story of a doctor who returns to the occupied Channel Islands because
he fears an epidemic there more than internment. The monologues are some-
times set between preface and epilogue stanzas. These formal openings and
closings tend to impart to the simple incidents outlined in the monologues
an air of self-consciousness and importance which does not suit them. In
"News From a Nation at War", for example, an apocalyptic vision of sorts
opens the poem:

> The vials are poured out
> The stars of heaven fall
> The sun and moon are dark,
> Apocalyptic horsemen ride again,
> And night and day are punctuation marks
> In pain's long tale.

and a similar closing is appended:

> Ride, dread horseman, ride
> All undismayed we stand.
> Our roots go deep, and drink
> From hidden, unpolluted wells new strength
> To fight this battle through, and then rebuild
> A better world.

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79 Toronto: Ryerson Poetry Chapbooks, 1942.
80 5:2 (December, 1940), 31-2.
81 5:4 (August, 1941), 17-20.
82 6:1 (December, 1941), 13-15.
83 7:2 (December, 1943), 26-7.
In contrast to these imaginative flights, the monologue itself is most unassuming. The letters show family life continuing: the bluebird nesting near the house, the latest local wedding and a prize from a fair for an exhibit of garden flowers being included in the news along with the deaths of an only son in the R.A.F., a husband at Dunquerque and a father and sister in the London blitz. This rather melodramatic choice of incident, combined with the matter-of-fact, conversational tone of the imaginary letter-writer make the point clearly enough without any extra patriotic epic machinery, which only overloads the poem.

The most interesting of Mary Elizabeth Coleman's poems is "Waiting". The interpolation of cosmic machinery in this poem is integral, and consequently not so obtrusive, as the poem moves back and forth in history. The speaker is always a woman waiting for the outcome of a battle:

I remember well
crouching beneath a leopard skin
in the darkest corner of the cave
listening for his voice
among the yelling voices of the tribe

leads to

How may ears have ached
in the heavy silences down the centuries
for the sound of his horses's hooves:
across the drawbridge with staccato clatter,
down miry roads
where the soft splatter of mud
made a faint obligato
to the rattle of musket and saber...

Though the conceptions of the cave-man, knight, and cavalryman are the standard stereotypes, their naivete is effective in this poem because they function only as broken images flashing across the speaker's consciousness as she sleeps fitfully, listening for the engines of returning bombers. Mary Elizabeth Coleman's poems are often unsubtle and naive. But they are revealing glimpses and incidents competently realized, if rather simply
presented. The limitations imposed on the poet by her choice of the mono-
logue form have resulted in a much greater control of and precision in
language than is the magazine's norm.

Also exceptional in The Canadian Poetry Magazine is Les Cox's
"Lament for Europa" which uses irony, a technique very seldom found in
the magazine, where a kind of "high seriousness" usually prevails. The
poem presents a rather facetious version of the theme of the damsel-in-
distress, and ends with an ironic dirge:

The well-bred democratic church-bell tolls--
Europa's dying, Europe is undone..
Donate our nickel, lend our fol-de-rols,
Measure our sympathy with Gallup polls--
Europa's dying, Europe is undone!

Something of the inadequacy of mere sympathy from unscathed North
Americans is implied here, and also the shallowness of the expressions of
sympathy which Europe's plight called forth from Canadian poets and head-
line-writers--"fol-de-rols" in the poet's words.

In general The Canadian Poetry Magazine was too closely tied to
the Canadian Authors' Association to attract any modern response to the
events and ideas of wartime. By the time of Pratt's resignation as editor
of the magazine, the new little magazines had been established, and these
became the centres of growing, vital poetry, attracting the developing
poets, and cutting off The Canadian Poetry Magazine from whatever tenuous
connection it had ever had with the new poetry in Canada. As far as war
poetry is concerned, The Canadian Poetry Magazine generally provides the
background of mediocrity against which the founders of the new magazines
rebelled.

84 6:1 (December, 1941), 15.
III WAR POETRY IN THE CANADIAN FORUM
The Canadian Forum was, during the thirties and until the advent of the little magazines, almost the sole Canadian publication sympathetic to modern poetry. It was also among the most prestigious places in which to have one's poems published, as the early work of the Montreal group had given the magazine something of a literary reputation. During the thirties The Canadian Forum often published the leftist and socialist poetry of the labour movement, and later, as the threat of war became more and more obvious, many pacifistic poems appeared. The Forum also published some poems concerning the Spanish Civil War, notably those of A.M. Klein and L. A. MacKay.¹ The establishment of the little magazines gradually changed the Forum's role. It became less an active centre for poetical experimentation and more a reflector of the activity going on among the various groups of writers associated with the new magazines. This change in direction also

¹The small body of poems by Canadians on the subject of this war is interesting. The traditionalists, of course, to a man ignored it. Since most of the modernist poets held leftist opinions to some degree or other, the war was to them a symbolic conflict, and as it progressed, a betrayal. Their poems are the only group in which one finds the modernist poets inclining towards the idealization of physical conflict, as is seen in Leo Kennedy's "To the Eagles" (Voices of Victory, p. 67) and A.M. Klein's "Castles in Spain" (Canadian Forum, 18:209 (June, 1938), p. 79). The Canadian Forum published some interesting poems on the Spanish Civil War, among them "Battle Hymn for the Spanish Rebels" by L. A. MacKay (16:189 (October, 1936), 25); "Suffer Little Children" by G.C. Hadow (16:193 (February, 1937), 24); "Red Moon" by Norman Bethune (17:198 (July, 1937), 118); "Three Snarls of a Disgusted Colonial" by John Smallcombe (17:199 (August, 1937), 159); "Murder Most Foul" by L.A. MacKay (17:203 (December, 1937), 314); "Yo Estor Un Rojo" and "A Spanish Revolutionary Poem", anonymous Spanish poems translated by Yakow Newman (17:204 (January, 1938), 346); "Limerick" and "Salutes" by Lionel Ried (18:210 (July, 1938), 116); and 18:211 (August, 1938), 135); "To L-- B--", an elegy by William Robbins (18:212 (September, 1938), 182); and "Now When the Long Fire Frozen" by Gordon Le Claire (19:221 (June, 1939), 92). There are also several poems of the Spanish Civil War in Preview, including "Nouvella" by Neufville Shaw (3 (August, 1942), 3) and "For a Spanish Comrade" by Patrick Anderson (17 (December, 1943), 9-10); and Louis Dudek's "Garcia Lorca" appears in First Statement (2:9 (October & November, 1944), 10-12). One of Gordon Le Claire's Spanish Civil War poems appears in Contemporary Verse: "Woodcut in Colour" (3 (March, 1942), 8).

Of particular interest is a book of poetry by J.S. Wallace entitled Night Is Ended, which consists mainly of poetry of the labour movement and also has a section concerned with the Spanish War. (Winnipeg: Contemporary Publishers, 1942).
appears in the war poetry published in the *Forum*. In the early years of the war the best contributions were those of well-established figures such as E.J. Pratt and A.J.M. Smith. Later, as the little magazines of Montreal assumed importance, contributions from the poets associated with them begin to appear.

The *Canadian Forum*’s first poetic reaction to the declaration of war is Paul Halley’s epigram "Macabre Patriotique":

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Ah well!
Each soldier slain
Will fertilize the grain
That grows to nourish once again
Soldiers!
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which, though not highly original, is interesting as a contrast to the *Canadian Poetry Magazine*’s first war statement, which was Nathaniel Benson’s article and poem.

The first of the *Forum*’s "poetry pages" devoted to the subject of the war appeared in the November, 1939 number, and included three war poems, by Ui Briun, John F. Davidson and Wreford Watson. The extreme contrast among these three poems is typical of the variety in the war poems that appeared in the *Forum*.

Ui Briun’s "The Drums" is a martial satire, a parade of the dead in highly rhythmic ballad stanzas of alternating three and four-foot lines. A protest is registered against the establishment churchmen, whose "God is peace: but who nevertheless "Urge from the altar that each go/ To slay his fellow man." The poem is competent but predictable, as are Briun’s other war poems in the *Forum*, and does not make any lasting impression.

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2 19:225 (October, 1939), 203.
3 19:226, p. 256.
John F. Davidson's poem is a Hokku sequence called "Oriental Rain". The poems are somewhat less than successful because of the satirical and rather self-conscious use of the hokku form. There are four poems in the sequence: "Serenading Poets", "Serenading Bomber", "Peace Loving Mother", and "Peace Loving Plane." The interrelationships between the four rains, of hokkus by Japanese poets, of bombs by Japanese planes, of prayers by Chinese mothers and of pamphlets by Chinese planes over Kobe, are established clearly, but the hokkus themselves are lifeless, and even silly, as "Serenading Bomber":

Japanese airplanes
Rain death by thousands
All year now ... Child's treat.

James Wreford's contribution is a contrast to the triviality of the other two poems, a contemplative poem entitled "Lines for the Anniversary of the Declaration of War, Aug. 14, 1914". The poem is a sensual description of an evening in late summer. The hard-edged forms of day are described as the evening dissolves them: "The trees achieve indeterminacy and the houses and the/ Myriad shapes of day-sense." As the calm of evening becomes a palpable reality, it is described in terms of its unassailable tranquillity. A radio "cannot shatter the tough elastic silence", passing cars cannot "pierce the resolute quietness". In the final stanza a sudden twist of metaphor aligns the heavy presence of the evening with memories of past horror:

It has a fascination like a honed knife, a fascination like a cloud of chlorine-gas, rolling, creeping, rolling...
this drift of silence and darkness...

Bayonet and gas are the symbols of the old war; the new war is the unspoken irony of the poem. Its successes result from the compelling quality of the description of the evening's embattled tranquillity.
Wreford Watson was the pseudonym under which James Wreford contributed his early work of the *Canadian Forum* and other magazines. By the time of his March, 1942 contribution to *The Canadian Forum*, he had abandoned it. His only other contribution as Wreford Watson to *The Canadian Forum* is " Armed Merchantman" which describes the decrepit S. S. Reynolds, an ancient merchantship, at anchor in B.C. "She is only an old cow of a ship," says Wreford, "the horns of death protrude belligerently but do not deceive...." A social message is attached to the description: there is some imagery of the faces of the ship's crew repelling each other with "the granite stare of caste"; but its direction is not clear. Wreford's habit of tangling syntax with imagery very loosely related grammatically, in this case entirely conceals the point of his argument.

"The Between Wars" appears much later, and is interesting because it points in the direction of the poet's development, away from social themes and towards introspection. In this poem the social theme is subordinate to a more personal lyricism. The constricting cultural climate of the time between the wars appears only as a challenge which is overcome by the affirmation of one individual's commitment to another. The poem begins:

Of course we were fools to love, the world being what it is and all that and our word so weak against its scorn...

but it ends

If we had never dared to raise our lips and kiss between the bars--who would have shaken the inauspicious stars?

"The Mental Butterfly", which appears in the August, 1943 issue, states

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4. 20:233 (June, 1940), 88.
5. 21:254 (March, 1942), 371.
a similar argument in a recognizably metaphysical style. The argument is between the power of love and the power of fear:

For fear of loving let us love against the teeth the iron talk of the exalted aeroplane; this mouse our happiness, that hawk--

and is advanced in terms of overlapping images. This technique is used to great effect in such lines as "the crossed hairs of the bursting rose/that blooms on the defenceless flat" and the final images of the "mental butterfly" which "floats on an eternal spring". However, the rapidly shifting pictures give the poem as a whole the effect of a brilliant mosaic seen from too close: it is easier to appreciate each tile than to comprehend the whole picture.

Wreford's next two poems in *The Canadian Forum* leave the theme of war for the consideration of the passage of time, which is seen in "Song for Intemperate Men" as insignificant in man's measure when compared with geological time, and in "Farmer's Fallow" as a seasonal change. A similar concern to that found in "The Mental Butterfly" with the power of love is the subject of "To Lucasta Today" which appears in the July, 1945 issue. The theme of war in this poem is only added by the title's reference to the Lovelace lyric, the poem itself being concerned with the impediments to love offered by the human condition; for all its power love is changed by the chance parting or eternal separations that are part of life. "New World Order", which appears with "To Lucasta Today", returns to the social concerns of Wreford's earlier work. Once again the metaphysical complexity and continual mounting up on images is very apparent, as, for example, in the opening line: "One world we wanted, not set up for some/

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7 24:283 (August, 1944), 106.
8 24:286 (November, 1944), 178.
9 25:294, p. 95.
but summing up the whole-world hope of man". The poem is about Canada and the aspirations of the New World.

Wreford's work in The Canadian Forum, then, is not predominantly war poetry, and it reflects the shift in the poet's concerns in that it abandons social for personal and philosophical problems. Even in the poetry which is specifically related to the war, especially the earlier "Lines for the Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of War" and "The Between Wars" the concern with personal relationships and individual emotions is seen to gradually absorb the themes of social comment. Ronald Hambleton's work in The Canadian Forum is similar in technique to James Wreford's, and, also as Wreford's, is not usually directly concerned with the war. Hambleton's only war poem in the magazine is "O Winter 1940"¹⁰, which is an extended metaphor comparing the dying and falling leaves of the approaching winter with the dying of fighting men which will inevitably continue through the winter. The style is complex and metaphysical; the comparison operates in both directions, with the leaves gaining significance from the deaths of the men and the deaths of the men gaining significance from the leaves' seasonal change.

Where Wreford and Hambleton do not generally deal directly with the subject of war, E. J. Pratt's preoccupation with violent struggle naturally included an interest in war, man's ultimate violence. "The Radio in the Ivory Tower"¹¹ was one of the early war poems to appear in The Canadian Forum. This is not among the best of Pratt's war poems, chiefly because of the strained quality of the historical point of view. The vision of the

¹⁰ 20:242 (March, 1941), 376.
¹¹ 19:227 (December, 1939), 276-7.
gathering forces leading to war has the effect of a carefully contrived allegory, and though the perspective is supposed to be that of "Polaris, the scout of Orion", the attempt to make the vision apocalyptic is not convincing. When the scout Polaris reports:

Nor would it be long,...
Before complaints would come from the stars,
All the way from zenith to nadir...

the reader cannot help but be conscious that he is being treated to a flight of fancy. As the vision of history's pageant continues, unravelling of the allegory becomes the chief response required.

Pratt published only one other poem in *The Canadian Forum* during the war years: this was the famous "The Truant*12 which appeared in December of 1942. This poem is typical of Pratt's response to war, though war is not its only theme. In celebrating man's free will, his ability to make of himself an exception to the laws of natural history which are represented by the "Great panjundrum", Pratt emphasizes that the real threats which man overcomes are those he creates himself. As the Master of Revels says:

Sire,
The stuff is not amenable to fire.
Nothing but their own kind can overturn them.

It is with an account of man's resistance to his own destructiveness that the truant himself crowns his response to the Panjundrum's string of curses:

We who have learned to clench
Our fists and raise our lightless sockets
To morning skies after the midnight raids,
Yet cocked our ears to bugles on the barricades,
And in cathedral rubble found a way to quench
A dying thirst within a Galilean valley--
No! By the Rood, we will not join your ballet.

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Pratt sees man's inhumanity to his kind as one aspect of the destructive side of the natural law which makes struggle and conflict conditions of life. It is man's ability to have compassion for all those involved in the struggle which is the crucial characteristic of his humanity.

Pratt's tendency to set up the subject matter in all his poems as a conflict, and to enlarge the scale of the conflicts he does focus on, appears in all his war poetry. In those of his poems whose subject or setting is war or war times, war is most often considered in one of two ways: either as the unfortunate but unavoidable result of the inherited aggressiveness of the species of man, or as the situation which calls for consummate heroic effort from man the adventurer. The techniques appearing most frequently are Pratt's famous direct and vigorous narrative or a characteristic indirection: an allegorical parody or more serious and universal parable-building.

The war poems in The Fable of the Goats and Other Poems, Pratt's 1937 volume, contain more of the allegorical technique and evolutionary conception of war than does Pratt's later war poetry, in which a higher proportion of the poems treat war as a dangerous adventure. "The Fable of the Goats" itself is a strangely inconclusive poem. The two goat armies and their leaders are provided with ancestries, mustered, and prepared for battle with Pratt's customary gusto, but the ending of the tale, though suitable for a fable, seems arbitrary when attached to this one. The "come all ye" section in which Pratt invites all the "hair dividers" to assemble a reason for Cyrus' and Abemilech's most uncharacteristic behavior holds the reason for this inconclusiveness--there is apparently no reason, even for

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13 (Toronto: Macmillan).
the hair dividers, as to why the two avoid the final battle. The reasons, evolutionary, racial and dietary, for the goats' war have, however, previously been made very clear. This arbitrary imbalance has caused at least one critic to suppose that Pratt was "(consciously or unconsciously)...
making fun of some aspects of peace-hysteria almost as much as at nationalistic and totalitarian excesses." The very arbitrariness of the ending particularly lends support to this argument. The poem is, of course, a prime example of allegory as Pratt uses it. "Puck Reports Back," the other long poem in the volume, is also allegorical in technique, and shares with "The Radio in the Ivory Tower" an apparent content with mere allegory, which, witty as it may be, becomes too much an end in itself. In "The Baritone," the allegorical technique is the poem: a skillfully extended metaphor of sound. It is interesting to notice that this metaphor is the same type used by Klein in "Not all the Perfumes of Arabia," though Klein translates the horror of war to images of smell, and Pratt translates the history of the war to images of music. The only exception to Pratt's musical translation is the very concrete "crops of grass on the battlefields" in the last line, which makes its effect partly because of its difference from all the previous images of sound.

Three other poems in the volume deal with war from Pratt's evolutionary point of view. "A Prayer Medley" treats war as just one of the aspects of the life the human species makes for itself: man's accomplishments and failures, both real and imagined, are juxtaposed so

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15 Milton Wilson, E. J. Pratt: Canadian Writers Series #2.
17 Pp. 16-17.
18 See p. 95.
as to contrast the reasons for hope and for despair over the race. "Seen on the Road"\textsuperscript{20} is a highly condensed treatment of the same theme, with its two views of man as a "Springtime colt" and as a derelict being carried to an "ammunition dump". The irony is that man is the author of all prayers, that he is both the springtime colt and the ruined derelict, resorting at last to what he can salvage in the way of hope by reusing the ammunition from previous wars.

"The Prize Cat"\textsuperscript{21} uses the idea that the tendency to violence is part of man's submerged feral nature. The whole metaphor turns on the image of the Abyssinian child's cry which is heard in the scream of the bird killed by the cat. The cat becomes, with those few words, mankind, whose veneer of civilization is just as thin as the few generations of breeding which have given the cat its domesticated outward appearance.

\textit{Dunkirk},\textsuperscript{22} which appeared in 1941, soon after the event which it describes, implicitly shows a new attitude towards war. It is among the earliest of Pratt's poems to treat the contemporary war as a setting for heroic action. In \textit{Dunkirk}, war is a situation, and the debacle on the beaches is a configuration of events which requires bravery, loyalty, self-sacrifice and compassion of certain groups of people. The focus is entirely on the struggle to get the trapped army across the channel; the adventurous aspects of the situation predominate. To this end, the German forces are treated impersonally, as aspects of the situation, and in the lines

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{20}P. 33.
\textsuperscript{21}P. 34.
\textsuperscript{22}(Toronto: Macmillan).
\end{quote}
...Set to a pattern of chaos  
Fashioned through years for this hour.  
Inside the brain of the planner  
No tolerance befogged the reason—  
The reason with its clear-swept hall,  
Its brilliant corridors,  
Where no recesses with their healing dusk  
Offered asylum for a fugitive.23

and those which follow, the enemy soldiers and airmen who harass the roads and beaches are reduced to mere terms in the destructive logic of the war machine they serve.

The poems in Still Life and Other Verse24 show both of Pratt’s views of war: war as the indwelling urge to kill, part of man’s inheritance; and war as the circumstance catalysing all man’s finest qualities to coalesce into heroic action. “The Truant”25 is especially interesting in its use of these points of view, since it contains both of them. The panjundrum has imposed the conditions: man’s violent inheritance is one of them. But the truant, in defiance, refers to the hope, or at least the refusal to despair, which resides in man’s soul even during the destruction of war.

“The Submarine”26 is a longer poem in which war is seen as something more closely akin to an adventure; here, an adventure calling for man’s utmost ingenuity in the construction of such efficient machines as the submarine itself. But the theme of man’s inheritance also enters, as the submarine, whose thrilling malice dominates the poem, is constantly compared to one of nature’s primitive but deadly efficient killers, the shark. Man, at the apex of the evolutionary ladder, bends all his ingenuity to

23 P. 2.
24 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1943).
25 In Still Life and Other Verse, pp. 4-10. See also p.
26 Pp. 22-27.
create a machine which has the same characteristics as an animal which appeared even before the fishes.

The theme of the tendency to savagery as part of man's genetic makeup is found most noticeably in "Autopsy of a Sadist" and the famous "Come Away, Death." In "Autopsy of a Sadist" the unnamed man who perpetrated the massacre at Lidice is anatomized in vain: no chemical formula can explain the predominance of the bestial in this particular human; though the bestial is every man's inheritance, and the appearance of this "throw-back" is inexplicable in terms of evolutionary theory.

"Come Away, Death" takes the idea of man's heredity of violence a step further. The second part of the poem describes a moment when the approach of death was palpable: the moment of silence before a dropped bomb explodes. The terms in which the moment are described reflect the nature of the "storm" which has gone before:

A sudden truce among the oaks
Released their fratricidal arms;
The poplars straightened to attention---

The cessation of the wind in the trees has dual significance—both as a lull in the storm and in a battle: the trees are described in military terms of "truce" and "straightened to attention" while the violent motion of the oak branches in the wind is described as "fratricidal". With the explosion of the bomb the meaning of "fratricidal" becomes completely transparent, and

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27 P. 3.
28 Pp. 29-30.
29 See Milton Wilson, op. cit., p. 20. The "motor drone" in the poem probably signifies that the bomb is one of the self propelled type which fell immediately when its motor was cut off by an automatic timing device. The psychological strain of being within hearing of the motor's cutting-off was notorious.
provides a hinge for the final statement. In this last stanza even man's heredity of violence is seen as being overpowered by the holocaust he has devised for this war. The point is made in terms of the description of the sound: it is "outside the range and target of the thunder," that is, it is more threatening than the malice of the impersonal natural disaster. This more-than-natural violence in the sound of the explosion is paralleled by the metaphor of speech "curving back upon itself". It is important to notice that speech, the symbol of man's superior intelligence to other animals, does not stop at the "Druid runways", "Piltdown scarps", or even "Java caves" in the process of curving back upon itself: it regresses to a time when violence was the only form of communication. But man's intelligence (speech) combined with prehistoric and mindless violence, has produced the "bolt" which is more destructive (because it is so much less wasteful in its expenditure of power) than anything to be found in the natural world. Ironically, it is because man is intelligent that he is capable of creating such cataclysms. Of Pratt's shorter war poems, "Come Away, Death" is the most impressive in its tightly compressed statement of contemporary failure and evocative contrast between old and new choices of death.

The tendency to build allegories on the contemporary situation which is so marked in The Fable of the Goats and Other Poems is of much less importance in this volume. It appears in "The Radio In the Ivory Tower"30 and "Father Time",31 both of which make use of allegory in

broadening and universalizing themes. "The Invaded Field"\textsuperscript{32} also depends upon an extended metaphorical statement for its effect, but it is much more tightly constructed than the other two, which tend towards bagginess. Pratt's ability to metaphorically transform a contemporary situation is put to humorous use in "The Prowler in Who's Who"\textsuperscript{33} and "Der Fueher's Pot-Pourri".\textsuperscript{34}

\textit{Behind the Log},\textsuperscript{35} Pratt's other long war poem, is of course, one of those in which war is primarily an adventure, a heroic struggle against overwhelming odds. The tale is told in the best of objective manners; even the people involved in the convoy are not really heroes individually. The heroism lies somewhere in the concept of the convoy itself; it is the collection of ships which is the adventurer, and the U-boat wolf-pack is treated almost as part of the sea's inherent resistance to man's exploits.

Another well-established poet who published his war poetry in \textit{The Canadian Forum} was A.J.M. Smith, whose poetry appeared at intervals in the magazine during the war years as it had during the thirties. Smith's concern during these years is predominantly with the relation between society and the individual. "The Face",\textsuperscript{36} "The Common Man",\textsuperscript{37} and "Perceptors of the Heart"\textsuperscript{38} all deal with the anonymity of the individual, who is more of a statistical than a real entity, though "The Face" comprehends a threat of resistance in the form of imminent revolution. But

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{32}P. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{33}Pp. 15-16.
\item \textsuperscript{34}Pp. 36-38.
\item \textsuperscript{35}(Toronto: Macmillan, 1947).
\item \textsuperscript{36}16:188 (September, 1936), 24.
\item \textsuperscript{37}25:299 (December, 1945), 213.
\item \textsuperscript{38}16:190 (December, 1936), 26.
\end{itemize}
Smith's more characteristic personal voice is also heard, as in "A Portrait; And A Prophecy" and "For Healing", two of the three poems by A.J.M. Smith which appeared in the December, 1940 number of the magazine. The remaining poem in this trio is Smith as literary satirist: "On Reading an Anthology of Modern Canadian Poetry" (later titled "On Reading an Anthology of Popular Poetry") punctures the pretentiousness of the anthology with the image, "every Saul of Tarsus/ Must puff himself into a Paul."

Of the five war poems which appear in Smith's *Poems; New and Collected* only one, "Ode: The Eumenides", was published in *The Canadian Forum*, but this poem was originally published under two titles, with the main part of the poem as it appears in *Poems; New and Collected* appearing first and the central section appearing under the title, "On Seeing Pictures of the War Dead."

Smith's other war poems are "A Soldier's Ghost", "The Dead", "Business as Usual, 1946", and "Fear as Normal, 1954." Taken together these poems form a commentary on war which implicates every individual in a kind of species guilt for the lives lost.

"Ode: The Eumenides" is like Smith's earliest war poem, "A Soldier's Ghost", in that the ghost-like presence of those dead in past wars is important. In "Ode: The Eumenides" there are two groups: those long dead, and the new "casual" dead. The long dead are those who fought and

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39 20:239, p. 278.
40 23:273 (October, 1943), 155.
41 24:287 (December, 1944), 204.
43 *Northern Review* 1:1 (December-January, 1945), 43.
45 Ibid., p. 11.
died in a time of comforting beliefs, identified with a place

    Where the crisp floor muffles the tread
    And the classic shade of cedar and pine
    Soothes the depraved head.

a time that Smith calls

    ...the significant dark
    Of piety and fear
    Where Holiness smoothed our hair
    And Honour kissed us goodbye.

These dead do not haunt the living because Honour and Holiness gave their
debaths significance, whether real or illusory is no matter; the signifi-
cance was belief. But the "casual dead" are different. In their "stained
shrouds", they search for the living:

    It might be that the casual dead
    In their stained shrouds
    Would not find us...

who are unprotected by piety or honour or holiness. The living "we"
narrows down to "I" as the poem ends. It is "we" who

    ...have a date in another wood,
    In the stifling dark, where the Furies are:

where

    The unravelled implacable host
    With accurate eyes levelled
    Wait in the enchanted shade--
    Where we spilled our bloodshot seed
    They wait...

But it is "I" who recognizes the dead in the end of the poem:

    ...each patient ghost
    My ruined son.
    The Furies lift the veil--
    I know that face!

The metaphor of the "bloodshot seed" describes the means and manner of
death for the "casual ghosts", but it is also an image of fatherhood.
The "bloodshot seed" is the generation killed in the last war, the first
of the "casual dead" who are now being joined by new armies of dead. The
metaphor also implies responsibility: it is no accident that the "ruined
son" waits in the place where the "bloodshot seed" was spilled. In this poem it is the presence of the dead, their power of horror, which is insisted upon, and the revenge they take through this horror on the living who hold responsibility for their deaths.

"On Seeing Pictures of the War Dead" also carries the idea of universal guilt. The poem is as cryptic and ambiguous as any of Smith's with meanings appearing in the words, in the lines, and in the relationship of line to line and clause to clause, and in the implications of these patterns. The meanings centre around the responsibility, again, of the older generation for the war which their actions rendered inevitable but which is fought by a younger generation. This pattern of inevitability is presented in terms of the legend of the dragon's teeth which, planted, spring up as armed men:

Now that the dragon seed
Grows tall and red, we
Harvest in the field
Sharp sheaves, and see
The reaper felled
By what we took such care
To sow so straight

From here the poem branches into a series of linked observations on the consequences of the pattern of events to which the legend is paralleled: the basic sincerity of the actions which led ironically to war; the need for hope, even greater for those who fight the war than for those who ultimately caused it, the loss of hope which accompanies the loss of life, the meaninglessness of the lives that are inevitably lost in an inevitable war. The conclusion of the poem emphasizes the universality of both the loss of hope and the responsibility:

There is none,
However innocent /
In heart or head,
That shall escape
The stench of the dead
Emptied and butchered hope

In these lives made
Meaningless froth
By us who were afraid
Of life, but not of death.

This conclusion, so closely related to the ideas of responsibility expressed in "Ode: The Eumenides" is probably the reason for the later incorporation of "On Seeing Pictures of the War Dead" into the other poem. The fear of life, that is, of growth and particularly of change, as in Livesay's "Invasion", is seen as the reason for war and death, the alternatives to life and change, having predominated. All those who fear change, who prefer the security of the known, however unsatisfactory, to the insecurity of the unknown, are responsible.

It is the presence of the dead which fills both these poems—those killed in the meaningless waste of life involved in modern warfare haunt those who survive—their presence is felt in emotional but also in moral terms. Who is morally responsible for these ghostly legions? The human species has denied its own responsibility to itself in allowing this wholesale slaughter, and must suffer the consequences.

A. M. Klein, another long-time contributor to The Canadian Forum, responded to the war with satirical poems which are quite unlike A.J.M. Smith's deliberative considerations of the subject. During the thirties and before the publication of Hath Not a Jew, much of the poetry of what Louis Dudek identifies as Klein's "Eliotesque period of development" appeared in The Canadian Forum. Klein's poetry showed a general social

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concern, and a tendency to deal in the imagery of the desolate personality, the style of the Eliot of Prufrock, as Dudek points out. Of particular interest regarding Klein's war poetry are the satirical "Blueprint for a Monument of War" and the three poems dealing with the Spanish Civil War under the general title of "Castles in Spain".

"Blueprint for a Monument of War" is a multi-levelled satire. Supposedly a letter accompanying a plan for a monument, the poem exposes many kinds of monuments and monument makers. It satirizes even its own business-letter form, with a long opening set of instructions to the stenographer requesting that copies be sent to various brass, the very people whose pretensions the "monument" is actually to commemorate: "Mr. Algernon Brown," whose fragile boots for soldiers made him, nevertheless, immense profits; "Sir Alfred Poyns," who bought "the salient for ten thousand lives, cold cash..." and who is currently writing memoirs about the bargain; and "Rev. Smith and Rabbi Cohen," men who "know monuments; it is their perch." The letter which follows is punctuated by quotations from the Latin inscription which is to appear on the monument; the contrast between the patriotic sonority of the Latin and the ironic and hypocritical business English of the letter is obvious. But the tone of the letter is puzzling. The monument is apparently as much to weigh down the unquiet corpse as to memorialize it:

'Tis simple, but 'twill serve,
To wit: a stone, a cairn, cemented, firm.
The corpse, perforce such sure impedimentum
Never to rise...

and the persona who writes the letter is apparently aware of this dual purpose, and also of the fundamental hypocrisy of the whole monument, but he is determined to build it anyway. For example, the carving of the proposed

47 17:200 (September, 1937), 208-9.
48 18:209 (June, 1938), 79.
monument is described as "chiselling, grandiloquent and apt:" hardly the terms which would be used by an unenlightened monument-builder. Again, the tone of the lines

Who shall gainsay that on a tombstone, Latin
Is for the great departed
A winding sheet of satin...

is cynical and aware: the inclusion of "who shall gainsay" suggests that the supposed writer is very much aware that these qualities of his Latin inscription may be doubted by some. This awareness on the part of the persona who is writing the supposed epistle blunts the satiric point of the poem. The actual point of view of the poet regarding the monument and that of the persona who writes the letter are completely intertwined. The persona, the monument-maker, should be either unaware of the irony of what he does, or completely knowing and cynical. Instead, he seems half aware that his activities are a travesty and half unaware. The final section of the poem, the hypothetical sixty-seventh chapter of Isaiah, is a tour de force in Klein's best tradition. The power of the Biblical rhetoric is imitated perfectly, and exploited to the full, the actual words used being completely ironic. There is nothing to mar the irony of the contrast between the formal rhetorical cadence with all the implications usually attached to its use and the meaning of the words which actually appear.

After this poem, so completely satirical of the aims and pretensions of armed conflict, Klein contributes a surprisingly idealistic group of poems dealing with the Spanish Civil War. These are entitled "Castles in Spain" and they appear in June of 1938. Perhaps, as Desmond Pacy says: "where fascism was the enemy, violence was justified."* Certainly, these poems tend to glorify the conflict by looking at causes and the idealistic spirit of the fighters rather than the actual fighting. These poems are exceptional among Klein's war poems. They are apparently the only ones he

wrote on the Spanish Civil War and they are the closest Klein's work comes to propaganda: the idealistic aspects of the war seem to have completely taken over the poet's imagination.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, Klein's work turns away from such themes of social protest, and neither "Blue Print for a Monument of War" nor the Spanish Civil War poems appear in any of Klein's collections of poems. Klein's response to the world war tended towards outraged satire, but another strong tendency during the war years was the autobiographical one, which produced Klein's well known descriptions of life and characters in a Jewish community and the superb "Autobiography" which is the best representative of this side of his sensibility to be published in the Forum.

The first of Klein's satirical war poems to appear in The Canadian Forum was "The Ballad of the Thwarted Axe: Coram, the German People's Court" This poem depends rather heavily on the use of the ballad form for its satirical effect. The stanzas are arranged in complementary pairs. The first stanza of each pair describes the action, the second is an ironic chorus instructing a "headsman" in terms that transform the sinister proceedings of the court into the implements of the headsman's grisly trade. The words of the perjured witnesses become whetstones, the words of the lawyers become a woven basket to hold the severed head, and the judges' words become lime to destroy the body. But since the trial with its predetermined outcome has already in effect accomplished the prisoner's death, the headsman is ultimately cheated. The colour of red dominates the ballad. The judges' robes, the basket of the head, the ink of the documents are all specifically red; the courtroom smells of blood and the documents themselves

49 23:271 (August, 1943), 106.
50 21:249 (October, 1941), 212.
bleed. The ballad form and the traditional metaphors of blood and redness are used to good effect in the poem though these very forms, of course, limit the scope of the poem to a straightforward indictment of the Nazi court's travesty of justice.

"The Ballad of the Nursery Rhymes"\textsuperscript{51} also appears in The Canadian Forum. Though it is also called a ballad, it does not make such extensive use of the ballad's traditional characteristics as the last mentioned poem. The main aspects of the ballad which appear in "The Ballad of the Nursery Rhymes" are its "song within a song" construction and its formal opening:

\begin{quote}
Upon a day after the roar had died
And the dust had settled, and cities were no more,
He sat him down, in a world that was wide,
As wide as is to a child his nursery floor.
\end{quote}

The "he" is a survivor (perhaps a sole survivor) of a war, whose mind has been so completely destroyed by it that his memory consists only of fragments of nursery rhymes and fleeting visions of the war's horror. The survivor mismatches the fragments of his recollections and the result is a surrealist landscape of destruction in his broken song.

Both these ballads are brief sketches whose effect is immediate but transitory. The clever and appropriate use of so many of the characteristics of the ballad in "The Ballad of the Thwarted Axe" make a clear connection between the evil of a controlled court and the kind of supernatural evil which is traditional in the ballad. The surrealism of the confused song in "The Ballad of the Nursery Rhymes" is also well conceived, and the added horror of the contrast between the shattered images of childhood's innocence and the fragments of horror remaining in the broken mind are obvious.

"Penultimate Chapter"\textsuperscript{52} presents a similar indirect view. Here the

\textsuperscript{51}21:250 (November, 1941), 244.
\textsuperscript{52}22:268 (May, 1943), 37.
imagery used is reminiscent of Pratt's stock of Darwinian metaphor. The "carefully evolved and cultured tribes" are surprised by a sudden resurgence of buried bestial and prehistoric irrationality. The men are powerless as the monsters of the geologic past come to life: the sea breeds the ichthyosaur, and the land is repopulated by "hooves' thunder, lightning tusks" of the "titranother and estrabelodon". The poem ends with the unfinished and strangely unnecessary line, "The mammoths (circa 1941)..." which adds nothing that is not already in the poem, and gives it the effect of trailing off.

"Actuarial Report"\(^{53}\) is another metaphoric treatment of the war. Instead of the metaphors of evolution, this poem uses the metaphors of business. The actuaries are the "Magi" of some vague world-wide insurance organization. They use the language of insurance to categorize the variety of means to the end of death, which they record assiduously on graphs and charts.

And drawn therefrom the hereto-appended graph
(The hanging gardens of death, shown tier by tier)

From these they "regretfully prognosticate a rising trend." The regular causes of death, "incidence of earthquake," "pestilence and dangerous intersections," is augmented by "risks, perils and bad luck/Remote from battlefield" in spite of the "saving war clause." "The general absence of felicity" is the summation of all the trends the actuaries note under this head. The irony of the poem is in the contrast between the formal jargon of understatement used by the actuaries and the actual human suffering it represents.

The only one of Klein's Canadian Forum war poems to appear in his collections is "The Ballad of the Thwarted Axe", which was reprinted in Poems (1944).\(^{54}\) This collection also contains Klein's best war poem, the

\(^{53}\) 22:269 (June, 1943), 60.

\(^{54}\) (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America).
famous "In Re Solomon Warshawer",\textsuperscript{55} which achieves a synthesis between Klein's historical concern with the patterns of Jewish life and his reaction to contemporary persecution.

Klein's poems are not the only representatives of the satirical in The Canadian Forum. In contrast to those in The Canadian Poetry Magazine, the Forum's war poems were often satirical or sharply ironic, and even, at times, humorous. David Stevenson published regularly in The Canadian Forum during the thirties and the early war years. His usual view is the satirical one, his short witty poems displaying control and virtuosity in this medium. "Oracle"\textsuperscript{56} describes the disgust of some nameless creator with the antics of earthlings: "Phew on animals in pants,/ I must try again with ants." "Serpent Sonnet"\textsuperscript{57} shows a skill with rhymes which are just obtrusive enough to add a note of bathos, and with multiple parodies, both of literature and of political theory:

\begin{quote}
When Britain's trade was free, and \textit{laissez faire},
And factories leaped to Adam Smith's commands
Duty and dividends were in the air,
Virtue had triumphed; and to darker lands
The serpent sped away with wasted glands...
\end{quote}

That Stevenson is also very capable in the use of blackly comic irony is demonstrated by "Call to Arms"\textsuperscript{58} in which the poet calls for more "generous Nobel prizes" for the conquest of disease, and more effort to "heal our social ills", so that

\begin{quote}
We may know when time has deified
The last man chiselled on the cenotaph,
That he was vigorous, he was edified,
Before his sinewy frame was blown in half!
\end{quote}

Stevenson's predominantly satirical approach to the war was not alone in

\textsuperscript{55}Pp. 49-55. This poem originally appeared in the \textit{Menorah Journal} 28 (1940), 138-40.
\textsuperscript{56}19:228 (January, 1940), 324.
\textsuperscript{57}20:233 (June, 1940), 88.
\textsuperscript{58}20:234 (July, 1940), 107.
the Forum, of course. The February, 1940 issue carried a poem by John R. Rooke entitled "The Use of Force" which puts war in a perspective as one of many social ills caused by a degenerate social system:

Please don't believe
The use of force
Is how we change the social course;
The use of force
You surely know
Is how we keep the status quo.

That "the status quo" bears much of the responsibility for continual wars and the glorification of the same is also expressed by A. N. Bentley in "And Kipling Be Damned." Bentley uses one of Kipling's favorite metres, and the rhetorical pattern of "If" to ask who, when the current slaughter is over and in the process of being justified, "will step up for the payoff?/And who mouth the last noble thought?"

Irving Layton's war poetry in The Canadian Forum, though more subtle than this, is also often satirical. Beginning in 1941 he becomes a frequent contributor (especially in 1942 and 1943), and his best known satirical war poems all appear in the magazine.

"Debacle" is Layton's first publication in The Canadian Forum. This poem is about summer, and the sultry heat of the long days is described as a parallel to the violence of wartime. "O I suppose," says Layton,

There is a beauty in the rose
That never dies. But Can one praise
The blood and heat of murderous days?

"Restaurant de Luxe" has the same satirical attitude, but deals with the undisturbed tranquillity of the lives of the denizens of the restaurant, who

59 19:229 (February, 1940), 350.
60 20:232 (May, 1940), 45.
61 21:243 (April, 1941), 19.
62 22:258 (July, 1942), 120.
have adapted to the war by watering down their responses until it can be discussed over dinner.

The satire in "Church Parade" is achieved through a highly ironic point of view. The poem opens with several images of violent death in war, followed immediately with the jaunty lines

We do not grieve,  
We have no fear,  
For Christ we know  
Is somewhere near.

which, in this context, can only express the irony first of Christ being "somewhere near" the scenes of horror already described, and second of the facility of a faith that asserts Christ's connection with such actions.

The figure of the padre, who is re-comforted each Sunday morning by the same familiar words, is also ironic, and he is transformed by the last stanza to an approving observer of a sort of military danse macabre.

Ironic "comfort" is also the theme of "Lady Remington". Here the comfort is a metaphorical whore/rifle combination. The imagery of sexual satisfaction is used to display the savagery released in men at war. "Passion" and "loving" have double valence, as they are not only sexual but almost psychopathic, the passion being for killing and the loving equated with inflicting violent death.

In "Petawawa" the ironic viewpoint (and incidentally formal regular metre and rhyme) has been abandoned for a less detached one. The poet is part of a group whose pointless training for destruction is the subject of the poem. The "calendar's late recruits" are taught to negate the fertility of life both physically: "practised by a sevenday schedule/ to sow

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64 22:264 (January, 1943), 303.
65 23:276 (January, 1940), 234.
ground with a most barren seed," and intellectually, "...watching our few thoughts squirm/ like sick, violent mice in minds made decently correct by press barons...." Those who profit from armed conflict receive some barbs: the recruits are fitted out "by a distinguished firm/ (they did business at Waterloo, Troy/ remember)..." but the satire in this particular poem is incidental. The main impulse is the serious consideration of the vacillating mental state of the late recruits: they are "faithless but not wholly without faith," and "valour not lacking, unvalorous."

From Layton's irony it is only a short step to the bitterness which fills poems such as Alan Brown's "All Out", perhaps the most bitter of any of the war poems published in the Forum. "The old men that would not die" bear the weight of the poem's accusation. Imagery of laughter unifies the poem: the old men's lies are a "sour jest" which results in an ironic reversal of a laughter.

The jest
Has made wry our lips,
They smile downwards,
Our laughter falls in pellets--

The "pellets" metamorphose into bombs, still in imagery of laughter:

From the round bellies of our loaded planes
The leaden pellets of our laughter fall...

The poem ends with a kind of curse on the "old men" and their "grey story tellers":

...if you had feared explosive mirth
You might have throttled your grey story-tellers
Or taken care whose ears you chose to fill
With fairy-tales
And froth of slobbered
Lies.

Irony and sometimes bitterness are present in a good many of the Forum's war poems, but there is not much of the humorous among the war
poems that appeared in any of the Canadian literary magazines. Two of the best which did appear were in The Canadian Forum. "Ballad of Self-Sacrifice", by C.P. Thomas, is a skillful ditty in which the poet presses his claim to heroism by virtue of his forebearance in not having a second cup of tea. His valour in this respect, he claims, dwarfs that of mere sailors, pilots and infantrymen at the front:

But I think I'm as valorous as he:
No baser soul can hope to realize
To what great heights of fortitude I rise
When I forego my second cup of tea.

The other notable humorous war poem in The Canadian Forum is Earle Birney's "Lines for Lotus Eaters". Birney announces his theme: "Past headlines roar and censorships/ I'll steer my way to the cosmic strips," and launches into a catalogue, in rather frantically rhyming couplets, of most of the contemporary notables in the world of comic strip characters.

In some of the war poetry from The Canadian Forum, the war is approached indirectly: it forms part of the background, imagery or atmosphere of a poem, and any statement about war is made in an indirect manner. A good example is the work of P.K. Page, where war is part of her characters' psychological environment, but does not usually intrude farther into the poem. Similarly, the subjects of Dorothy Livesay's four "war" poems in the magazine are not about this war, or any war; rather the war appears as a metaphor around which the poem is structured. "The Fallow Mind" describes the disruption the war makes in the individual and collective life as comparable to a field lying fallow over a season:

The fallow mind in winter knows, its scope
And wide horizon are made narrow by
The rim of early dusk...

67 22:266 (March, 1943), 359.
68 19:230 (March, 1940), 385.
69 19:227 (December, 1939), 227.
The war forces a kind of suspended animation of the life of "mind"; the aspirations which are the polar opposites of war's destruction: "Wait in the mind for the world's turning phase." The "children" in the last line are the creative children of man's mind as well as physical children. In "Invasion," a poem about the responsibility for the war, the war serves as a source of imagery. The poem is highly ambiguous: the metaphoric "invasion" is the invasion of spring, but also an invasion of the mind by an undeniable force. The mind is seen as responsible for war by its previous denial of the forces represented by the spring, which have invaded forcibly in retaliation. So the nature imagery itself becomes warlike:

Shrill the bomb bursts. The flare falls
On us. On you. We laid our mines long since.
The stifled whisper in the secret wood
Was known, was trumpeted far hence:
On sun-stained boughs, bird-mutilated morns
Harsh crackling music overrides, outwarns.

"Railway Station" is more limited in scope. The poem describes the turbulence of the crowded station and then focusses on a returning soldier who "wears silence on his face." The soldier has been to "that muffled underworld" where "Quiet is born for the inner ear." His journey is described: "Agony swept him, flak burst/ The punctured sky made shriek."

It is on this voyage that the "Voluptuous quiet came" and even in the clamour of the station it remains with him:

Washed to the heart's core, he:
That soldier standing quietly.

No judgement is passed on the soldier's experience; it is only important as it relates to the island of silence in which the soldier now lives.

The other poem of Dorothy Livesay's which has some thematic relation to

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70 24:282 (July, 1944), 90.
71 24:289 (February, 1945), 260.
war is an occasional poem on the death of F. D. Roosevelt. This poem is a simple eulogy, a rather limited and rhetorical piece.

In Dorothy Livesay's war poetry, the war is not so much a subject as a background. Its reality is the reality of metaphor, affecting every thought and every action, ousting the old occupants of the mind and insinuating its own violence there. Children appear frequently as victims; in "The Fallow Mind" "children will thrive/ Who late last year were bombed"; and in "Invasion" mind is "spendthrift of her children" and in Livesay's most famous war poem, "The Child Looks Out", the child as uncomprehending victim is the chief theme of the poem.

Similar indirection in approach to the subject of war is found in Miriam Waddington's two war poems in the Forum: "In Our Time" and "Dog Days," both of which are concerned with the change in the emotional universe created by war. "In Our Time" is one of her earliest poems, and shows some immaturity of technique with its common imagery, and pointless refrain line "Say no more." "Dog Days" has a similar theme but leaves a much stronger impression. The vague presence of fear and unease is made concrete, no stock imagery blurring the effective presentation of what is really a kind of collective emotional state.

Margaret Avison's poetry in The Canadian Forum is chiefly the meditative consideration of the phenomena of perception which is characteristic of her. The subject of war, when it does appear, usually is submerged

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7225:293 (June, 1945), 71.
73See pp. 30-31.
7420:231 (April, 1940), 9.
7525:294, 91.
in the question of man's nature. "Mutable Hearts"76 is the only one of her
Canadian Forum poems to deal with the theme of war. "Mutable Hearts" is a
complex poem and can be read on several levels, only one of which has any
connection with the emotions of war time.

The first section of the poem is a picture of people in movement:

Now with a rush the children of men
tackle the windswirled slope, their olive shirts
windplastered to their ribs...

It is only if "tackle" is read as something close to "attack" and if "olive
shirts" is taken to mean that the "children of men" are a group of soldiers
that the poem is about war and its effects. The "children of men" are
described as rushing "to meet the autumn? and the mention of the season
sends the poem on a new direction: if there is an autumn, there must
have been a summer. The summer becomes the previous season in the lives
of the "children of men", which is totally "out of mind" in their rush
towards the fall. The poem then shifts, with the lines

The counterpoint is shabby
that cannot suffer its own ridicule.

to a consideration of the mother of one of these children of men who waits,
trying still to somehow protect the son she has always sheltered:

intent to focus with her stricken wisdom the corded truth
about the son from whom so long
she beat away the leaden angels.

The "leaden angels" are not only bullets but all the other influences which
the mother has prevented from affecting her son. When and if her son returns,
he will be seasons removed from her, no longer what she was proud to have
raised.

The last part of the poem generalizes about time as it appears in the

76 23:273 (October, 1943), 153.
previous two sections. Time is metaphorically a river which is no less beautiful at one place on its course (the "summer" mentioned above) because bleakness awaits on the next bend (the "autumn" of the first section). The last lines of the poem return to the picture with which the poem began, but now the "children of men" have created the ridge; they have progressed a few more instants in their time. The poem, with its innumerable brands of meaning, defies any one interpretation. It is also a poem about time itself rather than being limited to time as it applies to mere human lives. In its complexity "Mutable Hearts" is much more like Avison's other poems than it is like the other war poems in The Canadian Forum.

In contrast with the indirect approach of these poets, to whom war is a part of the emotional or intellectual environment of the thinking and reacting human, is the approach of the poets who write more directly out of their own experience, where war is as much a physical as an emotional reality. One of these is Murray Bonnycastle, who is one of a group of war poets whose very promising war poems appeared only once or twice in the Forum. Bonnycastle's one war poem in The Canadian Forum is "Plane Formations", 77 which presents a lucid vision of the planes as perfect and self-sufficient entities, "freed of complicating neurosis of this present time/ triumphant in cold unconsciousness." Other aspects of the war are presented by Margaret Crosland, whose "Overseas" 78 appeared in the July, 1944 issue, followed later by four more war poems: "Broken City", "These Women", "Swift Mnemonic" and "Warning." 79 These poems are directly presented experiences of war. For example, "Broken City" is about a bombed-out town which, in its total destruction, seems to shun even summer:

77 24:287 (December, 1944), 204.
78 24:282 (July, 1944), 91.
79 25:297 (October, 1945), 164.
No repleteness of summer came
to a city of shattered windows
and darkened streets, for even the stars
could see we had no penitence.

and "Warning" describes an air-raid alarm in the middle of the night. The poems are sharply realized pictures in which the emotion evoked depends largely on the clarity of the photograph presented. "These Women" is interesting in that it treats a theme very similar to one of Bertram Warr's poems, "War Widow." Margaret Crosland describes the women "who dare not think but know that someone's dead" as living in "a little icy world alone", very similar imagery to Warr's description of the widow who looks at other people as if through the glass of some isolating but transparent cell.

Raymond Souster, another war poet whose poems are close to his own experience, contributed very little to The Canadian Forum during the war years, but a few of his poems appeared in the 1940 numbers. "Nocturnal", "Last Act, Last Scene," and "The Invaders" share a preoccupation with unnamed and invisible but clearly sensed horror that hovers about the edges of everyday life in war time. In "Nocturnal" the threat is fantasized away: "Let us pretend," says the poet,

That hate, that anger and violence,
Hunger and pain, hiding and revenge
Are gone forever.

But in "Last Act, Last Scene" the threat is realized and the world disintegrates. However, it disintegrates in mysterious slow motion, and the cause of the disaster is as vague as the threat. "The Invaders" is the poem which states the threat most openly. The poem is located in the

80 See pp. 106-110.
81 20:235 (August, 1940), 141.
82 20:239 (December, 1940), 279.
83 20:242 (March, 1941), 385.
country, and it is the peace of the farmland which is threatened, invaded:

the concentration camp, the madman radio,
bombing of civilians, those reported missing,
today's hidden terror, tomorrow's open outrage,

these are far from horses, cows, the color of hay on distant fields
but moving closer always to the heart,
closer to fear and death and agony without a name,

It is the very namelessness of the fear, the very fact that its presence is felt in the mind rather than actually seen in operation which makes it so pervasive.

Ralph Gustafson's rather literary style is the antithesis of that of Raymond Souster. Gustafson's war poetry shows a particular debt to Hopkins--his constant imitation of that poet is often quite strained. Ralph Gustafson published two war poems in The Canadian Forum: "Dedication"84 and "Epithalamium in Time of War,"85 which was also privately printed in a separate edition. "Dedication" begins with three stanzas reminiscent of the formal dedication of a monument. But the emotion of monumental memory is criticized: stones are "The hopeless giant alphabet." So these first stanzas have an almost satirical air, a tinge of the facetiousness of Klein's "Blue Print for a Monument of War":

They shall not be outdone in stones,
Generously, sculptured grief shall stand
In general, over numbered bones
With book and index near at hand
For particular sons.

The rest of the poem negates the idea of formal elegy which appears in the introductory stanzas. A specific individual is addressed, a "boy, locked in the grizzly hollow." The attitudes of "sculptured grief" are denied outright:

84 20:239 (December, 1940), 286.
O we have done with granite grief
And self denials: summing you
With the minutes' silence--two!

The boy's memorials become the places he has left, the half-finished fence line and the "abandoned hills" are seen as "fables for stout reading". The poem has a tendency, towards the end, to surround the unanswerable aspects of death with Hopkinsian rhetorical questions: for example, the meaning of

Our tongue how silent, muscles lithe
O land, hoist by the lag-end of little Deeds?

is almost indecipherable in any syntactical sense, though in context it provides a transition between a section dealing with "fables" left behind and possibilities of future remembrance. But the last stanza of the poem recovers from the rhetoric, and makes the poem convincing, and the final image

Of nearer things: how he was young,
And died, a silent writing down.

is most effective.

In "Epithalamium in the Time of War" Gustafson's models have tended to overpower him. The poem's rhyme and metric structure are rather formal. The language is that of Hopkins. Indeed there are times when the poem almost reads like a parody of that poet:

Manacle morning, make mandrake mute!
On June clap gyves and dungeon seed!

...Watch where a wing
A whorl, make use of wind and wheel...

Then take this dear, this double love
Whose loop and lunge on heaven's bollards Bind.

are only three of many examples of lines which sacrifice originality for fidelity of imitation.

The inclusive theme of the poem is the triumph of life and love over
death and hatred, which is expressed in several patterns of imagery. Images of the triumph of Christ; the omnipotence of God; the power of love, both God's and man's; and the power of the instinct towards life in nature, are all present. The stanzas ring the changes on these patterns, presenting them in a series of contrasts and combinations. For example, Christ's triumph and nature's are combined in "What cumbrous Caesar can repeal/ Golgotha's grass"? The images are also presented as paradoxes; for example, "In factories death is packed with palms/ Not harsh to bread and blessed wine." Eventually these patterns coalesce in the lines:

And so to martial hills and holms
   Where Magog holds a town in fee,
   Love's hater, index, darling comes.
Out of the monster cannon's seed
   The armoured epoch's gravid wombs
Make paradox, from spike and tree
   Glad words, read April palindromes!

in which they become inextricably intertwined. The poem, though interesting, is far too imitative to succeed on its own. The reader's attention is so often distracted by flourishes of imitative rhetoric, self-conscious double entendres and clever paradoxes, not to mention the odd figure which seems to cry out to be footnoted to its source, that the energy and impetus of the poem is completely lost in technique.

The weakness in Gustafson's war poetry is his tendency to become lost in the intricacies of his chosen style. Several other war poets in the magazine also display identifiable weaknesses, some of them without the counterbalancing strengths Gustafson can command. Carol Coates Cassidy, for example, wrote two war poems in the Forum which show a great range in quality. "The Unfilled Order"\(^\text{86}\) is a piece of cheap and calculated pathos, based on the contrived notion of a mother reordering a lost son through a heavenly mail order house called "Human Lives

\(^{86}\)20:234 (July, 1940), 120.
Incorporated." It is among the worst war poems the Forum printed, and has the air of an escapee from the Canadian Poetry Magazine. Mrs. Cassidy's other war poem from The Canadian Forum reveals her talent to the same extent that "The Unfilled Order" reveals her faults. "May, 1940"\(^{87}\) is a short poem in the imagistic tradition which this poet handles best, displaying much more control in this limiting genre. Two groups of related images are carefully paralleled: the images of actual spring, and the mental images of war. Each image, of place, of time, and of movement, of each set has its contrasting partner:

Here in this shade of silence
the river breaks its frozen hush,
and a robin bounds past on rubber feet
crisping the brittle leaves.

But in the brain
guns thunder the minutes down,
and marching feet
trample the ecstasy of May.

This pairing of images, it is interesting to notice, is the same technique that John F. Davidson's "Oriental Rain" uses so heavy-handedly. Here the contrast is a delicate and highly effective one.

Rita Adams was a frequent contributor to The Canadian Forum who was similar to Carol Coates Cassidy in that her poems varied between well controlled and lucid statements and affected sentimental pieces. Her work tended to be topical or occasional in its subject matter; for example, one of her contributions is called "An Affaire de Haine"\(^ {88}\) and is headed by two quotations from military heroes' after-dinner speeches advising hatred as a necessary ingredient in the war effort. The most interesting of Rita Adams' poems is "To John McCrae"\(^ {89}\) which is an apology

\(^{87}\) 20:238 (November, 1940), 239.
\(^{88}\) 22:260 (September, 1942), 176.
\(^{89}\) 22:262 (November, 1942), 299.
of a sort to that poet and his idealism, which the present poet describes as having been mistaken.

Gordon Le Claire's work is much more consistent. Like his other verse, Le Claire's war poems are technically competent but shallow. "Now When the Long Fire Frozen", a rather melodramatic comparison of a blood bath in Spain with a stirring Canadian spring, appears in the June, 1939 issue. "Blitzkreig: For the Munition Lords" is a similarly sensationalistic poem, ending with the epigram "The target of a baby's heart/ Is delicately small", and "Conscript", also a very short poem, deals with the loss to mankind when a "stripling poet" who has been conscripted is killed in battle: "Beauty conscripted at birth" the poet summarizes.

Patrick Waddington's war poems attempt much more than Le Claire's ever do. Waddington's career as a poet, in Canada at least, seems to have been short, his poems appearing only for a few years during and immediately after the war in The Canadian Forum, Contemporary Verse, Preview, and First Statement. Of his contributions to Canadian Forum, five of the seven are thematically related to the war. "Zero Hour" is composed of two sections which are related to each other with such a forcing of ideas that one is led to suspect the poem to have been the victim of some sort of misprint. The first section describes, using a series of rather derivative images, the rising tide of panic in Axis Europe as the war proceeds. Attached to this is a highly conventional coda of tribute to

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90 See pp. 104-105.
91 19:221, 92.
92 20:235 (August, 1940), 151.
93 20:236 (September, 1940), 186.
94 20:236 (September, 1940), 176.
the dead, complete with the usual unspecified "honour", "triumph of the spirit", and so on. As a whole the chief failure of the poem is its unoriginality, the poet's willingness to use whatever figure of speech comes first to his remembrance. "The Parade of Young Men" is marred by a similar conventionality. The poet has chosen to construct his entire poem around the repeated aphorism, "Those whom the gods love die young." In this poem, however, the sense of the emotional climate of a generation which the poet is trying to create does come through. The "young men" in the poem are on a night's foray for excitement which parallels their day's military manoeuvres, but what they seek eludes them:

Dogged each by separate death, from dark to light
Their unexperienced love and quick despair
Seeks for an unknown name.

Again in this poem the images used seem derivative and unoriginal. In the second stanza for example the young men's physical environment is suddenly described in terms of physical imagery which is totally unprepared for; it is as if the image was included because every modern poem must contain at least one of this type: "The calcined air/ Dry to the touch as rasping bone on bone." The other imagery in the poem ("startled inspiration of the sight", "Companioned by their/Unremitting dreams") is much more abstractly conceived than the dry bone image. "Ice Age" is the best of Patrick Waddington's poetic comments on the war in The Canadian Forum. This poem negates the heroics of "Zero Hour" by replacing that poem's concern for the dead with concern for those whose lives, through war, have become living deaths:

Let us, the living, shed
Tears for the living, not the dead
Though glorious; those who remain
Our namesakes are all men/

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9520:238 (February, 1941), 239.
9623:272 (September, 1943), 138.
Whose days scooped out of darkness rain with pain
Common as spilt blood, as shattered bones...

The imagery in this poem is not over-profuse, and the poem is controlled
and unified by its theme. "Canadian Journey" is Patrick Waddington's
"Canadian" poem. It has affinities to P. K. Page's "The Traveller" and James Wreford's "Kimmand Lake." Like "The Traveller", "Canadian
Journey" is about the quality of life in Canada for the working class, with
a miner's son as the type of "the worker". Waddington's miner is deliber-
ately typical rather than individualized:

He came from Timmins, Rouyn or Noranda,
Born in a shack with half a dozen others
Close by the pithead...

The poem has a propagandist air, probably because of the rather heavy-handed
inclusion of such details as the miner's boss, "Under an umbrella in
Bermuda...distant as God..." and a strike episode in which the men are
defeated by management's "well trained scabs." The end of the first phase
of the "journey" comes when "In thirty-nine/ He hitch-hiked south and
joined the army." The second section of the poem is a kind of exalted
prophecy. Typical lines are:

...Now on the crest of history
On the flood that brims beyond the final dykes
He rides a future that will not stop
Before a different death and stronger weapons.

The poem ends with an apotheosis of the socialist Canada to come. It is the
naïveté of the poem which is its most striking feature, especially in the
images of the glowing future which proliferate at the end.

Patrick Waddington's poems as they appear in The Canadian Forum have
a tendency to descend into the conventional rhetoric of whatever ideas are

97 24:286 (November, 1944), 186-7.
98 See pp. 87-89.
99 See p. '98.
his themes. Read with attention, the poems are like medleys of popular ideas in images borrowed or adapted from other places.

It must be mentioned that popular sentimental poetry was not entirely excluded from the Forum; though it did avoid the excesses of poetical patriotism, the Forum's war poetry was not entirely free of the kind of sentimentality and overreaction which filled the pages of the Canadian Poetry Magazine. A good example of this type of poem is Marguerite Wyke's "Death of an Airman," which depicts, with much pathos, the last few moments in the life of a pilot about to crash ("only a boy in a broken plane," sobs the poet). Also of this type is P. M. Beatt's "War Women" which ends with a pretentious and unexpected allusion to the Lysistrata.

Generally the war poetry in The Canadian Forum is an eclectic sampling of the kinds of writing that the war provoked in Canada, though proportionally the poems of empty and pretentious patriotism, sentimentality and nostalgia which flooded the newspapers, popular magazines, and the Canadian Poetry Magazine are underrepresented. In the early war years the best war poems in The Canadian Forum are those of well-known writers who contributed during the thirties as well, such as E. J. Pratt, A. M. Klein and A. J. M. Smith, but later the younger poets who were beginning to make their reputations also contributed excellent work (the exception to this pattern is Raymond Souster, who does not appear in the magazine after 1940). The uniqueness of the war poetry in The Canadian Forum as a body is probably in the large number of the poems which employ a satirical or ironical approach rather than in any particular pattern of ideas.

101 20:239 (December, 1940), 278.
IV. WAR POETRY IN CONTEMPORARY VERSE
Though it was published from the west coast, *Contemporary Verse* was never either a regional or a group magazine. Alan Crawley received the work of most of the modern Canadian poets at one time or another, and he seems to have chosen without regard for the location of the poet. *Contemporary Verse* was very much its editor's magazine; the editorial choices he makes reveal Alan Crawley as an intelligent and perceptive reader. It was undoubtedly his unfailing sense and good taste which resulted in the high standards of the work appearing in the magazine. Unlike the two Montreal magazines which began publishing a short time later, *Contemporary Verse* was not a group's magazine; though there was a "founding committee" which set the project in motion, there was no group of poets for whom the magazine was a mouthpiece.

At first, war poetry in *Contemporary Verse* was mainly by established modern poets, such as Dorothy Livesay, Ralph Gustafson, and Robert Finch. Later, contributions from the *Preview* group appeared, and from the younger poets associated with *First Statement*. A few traditionalist poets are printed, too, such as Audrey Alexandra Brown and A. M. Stephen.

The first issue of the magazine contains a most impressive list of contributors. There are poems from Earle Birney, Anne Marriott, and Dorothy Livesay, three established writers of the new poetry, and from A. J. M. Smith, its longtime arbiter, champion and critic. P. K. Page contributed two poems. Floris Clark McLaren and Doris Ferne, two west coast contributors whose work appears frequently in *Contemporary Verse*, also appeared. Several of the poems, such as "The Child Looks Out" and "Hands", had been previously published in other magazines.

Some of P. K. Page's earliest published work appears in *Contemporary Verse*, and because this time in Page's development as a poet was something of
a turning point, these poems are interesting. In the first issue of the magazine, her poems are "Ecce Homo"\(^1\) and "The Crow".\(^2\) The wartime setting impinges only slightly upon the personal epiphany described in "Ecce Homo", which tells of the importance to the poet of her first exposure to Epstein's work of the same title. "The Crow" is a terse, imagistic sketch of a crow which becomes a kind of universal symbol of horror. The crow's movement is described in terms of the waves of air he rides, and against the exhuberance of his airy environment the crow, a most sinister figure, is silhouetted:

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there,
like a church-warden like a stiff,
turn-the-eye-inwards, old man
in a cut-away, in a must,
stands the crow.
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Though both of these poems effectively convey their subjects, one an intellectual awakening, and the other an evocative and sinister image, neither of them is characteristic of the poet's later work; they do not have the layering of images, the characteristic fusion of the animate personality with its inanimate environment, and the intense concern with the conscious and unconscious aspects of personality which one associates with P. K. Page.

But in her next poem from *Contemporary Verse*, Page has obviously begun to employ these characteristic techniques. "The Traveller"\(^3\) appears in *Contemporary Verse* number six. By this time, the influence of her association with the *Preview* group and her absorption of some of the methods of the contemporary English writers is becoming felt in her work. "The Traveller" is the poetic log of the journey made by a character named Cullen. Cullen's journey is from infancy to battle, and he travels by a series of negative reactions. The tense ambiguity of the imagery is very

\(^1\) (September, 1941), 15.
\(^2\) (September, 1941), 14.
\(^3\) (December, 1942), 7-9.
much in the poet's later style. When Cullen leaves his school days, for example, his action is described in the following lines:

Cullen wrote a note on his plate with the yolk of his egg saying he hardly expected to come back...

The phrase "the yolk of his egg" associates the school with a protecting egg shell, easily broken by the emerging embryo. It reflects on Cullen himself --the boy is just emerging from his childhood, only an embryo, a wet and helpless chick. The phrase also has overtones of the schoolboy's joke of using one's boarding school food to write slogans on any appropriate surfaces. P. K. Page describes Cullen's journey to the city and the oppression and misery he sees and reacts against. Here societal concerns appear in the poetry: the "pink enamel of sales girls" is seen to "chip and harden" as they sell luxury items they covet, but will never be able to afford for themselves:

lovely as wind blowing imagined hair,
those webs for the flesh that they would never wear.

Cullen tries next to escape the commercial world through the theatre. He thinks he had "discovered his escape", but backstage, he finds "beauty a mirage" and "fragrance fictionary". The next world in Cullen's symbolic journey is literary--

He struggled with the foothills of the Times until he learned to walk between the lines.
Tried out the seasons then, found April cruel--
(there had been no Eliot in his books at school)

Eventually Cullen leaves the city, where he finds a momentary peace, which is expressed through images of his absorption into the sea-side environment which he has chosen as his refuge:

Sea was his mirror and he saw himself twisted as rope and fretted with the ripples--

He floated a day in stillness, felt the grass grow in his arable body...

But even here Cullen finds something to repel him--the women's tongues tat
"shrouds for their absent neighbours". The men, "fired with lemon extract and bootlegged rum", are gigantic savages. Returning to the larger world Cullen discovers the year is 1939, and, inevitably, enlists:

He knew there was a reason but couldn't find it and walked to battle half an inch behind it.

The imagery is more diffuse in this poem than in many of the poet's subsequent contributions to Preview and First Statement, and sometimes there are too many of them emphasizing one particular sickness Cullen sees. But the very diffuseness of the images with all their multiple connotations enlarges Cullen's summary history to a significance beyond the individual. Cullen, as well as being one easily damaged consciousness trying to protect itself, is also a whole alienated generation. After "The Traveller" in Contemporary Verse, P. K. Page's work is mainly to be found in the two Montreal-based little magazines. "Schizophrenic", "Average", and "Round Trip", her later poems in this magazine, show the concern with the subconscious life which characterizes her later work.

Floris Clark McLaren's writing has several characteristics which are interesting in that they are so typical of the development of poetry and the Canadian poetic response to the war. McLaren's poems at the beginning of the war show a preoccupation with war's effects on the social climate, with its moral and ethical implications and with the location of responsibility for it. Later the focus of her poems shifts from societal to individual concerns, in the same way but not so markedly as P. K. Page's does. Floris Clark McLaren's war poetry has two characteristics which are typical of Canadian war poetry: it tends to deal with the changes in man's conception of the order of the universe which the war forces upon him; and it continually returns to the idea that there is no defence from these consequences of war, they have ended the old world people lived in, even though the outward tranquillity of a Canadian landscape not blasted by war
does not, apparently, reflect the fact.

"No Lock, No Light"\(^4\) is about the futility of setting up islands of comfort and personal security in a setting where the destructive force of bombs is present. The door is closed against the dark, the heavy blinds are pulled, wine and glasses are set, when suddenly the door is gone, the blind shredded, and the speaker buried under rubble. The awaited loved one becomes a rescuer. The poem would be a mere melodramatic incident, such as one would expect to find in the *Canadian Poetry Magazine*, except that a double meaning is maintained throughout. The blinds in the first part of the poem were drawn "Across the heart", and "little cones of security" were burned in the room. Thus the bomb blast destroys a mental as well as a physical room, and the last lines

No lock for splintered door: no shaded light:
Your wavering pocket-torch against the night.

are an affirmation of the comfort, flickering and easily blotted out though it may be, of a personal relationship in a hostile world.

"The pity of war, the pity war distilled"\(^5\) is a three part sequence which is also thematically concerned with some kind of emotional protection against the time. McLaren makes use of Wilfred Owen's conception of pity as the one emotion which war does not make ridiculous. In the first section of the poem, the importance of the concept is defined:

Hold fast that word: hold it against the days
The bludgeoning days that hammer one by one...

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Go tell your implacable heart if pity fail
Then peace whenever come must be too late.

\(^4\) 1 (September, 1942), 7.
\(^5\) 6 (December, 1942), 3-4.
The second section examines the probability that the power of pity will not be enough to "resolve/To action:"

Signal unheard, messenger not admitted,
May be (0 must not be) our last
Our fatal treason.

The third section is not integral to the first two, and considers the consequence of the war in terms of the emotional change it has made in mankind: here appears again the pattern common to so much Canadian war poetry, that of the presence of the war somehow affecting even the scenes of natural tranquillity and peace which were still outwardly unaffected in a country where the war did not physically intrude. To this poet a change has occurred which morally affects the whole human race:

Our world died then; strange that we did not know:
Criminal not to know: our personal share
Of the larger guilt...

and brings the war to every person's doorstep:

...the arc
Becomes the centre: every bomb falls here;
No matted juniper's inadequate shield
Cover the naked heart; no glacial stone
Set barricade to this destroying time.

It is interesting to notice here how close these lines are to Livesay's from "Invasion":

Shrill the bomb bursts. The flare falls
On us. On you. We laid our mines long since.6

"No More the Slow Stream"7, with its analogy between life before the war and during it and a stream transformed from a gentle brook to a raging torrent by the floods of spring, is identical in theme to the last section of "The pity of war, the pity war distilled."

In the eleventh number Floris Clark McLaren published two more war

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6 See p. 73.
7 2 (December, 1941), 17.
poems. "These are the Boys" is about the war dead, and expresses, in terms of rather standard images, the hope that the pity and shame of their deaths will be more permanent than the paper and ink upon and with which it is recorded. "Never the Easy Answer" is much more intellectual in its theme; it shows some tendency to use images which explain themselves, thus freeing the poem from specific analogies carefully explained by the poet. The poem's central metaphor concerns the uncertainty of direction in a world where morality has become relative:

Never the certain road; the sign's white arms
Pointing right angles: peace and the good world here.
Well-marked: soft shoulder, slippery when wet, beware.

Earle Birney was another important contributor to *Contemporary Verse*. "Hands", though it had been previously published, was one of the poems in the magazine's impressive first issue. "War Winter", was one of the war poems in *David and Other Poems*. A considerable proportion of the poems in *Now Is Time*, Birney's definition of the experience of war, first appeared in *Contemporary Verse*, among them "Within These Caverned Days", "Lines for a Peace", "Skeleton in the Grass", "Young Veterans", "Time Bomb", "World Conference", and "Letter Home", which is titled "D-day" in *Now Is Time*.

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8 (July, 1944), 4.
9 (July, 1944), 5.
10 (September, 1941), 3.
11 (June, 1942), 14.
12 (Toronto: Ryerson, 1940), p. 33.
13 (Toronto: Ryerson, 1945).
14 (July, 1945), 5.
15 Ibid., p. 6.
16 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
17 (October, 1945), 6.
18 Ibid., p. 7.
19 Ibid.
20 (January, 1945), 3.
21 *Now Is Time*, p. 37.
Birney's poems are not, of course, limited to any one magazine. Indeed Birney seems to have submitted his poems at one time or another almost everywhere. Before he began contributing to *Contemporary Verse*, Birney appeared frequently in the *Canadian Poetry Magazine*, but except for "Dusk on English Bay"\(^\text{22}\) and "Monody on a Century"\(^\text{23}\), his poems in that magazine are the nature studies rather than the war poems. *The Canadian Forum* first published "For Steve",\(^\text{24}\) which was modified for publication in *Now Is Time*,\(^\text{25}\) and "V-E Night."\(^\text{26}\)

Birney's poems in *Contemporary Verse* show continual experiment in form. After the long smooth lines of "Hands" comes the heavily accented Old English rhythmic form of "War Winter". Birney's early critics were suspicious of his use of these imitative forms on the grounds of literary pretentiousness.\(^\text{27}\) In the case of "War Winter", the compounded nouns which are so apt to the subject and integral to the poem could never have been used outside the rhythmic pattern in which the use of such words originally developed, so that Birney's use of the whole form is very effective. In "Letter Home", Birney uses partial rhymes, a formal detail of which he was particularly fond, as well as full rhymes in a very irregular pattern and lines of varying length. The effect is that of a pattern which is recognizable but indefinable. In "Within These Caverned Days", the Old English habit of compounding words again appears, but here perhaps the critics could be justified, because the coined words are quite obtrusive when they appear in fairly regular tetrameter lines. "Skeleton in the Grass" exhibits another formal departure—partial rhymes are

\(^{22}\) 5:1 (September, 1940), 25.
\(^{23}\) Ibid., p. 26.
\(^{24}\) 24:283 (August, 1944), 112.
\(^{25}\) *Now Is Time*, pp. 29-33.
\(^{26}\) 25:295 (August, 1945), 118.
used on lines that are markedly end stopped with two accented syllables. "Lines For a Peace" is in very regular alternately rhymed lines--this and its approach to the subject give it a flavour of E. J. Pratt. "Time Bomb" and "World Conference" are similar. In both these poems, Birney uses regular metric patterns of three and four-foot lines with alternating rhymes, which accounts for some of their similarity to Pratt's poems on closely related subjects. "Young Veterans" is like "Skeleton in the Grass" in that its lines are very definitely end-stopped, a characteristic which, with the longer lines and reflective style of "Young Veterans" makes the poem into a series of separate though related statements.

Thematically, the war poems in Contemporary Verse show several recurring patterns. "Hands" is based on the conception of nature as a metaphor for man's conflict, an idea that is also important to another of Birney's early war poems, "Dusk on the Bay." The pattern of nature being a metaphor for man also appears in "War Winter", where the relationship goes beyond a metaphorical one almost to a causal one; and also in "Letter Home."

"Lines for a Peace", "Time Bomb" and "World Conference", besides showing Pratt's influence in their form, also have a similar approach to Pratt's when considering the problem of war--which is seen in both these poems and many of Pratt's as a result of the bestial capabilities still lingering in man's nature. Also, both poets emphasize the importance of man's will--it is man's indomitable will which is his hope for a more "human" future. This idea that man's evolutionary progress is away from wars is also found in the last stanza of "Young Veterans", expressed in most Pratt-like terms:

The soldiers merge and move with all of us toward whatever mystery bemused that fatal pliant fish who first forgot the sea.
These particular patterns, the ideas of nature as a metaphor for man, and of war as something man must, in the evolutionary scheme of things, outgrow, are also discernable in many of the other poems in *Now Is Time*. The only kind of poem which is important in *Now Is Time* that is not represented in *Contemporary Verse* is the narrative of the individual, such as Joe Harris in the poem of the same name and Steve in "For Steve", whose life reflects the patterns of the time.

Though he was not as frequent a contributor to the magazine as Earle Birney, a few of A. M. Klein's war poems were published in *Contemporary Verse*, but like most of his war poems in *The Canadian Forum*, these poems are not among the ones Klein chose to include in his collections. "Desideratum" and "Not All the Perfumes of Arabia" appear in the same edition of *Contemporary Verse*. "Desideratum" is a macabre piece of whimsey: the poet speculates on the joys attainable to man if the parts of his body could live independently of each other. He envisions his head, gloriously free of his perspiring, excreting, digesting body. "Not All the Perfumes of Arabia" is also very limited in its scope, but perfectly controlled within those limits. The theme of the poem is that as far as the senses are concerned, the worst horrors of war must enter the brain by way of the sense of smell. The poet can smell "the smell of fear" even in the radio broadcaster's measured tones. The poem's middle section gives the visions and their accompanying smell, which pass through the listener's mind during the news broadcast. To capture the speed and vividness of these responses Klein speeds the poem up by using shorter lines of more regular rhythm and full rhyme. The effect is that of a waterfall of evil, all accompanied by

28 (June, 1943), 3.
29 Ibid., p. 4.
distinctive smells, until the broadcast ends, and the tempo of the poem re­
laxes;

The voice of the announcer, like Mephisto’s in the play
Crackles and dies—Within the vibrating room,
Fear, and the brimstone fume.

Where Klein is concerned with emotional states resulting from the war,
L. A. MacKay deals with the moral state which allowed war to come about. There
are two of MacKay’s terse war poems in the journal: “Rend Your Heart and Not
Your Garments,”30 and “Untimely Tract for An Intractible Time.”31 The first
is about the responsibility for the war, and MacKay, like A. J. M. Smith,
indicts the entire human race:

Pity the innocent. There are none innocent, none.
Not all the quiet kindly men of good will.
We were weak who should have been strong, we were disunited
We were smug, and lazy, and gullible, and shortsighted.
Whatever we did, there was more we should have done
Before there was nothing left to do but kill.

The diction is close to carefully-modulated prose, and devoid of any
figurative decoration, a bald and uncompromising self-accusation. "Untimely
Tract for an Intractible Time" is allegorical in structure, a kind of verse-
parable of disillusionment. MacKay draws a parallel between the "graceless
years" and a bog, where "weedy memories the long channels clog." The poet’s
disillusionment appears in the colour his eyes project into things—where
others see "the bright wings budding marvelously/ Under the shadowy chrysalis"
the poet sees "an old smake shedding an old skin."

A contrast to L. A. MacKay’s simplicity and spareness of language is the
poetry of James Wreford, who contributed several war poems to the magazine.
Wreford uses words intricately, to produce complex, many-layered texture of
language. Both in form and style Wreford’s poetry, especially this early work,
is markedly imitative of Auden. Two war poems by James Wreford appear in the 
fourth number of *Contemporary Verse*: "Early Willows"\textsuperscript{32} and "Kirkland Lake."\textsuperscript{33} 
The predominant tone of the first two poems is a cold anger at the social in-
justice of the war, which Wreford sees as another infliction put upon the 
working class by the bourgeoisie. "Early Willows" uses nature imagery in its 
expression of anger. The willows are "too soon" because they herald a spring 
which, in terms of human society, will not come until there is a revolt 
against "the winter mind." Wreford sees the times as wintery and the willows 
signal as inappropriate:

\begin{quote}
Too soon you flag the faltering hope, 
or burnish up the pale desire,  
thrust out the clenched fist and too soon  
explode the marsh with fire.

Time shall not see you nest the song 
or hold the purple eggs of love,  
for war has still to glut the beak,  
and peace has lost its dove.

Let not another green thing grow  
the rivers row or the West Wind blow,  
for the polar front has carried down  
the latitude of snow.
\end{quote}

The imagery is particularly effective: the affirmation of the nesting song, 
and the "eggs of love" is delayed, cancelled to an indefinite future because 
of war, which is associated with a "polar front" bringing the "latitude of 
snow" south to engulf the premature spring of the willows. In the optimistic 
ending of the poem, the early willow shoot is seen there as a signal to rebel 
against the "Chilean man", against the "thundering machine" and the "winter 

time mind". In that time

\begin{quote}
our snow-bound world with shadowed faith  
if premature the not less true  
green of that far off common earth  
at last will credit you.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{32} 4 (June, 1942), 5-6.  
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., pp. 6-7.
The fusion of the nature imagery with political idealism is highly skillful; the parallel between the hoped-for but still distant spring and the similar hope of political awakening is made simply but firmly.

"Kirkland Lake" is more explicitly social in theme. The "we" of the poem is the working class, represented by the miners at Kirkland Lake. The poem is a forthright refusal on the part of the oppressed to be killed in a war for a freedom they have never had:

we wonder why we have to die
who living, were valued at a wage
that starved our youth and murdered age

let freemen die, but why should we
who toil to set the rich on high
three shifts beneath the smoking sky.

These poems are typical of Wreford's work of the early forties, much influenced by the English leftist poets and reinforced by his contact with the Preview group in Montreal.

Wreford contributes other poems later to Contemporary Verse, but these are lyrics about interpersonal relations or philosophical questions. The social consciousness which informed Wreford's early work is no longer the main impulse of his poetry. The world situation appears only as it impinges upon the inner landscape of the poet's mind, as in "The Mental Butterfly" and "To Lucasta Today." 34

In contrast to Wreford's war poetry, Raymond Souster's tends to be direct realization of experience rather than imaginary constructions or intellectual considerations. The element of pervasive fear, which appeared in his earlier contributions to Canadian Forum is not apparent here—the fear seems to have been replaced by a pervasive alienation. Time is also important. Souster's poems are often frozen moments whose capture and recording is in

34 See pp. 48 & 49.
itself commentary enough on the segment of time under observation. "Home Front"\textsuperscript{35} is the first of Souster's poems to appear in \textit{Contemporary Verse}. The point in time captured here is a double one: the same segment of time finds an airman "burnt crisp as a cinder" or with his "chest ripped, waiting for the bugs", and his friend, at home and at leisure, watching a movie, making love to his girl. "Poem"\textsuperscript{36} is also centred on a moment in time. This moment is the second when the sleep of all the men in a barrack is shattered by a siren. The siren shatters more than one dream—it is followed by "the sound/ Of all the boys coming out of their dreams right after me...", but the poet's particular dream has been one of escape from the world of the barracks to a different time and place—an island, an amusement park, which is in turn avoided for a quiet walk with a lover under willow trees. The moment in the dream which dissolves back into the moment in the barracks is caught with a light irony and humour.

This lightness of touch is absent from "The University",\textsuperscript{37} which is essentially a piece of nostalgia. The experiences which appear are recollections which have the sentimental haziness conferred by distance in time. Experiences which were frustrating at the time become "bitter-sweet memories" when viewed from a distance. The appeal of the nostalgia is so strong that the poet's pose of viewing the memories of youth from a cynical maturity becomes just that: a pose -- the emotional reality is the youthful memory, not the cynical maturity. Consequently, when the poet says

\begin{quote}
Our hopes and dreams--they were greater, O more wonderful
And so more impossible than anyone had ever dreamed,
\end{quote}

the impression is that the youthful dreams were the real ones, that they are

\textsuperscript{35} 3 (March, 1942), 13.
\textsuperscript{36} 13 (April, 1945), 9.
\textsuperscript{37} 18 (July, 1946), 14.
still being sought, that the poet has not reconciled himself to their impossi-

bility though he has adopted the outward form of cynicism. So the poet is

willing to be taken in by the past—the old barracks are "cursed-loved", the

officers "sometimes forgot their upstart place/ And were men," the sex in the
dancehalls was "cheap, but always honest and full-giving".

"The Hangers" is concerned again with a moment in time—this time the

one which marks the "birth" of bombers from their hangar-wombs. The poem is

purely descriptive, showing first the nightlong blaze of lights as the mechanics
work on the planes, working up gradually to the opening of the "great doors"
and the emergence of the bombers. But their grace is deceptive, their beauty
in flight is one which

...the true heart, the seeing eye denies,
Knowing the mockery rained from smiling skies.

This malignant beauty of the machines of destruction is also the theme: of
Murray Bonnycastle's "Plane Formations".

Some of Souster's poems in Contemporary Verse deal with the alienation
and hopelessness felt by the individual, a powerless cipher in a society at
war. "Roots", for example, has as its theme the compulsive longing of
modern man for the roots he has lost. Personal commitment is seen as one
way to regain this lost integrity. In its last lines, the poem emphasizes
the contrast between the longed-for "roots" and the world's instability:

We could make better roots than any of them
Roots that would clutch the earth with simple joy
Of resting solidly on a quivering world.

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38 Ibid., p. 15.
39 See p. 76.
40 15 (October, 1945), 11.
The irony of solid roots in a quivering world is basic to the poem. Two other poems which also have themes relating to social alienation, and which also have sudden crystallization of meaning in the last lines, are "East End" and "Speakers, Columbus Circle." In these poems war is only the ultimate symptom of the failure of society in general to respond to the needs of the individuals of which it is composed.

Similarly direct realization of experience characterizes Vic Hopwood's two war poems in the magazine. One is "Ground Crew", a very concrete address to one of the planes the poet has readied for flight in his work as a member of a ground crew. The other is "To You, Dear Love", a simple message to a loved one which affirms the healing and strengthening power of love.

Heart-weary,
we in our time reach out for brotherhood
And our bond, too, just find a deeper claim
for loyalty than flesh and heart.

Both these poems, though limited in their scope are very effective pieces.

By number seven of Contemporary Verse the magazine had begun a policy of featuring in each issue a group of poems by a writer who had not been published in Contemporary Verse before. The issue's two new poets were Louis Dudek and James Dermott. Dudek's poems are very personal and deceptively simple realizations of incidents in everyday life in Montreal. Dermott's are three war poems, each with a different perspective. "The Killers" is a comparison between war in the past and present, quite straightforward in technique. The lines are irregularly rhymed, and the rhythm is also irregular. The descriptions of the old ways of conflict are vigorous, but seem to be hampered by the attempted rhyme and metre. The last stanza completes the

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41(15 (April, 1945), 8.
42(19 (October, 1946), 7.
43(14 (July, 1945), 4.
44(19 (October, 1946), 15.
45(7 (March, 1943), 12.
contrast between the old kind of war, which involved anger, fear, bloodlust—

at least some emotion—with the cold and efficient war of technology:

instead a gun,
To kill without the killer knowing,
The blasting bomb to burst without
The challenge for diversion first;
Slaying without anger, or even a shout
Of joy. Lust has lost its carnal thirst.

"Perspective" is unhampered by any attempt at rhyme or uniform line length, and is much more effective. All the imagery is of slowness—slow motion pictures, earth's turning, tidal ebb and flow, the movement of a glacier, and "earthcrawl at the sea's edge", so that the slowness of death between the time it is realized that death is inevitable and the time of actual decease can be felt. "Lines for a Healthy Despair" is actually a description of despair. The poet's heart is described as resting "On the narrow edge / Of inviolable nothing." Dermott's poems are preoccupied with death and despair, particularly as they are related to the world of modern technological warfare and his later contributions to *Contemporary Verse* reflect the same sensibility.

Three more of Dermott's war poems appear in the magazine. "As Regards Detonating" is an ironically contemplative piece on the manner and means of a bomb's functioning:

Bombs, it seems, do lack discrimination
Regarding sex or guilt or nationality,
And shrapnel plans no destination
Except expansion...

The imagery which follows this opening develops an almost artistic, aesthetically satisfying vision of explosions dismembering members of the human race. The bomb functioning as a machine, complete in all its actions. That Dermott describes the bomb in these scientific terms renders their destructive power

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46 Ibid., 12-13.
48 9 (January, 1944), 11.
The imagery Dermott uses to describe a bomb destroying a beautiful woman is an example of this technique:

Perhaps ingenious unity of dispersion
--Which is exploding, disarm the soft
Indulgent flesh to clumsy Venus
Which was woman's; her streaming aloft
And fountainous hair untimely shorn
(Along with part of head) by the chance
Impersonal machining of a foreign
Sort of robot barber-surgeon.

The bomb's machining is perfectly functional, its "dispersion" is "ingenious." That the bomb in this particular case blows a woman apart, in some other case strikes "unagile ages vanity/ Of having to die anyway, and soon," is of no consequence to the bomb's efficient performance of its function. The poem is a skillful macabre.

"Plaza Piece" is about a parade drill of soldiers. "One must be proud to kill with honor" says the poet. He then outlines the usefulness of military pomp in changing killing from murder to heroism. Again the subject is killing, and again the poet refuses to consider it in the proper wartime manner. "Rage's Transportation" is a more general poem, further removed from the details of war but comprehending instead its universal influence of corruption. Dermott's war poetry returns constantly to the physical horrors of death inflicted by war. They employ the macabre and grisly descriptions of death in order to reinforce this horror, which dominates most of Dermott's poetry at this time.

Patrick Waddington's two war poems in Contemporary Verse, "The Destroyers" and "Against This Time", are much more detached. "The Destroyers" draws a detailed analogy between the pathology of the body

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49 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
50 Ibid., p. 12.
51 Ibid., p. 12.
52 Ibid.
and of the world. Its imagery is medical. The "crawling armies" are like "bacillae" which are, like the armies, roused from relative dormance to destructive activity by a rise in temperature. So the spring, with its rain and melting snow, is only an improvement in growing conditions for the invading bacteria. The earth's cure of its parasites is, however, sure; the question is whether the "medicine of love" will mend the damage, or whether the earth will destroy its own parasites, leaving a landscape "lonely of life as the stratosphere." The healing power of love is also the positive element in "Against This Time," in which personal love is described as

Unguessed by gunmen, absent from their counsel;
And our infrequent joy as windstruck trees
That mingle side by side their urgent limbs
In transient touch above their loneliness.

Love is not seen as all-powerful, the "gunmen" go on with their plots, but it is at least a temporary relief from loneliness. These two poems each show much more unity of approach and maturity of technique than Patrick Waddington's contributions to the other magazines.

Ralph Gustafson is probably one of the magazine's most lyrical contributors, and among his poems here the theme of war does not receive much attention. In "Idyll for a Fool," however, Gustafson deals with a topic that recurs in Canadian war poetry: the unconcern of the natural world with the little disturbances of man. With generous use of the techniques of his model, Hopkins, Gustafson explores the combined repulsion and delight he feels in the quiet of a green-and-gold stagnant pool of water. He delights in its beauty, but he is also repulsed, because it is "outrageous" that the flagrant life of nature does not reflect the cataclysm of the war:

...great men die
Grieved with a question in the blood
And we are left a dream to gape on.

53 (September, 1942), 10.
In Contemporary Verse as in The Canadian Forum there are several poets whose war poems, though not hopelessly incompetent, are never quite successful. The prolific Gordon Le Claire appeared in Contemporary Verse as he did in the Canadian Forum and the Canadian Poetry Magazine, and, according to the acknowledgements in his 1939 book, Though Quick Souls Bleed, in more than sixty other periodicals and anthologies in Canada, the United States, and Britain. Gordon Le Claire's poetry is traditionally rhymed and metred, and his language is a formal poetic diction. His subject matter is usually topical, and he apparently had something to say on almost every public controversy. LeClaire's weakness is a kind of sensationalism that leads him to overdramatize his subjects: to write sentimentally about life's victims and melodramatically about its heroes. His skill with language often results in oversimplified and meaningless generalization, which sound melli- fluously beautiful but contain very little in the way of thought. Several of these flaws can be seen in "Woodcut in Colour" which concerns the Spanish Civil War and is a lurid tale of soldiers of three separate races who are captured while defending a ridge on the road to Madrid, hanged and then burned alive. An attempt at the grotesque is made by a ballad-like opening stanza:

Three vultures poised on an olive bough
Their ravening maws grew thinner
And they jostled each other in shrill alarm
While flames devoured their dinner.

This might perhaps have come off, except for LeClaire's insistence that it be taken seriously and on pointing a moral. The grotesque is turned to melodrama by the neat summation stanza:

54
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3 (March, 1942), 8.
The red the black and the yellow
All burned to white bonedust at last,
Their spirit a searchlight for Freedom
Beyond the pale of caste.

Doris Ferne is also one of the weaker contributors to the magazine.
"But One Tall Gable"\(^{56}\) is her contribution to the first issue. Though the poem ends with a denial of nostalgia—"I have no tears/ To shed for houses or for vanished years"—the basic impulse of the poem is nostalgia, as it builds its contrast between the poet's childhood in London, when children thought moonlight eerie and frightening, and present-day childhood in London, when moonlight is wonderful, because it means there will be no bombers. In the fourth number, her contribution is "On Some Canadian Verse,"\(^{57}\) a diatribe against poetry which does not involve itself with the war. The kind of poetry Doris Ferne objects to is seen as "sitting remote,/ regarding her own navel", a phrase which the poet is apparently impressed with, as it is repeated in the poem. The poet defines the proper task of poetry as:

not photographic,
but piercing of synthetic shibboleths,
feel for the future
pointing the ultimate goal.

a theory which is very close to Clara Bernhardt's "spiritual leadership" toward the "higher values behind the conflict."

In number ten, the poet contributes "Paschal Lamb,"\(^{58}\) a four-part poem which makes interesting use of the symbolism of the passover tradition and of the Jewish marriage ceremony to present a highly romanticized version of childhood's innocence, youth's passion, and woman's unbounded love. It ends with a section that sounds very much like a piece of D. H. Lawrence's prose, defining woman's "impartial love" as the "centrifugal force" which "holds all worlds together." Doris Fane's work in general

\(^{56}\) (September, 1941), 12.
\(^{57}\) (June, 1942), p. 15.
\(^{58}\) (April, 1944), 3-5.
exhibits a rather naive romanticism of attitude; emotion, whatever its source, is accepted uncritically and expressed without having been subjected to refinement or intellectual consideration.

H.A.V. Green's only contribution to the magazine is a long rambling poem, very much in the nature of a chatty friendly letter, called "Trying to Forget the War." The poem consists of the indigested impressions of a trip to the alpine country of the Rockies, and, after several pages of descriptions, attempts to draw a strained analogy between the inspiration afforded by the high alpine country and the heroism of a young soldier. At this point the poet grows rapturous, and begins to add exclamation marks and exhortations, and to sound distressingly like some of the thoughtless prattle from *Voices of Victory*. Another poem of similarly unrefined emotional response which found its way into the magazine is Marcia Harris' "Girl's Lament for a Dead Airman." The sentimentality of this poem is quite cloying. The poet speaks as a girl who sees her war sacrifice in terms of an unconceived baby daughter--"Others have given sons--But I have given a daughter." The poet goes on to exclaim:

Oh, the small dreamed one!
Oh, the pink shell one!
Oh, the fair curled one!

with the *Ladies' Home Journal* conviction that all babies born in North America are blond, dimpled and beautiful. Fortunately this kind of emotionizing is rather rare in the journal's pages.

*Contemporary Verse*, with the assistance of Earle Birney, performed a valuable service in recognizing the work of Bertram Warr. Birney brought Warr's poems, which had been sent to him by Warr's sister Mary, to Alan

59 2 (December, 1941), 9-11.
60 10 (April, 1944), 13.
Crawley, who featured them in his October, 1945 number. In the same issue appeared the announcement of a "Bertram Warr Memorial Award" of twenty-five dollars to be given to the best poem or group of poems submitted to Contemporary Verse during 1946.

Warr was first given attention as a significant poet in England, since he had left Canada in 1938; and it was there that all his war poetry was written and published. He appeared in several anthologies of war poetry and new poetry: This Living Stone (the Grey Walls Anthology of New Poems), Patricia Leward and Colin Strang's Poems of This War, and in John Pudney and Henry Treece's Air Force Poetry. One of Bertram Warr's war poems also was included in Oscar Williams' The War Poets. It was not until after his appearance in Contemporary Verse that his work was included in the Canadian Anthologies. A. J. M. Smith included some of Warr's poems in his second (1948) edition of the Book of Canadian Poetry. Later Ralph Gustafson included Warr in The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse, and Warr also was included in the 1954 revision of Canadian Poetry in English by Carman, Pierce and Rhodenizer. Recently Len Gasparini has compiled a collection of Bertram Warr's poems with a valuable introduction and a foreword by Earle Birney.

Alan Crawley chose four of Warr's poems for the October 1941 issue of

61 Though this anthology is mentioned by Alan Crawley in his list of Warr's poems (Contemporary Verse 15 (October, 1945), 18) the present writer was unable to discover any more about it.
63 (London: John Lane, 1944).
65 (Toronto: Gage, 1948), pp. 436-40.
his magazine: "Winter Stalks", "Death of an Elephant", "The Heart to Carry On", and "Stepney, 1941." Of these the first two were from Yet A Little Onwards, Warr's only collection of poems, published in 1941 by the Resurgam Younger Poets Series.

"Winter Stalks" is about loss—loss of life for those who die in war, but more importantly, loss of the hope of life for those who are left. Because of the metaphorical nature of the poem, the "stalks" have a breadth of implication which transcends identification with any specific group:

Dry, and brown-withered and silent, they that remain, the tall and the short leaning into one another, with no more pride.
They have delivered themselves; and seen the new life stride away, And all that is left is to be drawn down into the earth again.

The stalks are particular parents, a generation, and a whole society, but their specific parallels are of little importance, for what matters is the pathetic pattern war deaths have made of the lives of those who did not die. So much of their lives have gone with the dead that a transient "wild half hope", created by a passing wind, is as close to life as they can come. They are "waiting" to finish the business of dying. This sensitivity to the damage the war has done to the human ability simply to hope is evident in many of Warr's other poems.

"The Heart to Carry On" is a wistful and tender poem which is informed by the poet's consciousness that the war has preempted his free will as an individual along with that of millions of others. The "heart to carry on" is based on a kind of vague collective determination to endure, the hope for

69Ibid., p. 3.
70Ibid., p. 4. This poem is not strictly speaking a war poem. It is about the dignity of the elephant's legendary death.
71Ibid.
72Ibid., p. 5.
the single individual being very faint. Relevant to the mood of the poem is Birney's statement about Warr's refusal, in spite of his principles, to resist being conscripted into the R.A.F.:

But he made the decision, a harder one perhaps, to "compromise with the mass view," in hope of better days to come from the dialectic of war—though with diminishing hope of personal survival.\footnote{Preface to \textit{Acknowledgement to Life}, p. 10.}

"Stepney, 1941" is structured around a landscape of devastation. But here no monuments have been destroyed—only a section of row housing in a working class district. As Warr describes it:

\begin{quote}
Much as though some one had sung
'House, house, house, house, house,'
Row after row of times;
And each time one more sprung up
To shiver in the line...
\end{quote}

But the houses are only fronts, with doors, windows and inhabitants all gone and with walls "standing around regarding one another,/ Naked, as they bear the weight of shocked ceilings." The "shock" of seeing the houses pathetically, almost indecently open to the skies dominates the poem.

Though the four poems in \textit{Contemporary Verse} are fairly representative of Warr's work, there is one important aspect that is unrepresented: the socialistic convictions that gave Warr what hope for the future he had. These are never expressed in terms of poeticized doctrine, but only as a distant source of hope for change. The best example of this is "Working Class", which appeared in \textit{Yet A Little Onwards} and in Smith's 1946 \textit{Book of Canadian Poetry}.\footnote{Pp. 437-438.} This poem forms an interesting comparison to some of the poems of similar theme in \textit{Preview}.

Bertram Warr wrote in England by choice, though he was Canadian by nationality, and his experience of the war was more the English than the
Canadian one. His poems were known only in England while he was alive, and his posthumous appearance in *Contemporary Verse* and as a result in the later anthologies, stemmed from his sister's desire to see him at least recognized in Canada. But among Canadians who wrote war poetry Bertram Warr has few equals.
V. WAR POETRY IN PREVIEW
Patrick Anderson was the dominant force in the creation of *Preview*, the dominant editorial voice in its rather frequent statements of political and poetical position, and its most frequent contributor of creative work. Besides numerous poems, an occasional short story, and later, long excerpts from his journal, Anderson tended to publish statements of position and explanations of purpose which are very revealing, and sometimes entertaining.

As Desmond Pacey says, the most outstanding quality of the editorial views in *Preview* was the assumption, basic to many of the statements, that they were being written on the eve of a sort of socialist millennium; the conviction that a Marxist utopia was about to be established in each of the Western nations. Consequently, a great deal of time was spent defining the function and use of art in a socialist state and insisting on the importance of social purpose in poetry. Mere artistic merit is not enough: the poet's task is to reconcile his political ideals with his artistic aspiration, as the much-quoted opening editorial insists:

> all anti-fascists, we feel that the existence of a war between democratic culture and the paralysing forces of dictatorship only intensifies the writer's obligation to work. Now, more than ever, creative and experimental writing must be kept alive and there must be no retreat from the intellectual frontier, the poets among us look forward, perhaps optimistically, to a possible fusion between the lyric and didactic elements in modern verse, a combination of vivid, arresting imagery and the capacity to "sing" with social content and criticism.

Patrick Anderson was always conscious of this dichotomy between "singing" and "social criticism" as motivating forces in poetry. In one issue of *Preview*, each contributing poet's work is accompanied by an explanatory statement from the poets, and Anderson says about his "Winter

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In Montreal:

In this poem I have tried to express a social statement about Canada in terms that allow my essentially emotional and romantic nature free play.\(^3\)

But, even thematically, Anderson has great difficulty in reconciling the lyric with the political. In a Preview article in September, 1942, he restates the problem in greater detail while reviewing Spender's Ruins and Visions.\(^4\) Anderson uses a quotation from Karen Horney's The Neurotic Personality of Our Time to define the "tragic sense", which he considers the essential element in the poet's viewpoint: "In spite of all the happiness life can afford it is at the same time full of inescapable tragedy."\(^5\)

According to Anderson, this tragic sense inevitably interferes with the production of poetry for a social or political purpose.

Almost always the tragic attitude will conflict with the mass of articulate public opinion in war time, even though the greatest tragedies of all are being enacted. Morale requires a patriotic optimism, an ability to translate groups of men into abstractions, to move flags over maps, to withstand adverse news and to recognise the teleological aspects of death: by its very enormity it numbs responsive felling. Wilfred Owen's 'pity' is drowned out by the mass meeting or by Sholokov's vigorous plea for a 'Science of Hatred'. The poet often feels himself a sort of potential fifth columnist. He realizes only too well the confusion of war aims, the fact that we are using a bad system to combat a worse, while he tries to reconcile a struggle for freedom with reactionary leaders, and war as heroism with war as catastrophe and disaster. His only certainty is the despicable character of the Nazi death-in-life.\(^6\)

Though Anderson admits he can see no way of solving this dilemma, as he can find no sure formula for the necessary synthesis, he nevertheless castigates Spender for his lack of the "affirming flame" and for "the
detached and despairing note of the poems on war." As a possible contrast to what he objects to in Spender, Anderson mentions the "pithy little verses being distributed monthly amongst the Soviet troops," but he fails to pass any judgement on these, and can only say they "are good or bad...I imagine neither." 7

Patrick Anderson is taken to task for his comments on Spender by one Allan Anderson in the next issue of the magazine. Allan Anderson declares that Spender has actually achieved exactly the synthesis that Patrick Anderson demands, and what is more, achieved it long ago. 8 Patrick Anderson, of course, defends himself, 9 but it is interesting to notice that his defence consists mainly of a restatement of what he had said in the previous article. This time, however, he does identify two possible ways of escaping the conflict. The poet can reconcile the "tragic sense" with political ideals in two ways: by becoming a "definitely socialist writer", or by remaining

a semi-socialist, a liberal, a mystic or whatever, provided his work identifies itself so strongly with the masses, is so full of common humanity, that it succeeds in expressing the life, aims and dreams of the people. 10

The second alternative is the one Anderson prefers, of course, and the one he aims for in his own work--one of the most persistent and obvious intentions in his poetry is that of giving a voice to the inarticulate masses, and much of his objection to Auden and Spender is actually represented by what Anderson calls, "the reedy public school note:" 11: he sees their poetry as embodying the attitudes and experience of the privileged classes.

7 Ibid., p. 2.
8 "A Communication To the Editors of Preview," Preview 8 (October, 1942), 1-3.
9 "A Reply," Preview 8 (October, 1942), 3-5.
10 Ibid., p. 4.
11 "Stephen Spender and the Tragic Sense," p. 3.
Anderson always had difficulty in reconciling political and lyrical aims, however, and his attempts to identify with the "masses" lead him to not a few rather ridiculous compositions.

Anderson's "dilemma" stems from the acceptance of the political doctrine that art should serve the social function of education and politicization.  

This conception of poetry allows little scope for lyric urges, and Anderson's suggestion that poetry can overcome the conflict by giving expression to the humanity of the masses also sets up for the creative artist the limiting role of the poet as public prophet. Anderson's preoccupation with this problem informs many of the editorial statements of Preview; the solution to this dilemma was seen as part of the preparation of a place for poetry in the coming socialist world order.

In his eagerness to live up to his conception of the poet's role in the socialist state, Anderson perpetrated, during the summer of 1943, the "Victory Broadsheet," which reveals to what lengths Anderson was willing to go in order to do what he considered the poet's duty to be. He admonished his fellow-writers, "we must not consider the routine jobs of propaganda beneath our attention," and indeed, the contents of the "Victory Broadsheet" are just that. The broadsheet is dedicated "to the support of Canadian Morale," but the verses on it are such doggerel that even as propaganda they fail completely. This stanza from "Song for Canadians" is a good example:

Yet there's one thing bigger than Canada
And that's this thing called a People's War,
A struggle of Catholics, Protestants, Jews,
Of the Eskimo's kid and the Indian's papoose
And our friends in Britain and China--/

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12 In Preview 8 (October, 1942), p. 4, Anderson himself solemnly says of one poet's work: "the poems, like most good art - illumine and reinforce my socialism."

13 Preview 11 (February, 1943), 13.
It's mighty important 'cause if we lose
We won't get help from Hitler!

Patrick Anderson's poetry in Preview seems to arrange itself around three themes: Canada, "the masses", and war. Anderson has a geographical fascination with Canada: the ferocious winters, the abundance of uninhabited land and the general absence of the marks of long established civilization in the landscapes, both in and outside the cities, dominate his imagery whenever Canada is the subject of his poems. Characteristically, Anderson uses these aspects of the landscape as metaphors for the state of society as he sees it. Anderson's poems on the masses (or on the representative common man) sometimes display an unfortunate patronizing attitude, like that of an old-fashioned anthropologist describing the ways of some obscure primitive tribe. In these poems too, the fascinating climate and geography are a dominant source of metaphor. Of course the three themes are often interrelated, and imagery from Canada's geography and references to the latent power of the working class and the emergence of the socialist state are often found in Anderson's war poetry.

In Preview's first issue Anderson published two war poems: "New Dead"14 and "Portrait".15 "Portrait" deals with a deserter who rents a room in a boarding house. Anderson uses the landlady's furniture as a source of imagery to describe the young man's state of mind as he locks himself into his room and spends his days there in constant fear of discovery. "New Dead" is typical of Anderson's approach. After some preliminary metaphors on the subject of death in war ("these planted green in the forest of smoke and wire") Anderson interpolates a political meaning with almost bathetic suddenness:

14 1 (March, 1942), 5.
15 Ibid.
they are changed strangely by pain's metaphors, 
yet leave an unread book, who die for culture.

and then proceeds to interpret the political meaning in terms of the landscape around him, as poet: "In this green landscape see their landscape's failure." The series of metaphors relating to landscape are rather obscure, and the final one, "and then a bird is slowly flying out of the eyes of the dead," though vivid, is incomprehensible in terms of the movement of the poem as a unit, because no limitations are set on its infinite possibilities of meaning by the rest of the poem.

"Death of an Animal Man" is one of Anderson's biographical poems, like the well-known "Summer's Joe." The "animal man", however, is more of a representative type than is the more individualized "Joe". The "animal man" is realized with a long series of images of which this stanza is a typical section:

What can I say of him? except that he ate ceaselessly the mottled yard of his breath; That, when he stripped, his clothes crumpled in shadow upon the anatomy of chair and his watch ticked like a star under his pillow; That his nest was between the grave and columnar flight of elevators, lined with human hair, while the dark around was the history of his time.

The main problem in Anderson's work with this technique is his tendency to be random in his choice of metaphor—the figures are vivid enough in themselves, but they verge on contradicting each other. For example, in the section quoted above, "his clothes crumpled in shadow/upon the anatomy of chair" shows the strength of life in the animal man's physical presence, in that his anatomy reacts so differently with his clothes than the structure of some inanimate thing like the chair does. His bodily
vitality is so obvious when he strips that it is like a strong light source; his clothes are in shadow as soon as he takes them off. But the next image goes in a completely different direction: "and his watch/ticked like a star under his pillow" suggests eternity, but its connection with the animal man is not specified. The next lines turn to a new source of metaphor by describing the man's "nest...between the grave and columnarflight/ of elevators."

Now the man is not so much a vital presence, not so much an aspect of eternity, as a bird of some kind, who nests between life and death, or else in a tall building somewhere near the elevator shaft, depending on how one reads "grave". The "bird" lines his nest with "human hair". His own, with touching solicitude? That of his victims, in some cannibalistic ritual? Again the imagery is equivocal, because its ambiguity is entirely uncontrolled. The succeeding stanzas only add to the ambiguity, and multiply the confusion. Only the ending is unequivocal—"for all, all, all,/ lies now dissected on the battlefield." Admittedly this lack of cohesiveness in Anderson's imagery is usually found in poems where the aim is some sort of universality, where an inclusive view of a period or a representative person is being presented. But the use of too many and unrelated metaphors is one of Anderson's most frequent failings, especially in his earlier contributions to Preview.

"Love Poem" is similar in theme to both A. J. M. Smith's "The Dead" and Raymond Souster's "Home Front." In this poem the lovers are not so much haunted by the dead as the living are in A.J.M. Smith's war poems, or contrasted ironically with them, as in Souster's poem, but metaphorically composed of the dead: "O, love, your snowy limbs/ are galleries where blood and flesh are twined." As Smith characteristically builds up a mystical

179 (November, 1942), 6.
18 See p. 59.
19 See p. 99.
relationship between the living and the dead, Anderson characteristically builds up a metaphorical one. In this poem the imagery does cohere, all tending to make the lovers and the dead one flesh. But Anderson's politics intrude, and he tacks on an idealistic little conclusion:

Yet stand, You are as tall as Europe.
Yet stand, I am as tall as Asia.
Shall we have children?
Shall our children live in slavery or in peace?

This is a purely ideological tail added to a poem whose statement is entirely metaphorical. A poem like "The Airman" is more successful because it is very short and controlled by one metaphor—that of the airmen as nomads, each "mindful/ of tender flocks, his milk white wishes."

Patrick Anderson's poetic contribution to Preview 11, with its "Civilian Report" on the war is as much a statement of position as his prose one, and also self-consciously doctrinaire. The point of view of "In the City" is one of condescension. The poet stands in the city "with wood and frozen brick" around him and philosophizes on how this city is cut off from the real physical war and even the real ideological war: "The absence of moaning/ was marvellously terrible to me as I waited", he intones. But the poet eventually confirms his own involvement: "after all I was not a ghost but a real/participant—a citizen", thus bringing the ideological war, at least, home.

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20 These last lines are, understandably, the ones John Sutherland, in "Three New Poets" (editorial) First Statement 1:12 (undated), 3, uses as examples of the Preview poets at their most artificial to compare with the more direct statements of Dudek and Layton.
21 10 (January, 1943), 1.
22 Preview ran two "special" issues. One was number 11 (February, 1943), which contained one "Civilian Report" from each member of the group on some aspect of civilian wartime life with which they were involved; these included poems in some cases, notably that of P. K. Page, who accompanies her account of the lives of women office workers with one of her poems about the typists. The other was number 21 (September, 1944), which contained explanatory pieces by the poets to help readers with their poems, though not all who contributed to the issue participated in the project.
23 11 (February, 1943), 8.
"A Soldier," a much better poem, also appears in Preview 11. Anderson has labelled this poem "An Attempt". The nature of the attempt can be explained with the last words in his statement of position:

what could be more fascinating than the attempt to portray the combined effort of the United Nations --the colour and surge of East and West, the relationships between Pole and Yugoslav and Australian and Greek?...In a people's war the writer can feel at home.

In "Soldier" the imagery is more coherent than that in many of his previous poems, because, as in "The Airmen", the poem's structure is controlled by one metaphor. The representative soldier in the poem is always represented in terms of his clothes--whether he is shedding the clothes of peace or donning the clothes of war. Anderson uses an alliterative rhythm with considerable skill in this poem:

shop-smudged
On belly and breast, and stripped
and zithered and zipped up the spine
Casts clout and cancels place
diminishing like clothes...

--though the effect is a little heavy-handed. The final inspirational section, the inclusion of which is so often the downfall of Anderson's poems, is of course, propagandistic, but the poet has been more successful here at effecting a merger between poetry and propaganda without entirely obliterating the former. Though the last lines:

for, soldier, you're a worker,
a whole earth you wear,
and your class is struggling, rising,
fighting everywhere.

amount to a half-translated propaganda release, the strength of the first part of the poem is almost enough to carry them.

"Education" is one of a type of poem found frequently in Preview--the historical survey poem. The imagery suggests the growth from boyhood

24 Ibid., p. 13.
25 Ibid., p. 11.
26 13 (May, 1943), 4.
through adolescence to painful adulthood of a generation. The ending is very effective, with its juxtaposition of the young man or generation's attainment of physical maturity with his realization of the diseased state of the world.

"Poem"\(^{27}\) and "Bombing Berlin"\(^{28}\) are both typical poems, "Poem" because here Anderson is once more obsessed with the apparent absence of war in Canada, and again uses weather as a metaphor for war; and "Bombing Berlin" because of the characteristically clever image of the swastika as a cross which the Nazis "tried to bend into a more self-contained shape."

"Eyes"\(^{29}\) is one of Anderson's best war poems, perhaps because no ideological conversion or inspiration is attempted; the poem is limited to the description of the destruction of one boy, who, ironically, seems to thrive on war. Anderson manipulates imagery of eyes until at the end it is the sky that is "God what a forget-me-not or other etcetera and angelic blue" and the boy's eyes are "rotted black" as though he had, finally, "come out and looked."

Anderson here achieves the cohesiveness which is missing in the early "New Dead", which also employs "eye" imagery.

Though Neufville Shaw (another member of the original *Preview* group, though his connection with the magazine apparently ended after number 17, when his name disappears from both cover and contents) publishes only a few poems in *Preview*, his poetic voice is characterized by a seasoned maturity which makes Patrick Anderson's early work seem adolescently overenthusiastic. Judging by his sketch in the "Civilian Report" of *Preview* 11, Neufville Shaw's political affiliations were as solidly with the Labour Movement as Anderson's were, but Shaw does not spend any lines of his poetry on "the routine jobs of propaganda." His war poems are particularly interesting, for their concentration on the physical reality of death in war.

\(^{27}\) 18 (February, 1944), 7.
\(^{28}\) 18 (February, 1944), 9.
\(^{29}\) 20 (May, 1944), 8.
Full of bodies gradually mingling with the sea in which they were drowned, of human remains assuming "the character of mud", and of dead faces changing to leather, they constantly emphasize the macabre, though a few poems do take a contrasting pensively intellectual approach.

The horror of bodily dissolation predominates in the first three of his war poems to appear in Preview. "Drowned Sailor"\(^{30}\) is reminiscent of Eliot's Phlebas:

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Brown was the sea weed
That ringed his frigid ear
And distant the rasp
Of the claw upon his cold snowbone.
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"For A.H."\(^{31}\) presents the ghost of the commemorated fighter continuing the struggle, a grisly automaton--

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Now he marches, three axes in his skull,
And wires viced about his splintered head...
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"Obituary Without End"\(^{32}\) makes obsessive use of the numbers of the dead: they are "stacked up like/ Railway tracks" and are difficult to count, because they

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in a million minute ways,  
Change to grass, to alms, to oaks;  
And then to mice or stoats or grass again.
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But the more philosophical of Shaw's poems are quiet and resigned in tone.

"Nouvella"\(^{33}\) looks back on the Spanish conflict. It begins "One last tired regret" and the weariness of the opening line pervades the whole poem though it moves towards a vague promise at the end. "Platitudes of Necessity"\(^{34}\) is a poem dealing with the role of an intellectual in war time. Though totally skeptical of all prearranged formulae of belief, the poet at the same time is forced to concede their necessity in a physical conflict. For himself, the poet remains skeptical--the intellectual role that the poem defines is

\(^{30}\) (April, 1942), 4.
\(^{31}\) (July, 1942), 5.
\(^{32}\) (August, 1942), 3.
\(^{33}\) (August, 1942), 3.
\(^{34}\) (October, 1942), 6.
to remain aware of the complicated truth; but to keep it separate from the
simplifications that must be purveyed to make action possible:

O heart, bear courage
to deny the shrines an easy knowledge makes
which, loud with flowers, hold high the sun-caught
rigid dogmas of our day;
for who will say I don't know
and, willing, face the ignorance of a septic night.
bound in armour, the knights ride
freedom bloody on their flags
and words that gleam on fore-aimed swords.
For it is easier so to die.
Slogan-wise, drums shake the skin of air
And, with their bell of sound, lay low our desolate monument,
For of necessity is simplicity bred.
And, peopled with our blood, their strong abstraction
becomes our new reality.

The poem is in a sense a statement, in more universal terms, of the kind of
dilemma faced by the poet which Patrick Anderson spent so much time and ink
defining.

Though his connection with the magazine was apparently longer-lasting
than Shaw's, Bruce Ruddick also contributed a rather small number of poems
to the magazine, and only six of his war poems appeared.

Ruddick wrote what he called "poetry of implication", as he labelled
it in Preview's "explanatory Issue". As his contribution to this issue,
Ruddick reprinted "With his scimitar logic" (which first appeared in Preview
3) under the new title of "The Demagogue". In the "explanation" which
accompanied the poem Ruddick defended himself against charges of obscurity:

It seems obscure mainly because it
attempts to say a lot by giving a specific
picture which implies significant generalizations,
as well as naming his style "poetry of implication". However, a difficulty
in controlling and directing the implications of which he builds his poems

35(May, 1942), 3.
3621 (September, 1944), 9-10.
37Ibid., p. 9.
is one of Ruddick's chief problems, and sometimes results in poems which are accidently obscure. "With his scimitar logic", for example, is certainly obscure in the form in which it appeared in Preview 3. The imagery used had plenty of "implications" but these were not limited to any one context, and, since the poem itself fails to give the necessary background information, could apply to a psychopathic spree or to a physical disease of some sort. The mere addition of the title "The Demagogue" gives the imagery a context, and subsequently, a precision and depth of meaning they had previously lacked.

"August, 1942" is another of Ruddick's war poems which contains too much ambiguity. The poem is full of beautiful and compelling imagery, but the relationships between the images of nature's fabrications, man's constructions and institutions, and the poet's synthesizing mind are not clear. When the poem ends with the lines:

The perennial world reels, fevered with pregnancies
Surely my only annual brothers serve more than hoe and spanner
Save more than tunnelled, chambered, hard-backed vaults.

the identities, and hence even the "implications" of "the perennial world" and "my only annual brother" are impossible to define.

However, aside from these difficulties of definition in a few poems, especially the ones in the early issues of Preview, most of Bruce Ruddick's war poetry is remarkably successful in fusing image and implication into very effective poetic ideas. "Plaque" and "The Conqueror" both deal with the role of the common man, of lower class and still lower significance, in war. "Plaque" is an ironic commemoration of a soldier whose death is

38 (August, 1942), 5.
39 (June, 1942), 5.
40 (March, 1943), 3.
unnoticed even by his family, because his mother, or whoever now lives in
the wretched house where she used to, cannot read to understand the telegram
informing her of his death. Ruddick uses imagery of mourning with pointed
irony in the last lines:

Oh lament your strong and white winged heroes,
Here no bronze nor crepe marks
The passing freight flutters the laundry hung out
like cliches.

"Rehabilitation", moreover, is one of the best war poems in Preview. It
deals with the relegation of war to history:

Some afternoon, dreaming of love
a pale stenographer will push
the final button and the machine
will run off the great totals
in neat rows of numbers--
for the books.

The conversational tone of the poem contrasts with Ruddick's usual more for­
mal style; by adopting a casual idiom Ruddick adds to the irony of the ease
with which war's destruction can be relegated to the harmless archives. The
casual style continues as the poem describes this process of absorption going
on at all levels: life resumes its dreariness for "the little guy in the
street" and the denizens of the country club, the deaths of the last old
veterans are noted in the newspapers, children use Grandpa's old war medals
for their Hallowe'en costumes, and finally even the stone war memorials will
be moved to make room for the new speedway. Only a few journalists' photo­
graphs "hidden away in the library files" retain images of the human suffering
connected with the historical war. The poem is carefully constructed to lead
up to these pictures and their implications which make all the returns to
normal in the first part of the poem into evasions and repressions of a too
painful truth.

"Fear" is a return to Ruddick's more complex and allusive style of

41 10 (January, 1943), 7.
42 19 (March, 1944), 6.
implications and connotations. The omnipresent fear which is the poem's subject is much like the nameless fear which appears in Raymond Souster's war poems in Canadian Forum. In "Fear" the general fear is seen as a kind of cancerous growth over the whole world. Even love or faith, taken as cures, are completely ineffective. Cities reek of it, and wilderness is transformed by it: "in the mind it miracles/ pack-rat to panther."

Aside from a few lapses in control in some of the early ones, Ruddick's war poems in Preview are technically mature and emotionally pointed. If any one theme can be said to predominate, it is the meaninglessness of the war to the individuals actually involved. Suffering is war's only meaning—the individual, one of a manipulated mob, can suffer, but he never really knows what is happening.

Anderson, Shaw and Ruddick produced most of their creative work during their connection with Preview. This is not the case with the other two members of the Preview group, P. K. Page and F. R. Scott. P. K. Page had published a few poems (particularly in Contemporary Verse) before her association with Preview, and her work continued to appear frequently in Canadian literary magazines after Northern Review was established. F. R. Scott, of course, was already an important literary figure when Preview was inaugurated, and continued his creative work long after the war years.

P. K. Page was one of Preview's most prolific contributors. Her intricate and introspective style and her preference for psychological themes

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43 See pp. 77-78.
44 See p. 86.
45 Margaret Day, the other member of the original Preview group, should probably be mentioned here. Her name appeared on the journal's cover as a member of the group for the first six issues only, during which time she contributed a few prose pieces. She apparently wrote no poetry for the magazine; and after number six, no more of her writing appears in Preview.
was already well developed when she made her affiliation with the magazine. These characteristics of style and subject were not, in her poetry, very often applied to the concept of war as such, but rather to the quality of life the war defined for the people the poet observed around her. War impinged on their lives indirectly—the cause of some malady of mind, or of a situation that changes life for an individual.

Often a group or collectivity is the subject of her psychological probing. "Generation" is a poem of this type. The technique used is that of metaphorical transformation of historical events. The generation is an "ignored and undeclared ultimatum/ of solid children" to the previous one; its revolt against old beliefs becomes "firing our parent-pasts." As the poem progresses the generation is gradually transformed, and in the end is completely inseparable from the war itself—the generation is its soldiers.

Two others of P. K. Page's poems which have some thematic connection with the war are "Poem" and "The Bands and the Beautiful Children." "Poem" is a short and cryptic piece. The approach of death is its theme, but the kind of death that is drawing near is very vague—it is only referred to as a "close of innocence." The approaching dissolution is, however, clearly linked with the existence of war in another place:

for death is as common as grass beyond an ocean
and, with all Europe pricking in our eyes,
suddenly remember Guernica
and be gone.

In the poem the psychological distance of the war seems to sharpen rather than diminish its effect.

"The Bands and the Beautiful Children" is a processional poem in that

46 (October, 1942), 5.
47 (February, 1944), 5.
48 (March, 1944), 8.
its movement and rhythm imitate the approach and passing of a marching band (but no ordinary band, in this case). The band is seen as a magnet, attracting the children, leading them out of the comfortable centre of a vague city to some unfamiliar suburb. The children are not aware of what they have been following until it collapses, until the band breaks up and loses the magical power of attraction it once had, and reveals itself to be only a group of disparate humans. As a result, the children, who had been a group held together by the fascination of the band, are now separately lost. The stanza depicting the collapse of the band is most effective:

But the children move
in the trembling building of sound
sure as a choir
until band breaks and scatters,
crumbles about them and is made of men
tired and grumbling
on the straggling grass.

The lost children "remember the certainty of the anchored home". The fascination of the band has disappeared, but the results of that fascination, the fact that they are far from any "anchored home", have not.

The language and imagery of the poem are just vague enough to suggest a wider significance for the poem as a pattern of all disillusionment. The arrangement of events is always the same: the magnetic institution which leads its followers away from accustomed ways and ideas and then collapses, proving itself to be made of mere humans, leaving its erstwhile disciples stranded too far from their old ways to return to them but without any leadership in the new.

Among F. R. Scott's contributions to Preview are five war poems, which represent several different facets of Scott's poetic personality. F. R. Scott is, of course, best known as a satirist. It is people he satirizes best; the businessman-cum-politician, the literary upper class, the soda-
sipping citizens in Saturday drugstores, all are neatly pinned down for his humorous inspection. When he deals with war, Scott turns from longer satires to short, epigrammatical verses, such as the ones he contributed to *Contemporary Verse*. "Enemies" 49 is one of these epigrams, expressing succinctly the ironic relationship between enemies: "Because we hate you / We are bound to you...."

Another direction Scott's war poetry takes is towards poems in the nature of historical surveys. Scott's poems of this type have some characteristics in common with the war poetry of E. J. Pratt; though Scott is much less expansive than Pratt, and does not share Pratt's stock of Darwinian metaphor, both poets attempt to display the widest possible view of the conflict, and treat it as a part of the pattern of history.

"Fragment" 50 and "Flux" 51 are Scott's two war poems of the "historical survey" type in *Preview*. "Fragment" is about the war as a machine, whose maintenance and fueling have become man's total concern, turning man himself into a part of the mechanism. The machine gradually gains momentum during the poem--first it is like a light web, built by "caterpillars":

> The closed world swarmed with a throng of roads
> Where caterpillars span a thread of our blood
> To sew our flags into the history-quilt.

Later it becomes a thicker enclosure with more power to mould what it contains:

> Bound in a box of hate, all were packed
> In neat grades, slivered in oil. The shape
> of mind and hand fitted the pressed groove.

Finally the war machine produces men to fit its needs:

> Off assembly lines came motor-men
> Held by rivets of fear. Identical cogs
> Meshed in reverse directions, gathering speed...

49 16 (October, 1943), 7.
50 6 (August, 1942), 5.
51 12 (March, 1943), 5.
The imagery of mechanical operation and the gradually increasing pace of the rhythm are both highly effective in this poem. "Flux" deals with the totality of war's effects, and is less a survey of events than a representation of an emotional state. "The ultimate I, the inner mind" is, in the context of the poem, "The only shelter proof against attack". The poem records the disintegration of all man's cherished sources of emotional security and describes several varieties of human response to this collapse. Particularly interesting is the stanza about tradition:

Refugees in the mind lead their loved bric-a-brac
Glass Gew-gaws and their little tea-set faiths
On the piled ox-cart of tradition; make for the rear.
This self-imprisonment obstructs the roads
And only the mobile heart allows escape.

In this, Scott's urge to the satirical appears briefly in the metaphorical load the traditionalists carry, only to disappear into the descriptive idiom of the poem. The final image, "A green seed/ Lies on the ground, under a leafless tree" represents a very fragile hope, as it is conditional on man's power to endure, to hold the fortress of his "inner mind".

The tendency to treat the war in terms of the emotional states it engenders in the collective human mind is even more dominant in "Recovery", which is about the position of faith in a world of war. Faith is personified in the traditional manner in the poem, but she is the victim of a metaphorical bomb attack:

Fearfully, the man's hands dig
In the debris of thought, for the lovely body of faith,
Is she alive after this shock; does she yet breathe?

The personification imparts an unfortunate quaintness to the poem, especially when the chance to recover faith is seen as a beneficial aspect of the war.

In the end the poet hails the war as a blessing: "This sharp blow pulls the excesses down,...More roads are opened than are closed by bombs." This

521 (March, 1942), 6.
is perhaps an overstatement of the case; at any rate it does not combine very well with the traditional personification of faith. Another of Scott's more traditional war poems is "For R. A. S. 1925-1943", an elegy for a young writer who was ironically drowned on his way to the scene of war.

Besides the work of Anderson, Shaw, Ruddick, Page and Scott, published some interesting war poems by writers who were not among the journal's original founders. In the March, 1944 issue A. M. Klein became an official member, though "Actuarial Report" was the only war poem he published in Preview, and in the May issue of the same year, James Wreford also joined the group with a set of three poems: "Comrade, Look Not Into the Hill", "Identity", and "The Mental Butterfly". The first of these is the most interesting in that it is quite unlike Wreford's usual rather involved literary style, an inspirational poem addressed to all the world's freedom fighters. Ralph Gustafson's "To a Fallen Airman" is also unlike his other poems. It is a brief "poem against poetry" in which there is none of his usual revelry in lush ambiguity generously used, but only the irony of a silent poet and a starless navigator:

Starless now is he who owns
Egregiously these grounded bones:
Silence, his praise who vainly brings
A quill to him who died on wings.

"Hills of Anger" is Patrick Waddington's version of the same theme as P. K. Page's in "Generation", and one of a number of war poems in the little

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5315 (August, 1943), 11.
54First published in Canadian Forum, see p. 67.
5520 (May, 1944), 4.
56Ibid., pp. 5-6.
57Ibid., p. 6.
5813 (May, 1943), 7.
5915 (August, 1943), 12.
magazines with the same historical point of view.

Waddington begins his history by establishing his generation as a collectivity:

For all alike the time bomb at the wrist
Ticked to a quiet revolution; now
With war's iron fingers laid along our pulse
Fades the sound of self...

He constructs the whole poem with a similar sense of journeying. The hope in the poem rests in "our children" who "shake at the world as the wind shakes at a tree". In this expression of faith in yet another generation the poem differs from P. K. Page's, which ends with the war and the generation merging. Waddington's hope, as expressed in this poem, is facile: the poem itself presents no basis, beyond the common sentimental hope for the best from the new generation, for that hope. The metaphors of the older generation's hope collapsing under the pressure of war are much stronger than the expressions of hope for the future—they impress the mind, while the "hope" never registers.

Generally speaking, Preview was the one little magazine which had anything approaching a literary style of its own. This style resulted from a conscious attempt to develop a mode of expression using ambiguous, allusive and tightly packed metaphor as the chief means of communication. Preview was also the most politically vehement of the little magazines.
VI. WAR POETRY IN FIRST STATEMENT
The statements of editorial policy in First Statement are a contrast to the proclamations which appeared in Preview. No party line was adhered to; no overconfident declarations about the writer's role in society appear. The First Statement "group" was also not as formally defined as was the Preview group. Not all those who were involved in the actual production of the magazine were regular contributors; many of the writers whose work was published were not associated with the First Statement group at all, and even members of the Preview group appear frequently in First Statement. This is not to say that First Statement was devoid of polemics. Indeed, the most important statements of position from the First Statement writers are definitions of the points at which they differ from other contemporary trends—especially those they identify with Preview.

The most vigorous of the First Statement group in stating their ideas about what poetry should be were Louis Dudek and Irving Layton, both of whom, though not included in the group that assembled the first issue of the magazine, became associated with it soon after it was founded. In an article from an early number of the magazine, "Geography, Politics, and Poetry", Dudek quotes from Hart Crane the idea that poetry should be a first hand reaction on the part of the poet to his immediate environment, and that this reaction, if it is honest, will speak well enough for the poet's "times." Dudek goes on to take specific issue with three tendencies he identifies in modern poetry:

(1) a clever aptitude for exploiting the unreal universe of language, (2) a pedantic absorption in the second-hand universe of books, literature, and erudition; and (3) a falsified devotion to a special universe of ideas, chiefly sociological and political ideas.1

1 First Statement 16 (April 2, 1943), 2-3.

2 Ibid., p. 3.
and especially in the poetry of the **Preview** group, which he identifies as the most glaring example of the writing of poets taken up with these concerns. Dudek suggests, "by way of correctives", that the following three slogans should guide the modern poet:

No polyglot displays. No poetry about poets and poetry. No high party politics.³

This criticism, in spite of the fact that it is couched in rather clumsy and repetitive terms (what, for example, is a "falsified devotion"?), is justified when one considers some of Patrick Anderson's forays into the poetical-political battlefield. But Dudek's criticism is undeniably overstated. The term "the unreal universe of language" betrays an exceptionally short-sighted conception of the nature of words as the poet's medium. No doubt this label was pasted on language out of eagerness to criticize the particular use which is made of language in some *Preview* poetry, but a moment's thought should have convinced the critic that if "the universe of language" is unreal, then poetry, made from and existing in that very "universe", has even less claim to reality.

Another and more competent article which relates to the difference in philosophy between the *Preview* and *First Statement* groups is Irving Layton's "Politics and Poetry,"⁴ which deals with the failure of the "triumvirate" of Auden, Spender, and Lewis as leading forces in English poetry. The new English poets are, Layton says, "leaving behind the dry, puritanical exercises of Auden and his imitators."⁵ He goes on to identify romanticism, individualism and naturalism as the returning and invigorating characteristics of the new poetry. Though Layton confines his comments to

³Ibid.
⁵Ibid., p. 19.
English poetry, they apply to some extent to the difference between Preview and First Statement, as Preview's identification, particularly in the work of Shaw and Ruddick, is clearly with what Layton identifies as Auden's type of poetry, and the lyrical and individual is generally more prevalent in the work published in First Statement.

This expression of opposition to the unity of literary and political loyalties which are proclaimed so often in Preview's editorials was not entirely without provocation. In the "Ourselves" section of Preview's "Civilian Report" issue, Patrick Anderson berated the First Statement group for its lack of involvement in political affairs:

An attempt to discredit the Labour Movement is again in full swing...What is the writer going to do? Is he, like the First Statement Group, going to content himself with study circles to ponder the platitudes of Lampman and Carman? Or is he going to plunge boldly into the progressive movement, learning from association with it the inspiration of solidarity, while he contributes to it the values of his culture, imaginative understanding and sensitivity,\(^6\)

This statement could hardly be read by a First Statement supporter without some irritation, and it is apparently Louis Dudek who was most annoyed. At any rate Dudek's choice of the quotation "reacting honestly...first hand" epitomizes the contrast between the war poetry in First Statement as opposed to that in Preview. The Preview poets, especially Anderson, Ruddick, and Shaw, tend to treat the war as a phenomenon--they fit it into a political scheme, place it in a personal universe, or analyse it as a collective experience. This is not to say that the more analytical approach of the Preview poets is dishonest; the difference is one of emotional distance, with the First Statement poets usually much closer to their subject. Also, since "first hand" reactions to war necessarily involve some direct experience with it, and the Canadian experience of the war was generally much more indirect.

\(^6\) Preview 11 (February, 1943), p. 11.
(except, of course, for that of servicemen on active duty overseas) than the
British or European one, there is not as much war poetry in First Statement
as there is in Preview.

The war poems in the first few issues of First Statement were mostly
by other writers than the ones most closely associated with the magazine. Two of the most interesting, in fact, are by Preview poets: "Edwardian and
the War", by Neufville Shaw, and "Disaster", by Patrick Anderson.

"Edwardian and the War" is an account of the psychological effects of the
war on an anachronistic (Edwardian) consciousness. The poem as a whole
suffers from overinventiveness in metaphor and a resulting unconnectedness
and confusion in the presentation of the character's mind. Patrick Anderson's
"Disaster" is a more accessible poem, a relation of a surrealistic incident
which takes place in a vague household in a vague city and involves three
characters: the poet, a boy, and the boy's mother. The disaster is the
nearby explosion of a bomb, and the boy, handy with tools, has immediately
invented an exercise in reassurance by attempting to repair a smashed radio
and re-establish contact with the outer world. The poet is not reassured,
and tries to reason with the boy and his mother:

...how can this be of any use
the radio fell from the third floor after the bomb--
it lies here, clearly it's smashed to pieces,
and anyway it had just announced the Ultimatum

The boy's reaction to this is to invent more useless activity, but his schemes

7 Though he was an effective editor, John Sutherland's poetic contribu-
tions to the magazine are less than successful. His only war poem there is
"Camping Place" (1:3 (undated), 3). The poem is undistinguished, as are
Sutherland's other poems in First Statement. Sutherland's greatest talents,
of course, appear in his critical articles.
8 First Statement 1:3 (undated), 2-3.
9 First Statement 1:7 (undated), 3.
are reduced in the poetry to a child's frantic reactions—attempts at boy-scout heroism. Though the poet-character intervenes again, trying to make the mother realize that the Ultimatum is "the death of a world", both the mother and the son apparently prefer the son's pitiful remedies to any confrontation with reality.

Miriam Waddington, though she contributed as frequently to First Statement as she did to the later issues of Preview, did not often use the war either as theme or as a source of imagery. Her one war poem in First Statement is "Now We Steer", a "historical survey" poem similar in kind to P. K. Page's "Generation" and to Patrick Waddington's "Hills of Anger", though the survey is made from a much more personal point of view. The "we" of "Now We Steer" is a group whose common bond is their intellectual experience:

...they
Whose names were a white legend in our night
Auden and Spender and Thomas Wolfe—
Whose word poured through our blood like warm wine
Whose hands rang clear and warning bells
Across the dark and troubled oceans of our youth...

For this group, the coming of war "upsets the tenuous balance of revolution" resulting in the apprehension of impending doom which gives the poem its title: "Now we steer/ Straight for the tropical centre." The poem suffers from some rather hackneyed figurative constructions in the course of its metaphorical sailing voyage; the final metaphor, the familiar unwavering compass point, is an example. The poem's conclusion amounts to an explanation or even a "key" to the rest of the poem, and is too obviously drawing a moral. Altogether the poem is not of the same quality as Miriam Waddington's other poems in First Statement, which usually deal with more immediately personal subject matter. In "Now We Steer" she seems to strain in handling the controlling metaphor, and descends at the end into well-worn metaphorical

101:14 (undated), 9-10.
The twelfth issue of the magazine is of particular interest because it was an official introduction to three new First Statement poets: Kay Smith, Irving Layton, and Louis Dudek; an editorial concerned with the major characteristics of the work of each poet precedes a feature section of the poems of each.

Kay Smith had contributed to First Statement before this official introduction, and she continued to appear frequently in the magazine. Her featured poem in issue twelve is, however, the only one of her poems in First Statement that could be called a war poem. "Conversations with a Mirror" is a sequence of six poems, each one of which alternates between repeated lines of refrain and a monologue spoken by a character who is looking in a mirror. The war imposes itself in some way on each character: there is a girl whose lover has gone to fight; a harlot whose business is improved by the presence of soldiers; a wife who waits for news of her husband's death; a spinster who has an empty heart and sardonic tongue, this being the second sending off of sweethearts to war that she has witnessed; a soldier who tries to see what his life has been before he loses it; and lastly death himself, who proclaims his impartiality and superior power over all forces but love. The introductory editorial points out Kay Smith's frequent use of nature imagery—hardly necessary, considering the heavy-handed and redundant use of all the standard figures of nature's power in this poem. The other techniques used in the poem are equally intrusive and clumsy—the refrain lines are silly, and their repetition makes them more so, and the nursery rhyme rhythm employed throughout loses its effect of innocence and becomes simply wearisome after the first few poems in the sequence.

11 1:12 (undated), 4-9.
12 Ibid., p. 1.
It was Irving Layton and Louis Dudek, the other two poets who receive official introduction in the twelfth issue, and Raymond Souster, who began publishing in First Statement a short time later, who contributed the most interesting war poems to First Statement. "Obstacle Course" is the earliest of Layton's war poems to appear in the magazine. The poem has the ironic point of view which is characteristic of Layton's war poems in Canadian Forum as well. It combines, as the introductory editorial suggests, observation with criticism. The obstacle course itself, "A mined track of twigs and tinkling glass", and the trainees using it "Like schoolboys on a frolic", are closely observed; the criticism is in the fable ending, "Beware when grown-ups play a child's game."

It is interesting to notice that it is "Obstacle Course" which is singled out by Patrick Waddington in a letter to the editor of First Statement as the worst of Layton's poems, all of which he considers to be very bad indeed. Waddington's criticisms of "Obstacle Course" have mainly to do with the lack of sufficient cause for the emotions the poem projects onto the men running the obstacle course; the expression "sans blame" particularly upsets him:

But finally, oh! that "sans blame"! Oh! oh! oh! That, beyond everything, damns Mr. Layton's inspiration as an old woman wrapped in the shoddy hide of the puling minor Victorian.

Layton's answer, though admitting that the poems Waddington attacks are not necessarily masterpieces, is mainly concerned with Waddington's ability as a critic: Layton points out that anyone who reads poems with so little intelligence is bound to find them ridiculous as a result of his own imperceptive reading. He also rejects the label "minor Victorian" as a term

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13 1:12 (undated), p. 10.
14 1:16 (April 2, 1943), 5-7.
15 Ibid., p. 6.
16 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
rendered meaningless by too frequent use:

Why in heaven's name must he use that old tag about being Tennysonian, or, a variation on the theme, minor Victorian? Surely these are such commonplaces of criticism that Mr. Waddington should swallow a bottle of Lysol before using them.17

Waddington's criticism of "Obstacle Course" seems misplaced. The other poems Layton published with it in his section of First Statement number 12 are much more vulnerable to the charge of being "minor Victorian" than this poem is, particularly "Providence"18 which unsuccessfully attempts to make a new character out of the old personification. "Obstacle Course" uses to great effect the viewpoint of the would-be detached ironic observer, which becomes so characteristic of Layton's early poems.

Layton's next war poem in First Statement is "Say It Again, Brother,"19 a self-consciously slangy monologue about the participation of the common man in the fight against fascism. Unfortunately Layton begins the poem with a metaphor which makes a joke of the rest of it:

What can I cut from your heart and from mine, something of worth, not touched but spared the fibre's thickening, the blood's decline?

The person to whom this is addressed evidently responds with incredulity, and the speaker replies, "Yes, mister, I mean you...Never thought I would ask, eh, for a piece of meat so almighty clean?" The gap between the conversational tone of the poem and the imaginative nature of the metaphor is too wide, Layton's attempt to bridge it with humour--

I must be nuts, loco, clean off my mind.
Go on, why don't you say it? Ask, why don't I slash a piece from your behind?

--is unsuccessful, and makes the rest of the poem, which is built around the

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17 Ibid., p. 8.
18 1:12 (undated), 9-10.
19 1:19 (May 14, 1943), 7-8.
contrast between colloquial response and the "heart's flesh" metaphor, into something close to the speech of some professor of poetry to a semi-illiterate, an effort to make an unread listener understand the nature of metaphorical language by translating a lecture into street jargon.

Fortunately Layton's other three war poems in First Statement are much better. "Petawawa",20 which also appears in The Canadian Forum, was published here. "Forecast"21 analyses the role of the seer who "For men, astigmatic, prone" "bares an epoch's tumour." The seer is "illusionless", "Stark, as individual pain" and he sees behind superficially new circumstances "an old, disfigured story" in the new pattern of events. "1943"22 has a similar prophetic point of view. It is another of the poems summarizing the experience of war as a collective emotional experience, like Miriam Waddington's "Now We Steer," Patrick Waddington's "Hills of Anger" and P. K. Page's "Generation."23 Layton's poem is concerned with the patterns of life in the present as they affect the future. Modern man's aimlessness stems from his denial of the validity of personal or historical roots in the past. The past is turned by the modern experience from a point of reference to an obstacle:

We stumble over tombstones in tall grasses;
Our shod, firm feet obliterate
The epitaphs to our rescinded selves...

Louis Dudek does not make the war his subject as frequently as Layton does. "Coal Shortage"24 is really about class distinctions rather than about war. "The coal shortage (brought on by the war)" is felt by the old lady living on a poverty-stricken side street, who gets only two bags for

20 2:4 (February, 1944), 8.
21 1:2 (August, 1943), 16.
22 2:2 (September, 1943), 21.
23 See pp. 135, 130, and 125 respectively.
24 1:15 (March, 1943), 7.
her meagre fire, while the poet finds his way blocked on prosperous Sherbrooke Street West by a truck which is, by comparison to the old lady's ration, "a mountain of anthracite". "Garcia Lorca", Dudek's commemoration of Lorca's tragic death, is really a definition of class war. Dudek considers the firing squad which killed Lorca as

...only
an ignorant audience, breaking
to bits his stage

and says that similar murders are committed every day by all of us who "with subtle and selfish claws; set ourselves up a single majority", thus betraying the unity which is the only hope of the oppressed in a class war.

Though neither of these two poems is particularly impressive, it is interesting to compare Dudek's handling of ideological statements in these poems with Patrick Anderson's treatment of similar political ideologies in his poems. Anderson tends to create a highly charged imaginative structure and then top it (or deflate it, depending on one's viewpoint) with an ideological statement. Dudek, on the other hand, makes the ideological statement more integral to the poem, with any imaginative structure existing only to reinforce the statement of ideology. Also Dudek's approach is apparently to be content with making the statement, where Anderson tends to try to inspire emotional enthusiasm with it.

"0 Contemporaries" is Dudek's vision of contemporary life. Like Layton's "Forecast", it is concerned with the problem of meaning for life in modern society beyond the temporary illusion of purpose created by war. But Dudek's poem is mainly concerned with attacking the habits of mind which lead people to formulate entirely scientific explanations for existence.

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25 2:9 (October & November, 1944), 10-12.
26 2:11 (February & March, 1945), 13.
The fragmented nature of life which conceives of itself in solely scientific terms is represented by a series of fragmented images: "No noise of knowledge left, but only the clatter/ Of caricatures, a Hitler circus, jitterbugging kids."

Raymond Souster's war poems in First Statement exhibit the sense of death and destruction which is so pervasive in his poems in The Canadian Forum. They are all written in the casual and undisguised conversational voice of the poet which was characteristic of Souster from his earliest poem. "End of a Year"27 is a series of rambling thoughts on the occasion of New Year's Eve of 1942. Each section begins with an observation which leads the poet through a series of progressively more disillusioning reflections. On the subject of the war itself, another year of which has ended, Souster says:

Let the others tell of the blood of innocents
Spilled with the wild abandon of madness...
Let others tell of the bombs falling...

There will be enough willing slick ones with
Exact words and touching phrases and they
Will do it up so will it will read
Like last year's best best seller...

an observation, which, in effect, puts war out of the reach of words, since the more closely the words reproduce the destruction and waste of the war, the more they partake in war's essential futility.

"Late March"28 and "Green Wonderful Things"29 share the theme of the deceptiveness of natural beauty. In "Late March", the power of spring has almost blotted out the image of war:

27 1:13 (undated), 5-7.
28 1:20 (June 11, 1943), 5-6.
Impossible to think of, comprehend,
The words, war, bombings, air-raid shelters,
With afternoon sun so glowing like spring
And dry but cheerful noise of sparrows.

but eventually the sun is seen as "A liar, and escapist" and the world as an
unworthy recipient of spring. "Green, Wonderful Things" presents the appar­
ently reverent and tranquil peace of the green world of summer and then ne­
egates it by showing the greenness to be the camouflage of an enemy:

And the green wonderful things
Are enemies never to be forgotten, snapping shutters
over lazy minds,
And hiding too easily the sight and smell of blood.

In "Go the Sleep, World" the poet who speaks seems to have, in the pres­
ence of his beloved, a certain power over the pervasive evil influence of
the warring world. Men at war become as small as insects, their battles
as insignificant as those of ants, and the poet has the power to command the
world to "make them all stop", temporarily at least:

make your tiny men
Give up their dirty killing for the night
And lay them gently down
0 lay them gently down
Their arms tired with butchering
Their trigger-fingers stiff with murder
And give them sleep so they may be strong
In the morning and the blood run
Plentifully...

The poet also temporarily has the power to defend his beloved from the evil
influence of the world, but in expressing it he ironically lowers himself
to the level of the other tiny men, butchery being his ultimate form of self-
expression:

Go to sleep world--
But do not look at my beloved lying there
Or I will kill you
A little at a time, so the ants may have a chance
On your rotten gut.

Nathan Ralph's war poems, which appear in all the contemporary Canadian

30 1:16 (April, 1943), 1.
little magazines, were even more directly concerned with his own experiences than Souster's; at times they are effective, but some of them are long-winded and undigested ramblings concerning the situations in which he finds himself. "Air Raid"\textsuperscript{31} and "Forgotten Moments"\textsuperscript{32}, his contributions to \textit{First Statement}, were both written while the poet was in England with the Canadian Army. "Air Raid" is an internal monologue during a London bomb attack. The poet finds his poise somewhat more fragile than he had imagined it would be:

The guns are roaring
and I am not as calm
as in the movies...

All the trappings of the film versions of fear are strangely absent in the reality: the poet's tie is not straight, there is no shine on his hair, and there is no sympathetic siren nearby to commiserate with. Neither the movie version nor any other imaginary adventure can recreate the conditions of the air raid, nor the intensity and physical reality of the fear the poet feels:

I cannot imagine thunder half as well as heard...
I cannot imagine pain as accurately as splinters in my side I cannot imagine bravery until I've cried.

"Forgotten Moments", which appeared with "Air Raid", is a less successful poem. It deals with moments of time transformed into mysterious entities which haunt the soldiers at their leisure.

Where very concrete situations and moments of time are basic to the

\textsuperscript{31}1:16 (April 2, 1943), 1.
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 2.
poems of Souster and Ralph, intellectual and emotional problems are funda­mental to the thoughtful war poems of James Wreford and Donald Stewart. Of James Wreford's several poems in First Statement, "Real Issues" is pertinent to a consideration of war poetry because it makes such extensive use of war imagery in defining a relationship between personal and universal love. In the course of the poem, however, the war of nations and the war of passion seem to become confused, and the personal war of love fuses into the international one of hate. The relationship between the two is only partially resolved at the poem's end, which proposes, apparently, some form of denial of merely personal love in favour of one more universal. Two long discursive and meditative war poems by Donald Stewart appeared in First Statement. These form an even more pronounced contrast to the direct and emotional nature of most of First Statement's war poetry. "Prologemena to Matthew 26:52" progresses by means of logical statements resembling expanding terms in a philosophical argument:

Those who want to know will know:  
death settles nothing.  
You equivocate  
ending the argument with agony.  
The bayonet thrust  
opens a second mouth more eloquent  
than one it shuts.

The lines continue, expressing variation after variation of the theme of "death settles nothing", or, as the text in the title expresses it, "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The statements grow in complexity and imagination; they pose hypothetical situations by way of illustration, but they are all restatements of the original idea. The conclusion of the poem is a statement of the converse of the original proposition—death does not settle a dispute: the living can settle a dispute:

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32 2:4 (February, 1944), 14.
34 2:5 (March, 1944), 10-12.
But you
Intact with moving flesh and blood
can make decision for tomorrow's sons
whether they die and leave the argument
shapeless and unresolved, or
speak to form
choate community of man with man.

"Meditation on the Approach of Peace"[^35] is written in a similar style,
with a similar pattern of cohesion through the elaboration of a single idea.
In this case, the idea is the difficulty experienced by a returning fighting
man in adapting to a routine of life in which death is a gradual encroachment
of time rather than an impending moment of sudden extinction.

The form of repeated variations, traditional to the poetry of religious
meditation, which appears in these two poems, sets them apart from the rest
of the war poetry in First Statement. They are not concerned with presenting
experience, or with expressing emotion, but with the elaboration of a philo­
sophical truth.

Two selections from A. M. Klein's The Hitleriad were published in
First Statement in August and October of 1943, some time before the New
Directions edition of the complete poem appeared. The selections in First
Statement differ very little from the same parts of the complete edition,
though some stylistic changes have been made to a few lines. The sections
which were published in First Statement are the first 110 lines[^36], com­
prising the formal introduction and Hitler's biography, and sections XII to
XV[^37], the "rogue's gallery" of Hitler's assistants, both of which are among
the most successful sections of the poem.

The Hitleriad was the most ambitious of Klein's satirical war poems,

[^35]: 2:7 (May, 1944), 16-18.
[^36]: 2:1 (August, 1943), 11-3.
[^37]: 2:4 (October, 1943), 2-7.
and has always been considered less than successful—a "misstep" as Milton Wilson has it. The most favorable review of the poem was by E. J. Pratt, who praised "the drive of the masculine thrust against the common foes of humanity" as being powerful enough to nullify an academic point of dispute concerning the proper ingredients of high satire. E. K. Brown, however, finds that the disparate elements of burlesque and satire in the poem do not reinforce each other.

John Sutherland finds the poem's portrayal of good and evil merely melodramatic: "if we look in it for the... subtle wisdom of satire, we are doomed to disappointment," he says. Dorothy Livesay, less specifically, says that it lacks objectivity. It is Louis Dudek who seems to deal with The Hitleriad most effectively. He says:

...besides bad rhyming and diction and crude satire, the poem, considering the implications of the subject, has no density or weight of thought. Klein seems to have believed that a strong line against Hitler from the start would have made all things well.

The poem ridicules Hitler simply as a man: the "lack of density of weight of thought" which Dudek identifies in the poem is partly the result of the poem's failure to account for the aspects of Hitler which were the incarnation, so to speak, of historical and political forces in Europe. The image of Hitler that the poem attacks is Hitler the human being; but Hitler the human being is not a complete view of Hitler: the remarkable thing about this man was that, in spite of, or perhaps even because of his


very obvious limitations as a human being he was able to obtain such power. By limiting himself to satirizing Hitler merely as a botched specimen of humanity, then, Klein is drastically narrowing the focus of his satire.

The other problem with the poem is of course the formal one inherent in the subject matter. The satirist, to be successful in his medium, must have a situation in which the exposure of the object of the satire could possibly lead to some change in the opinions of or actions of his audience. In the case of a poem about Hitler written in 1943, the facts about the man and the Nazi regime were already too well known, and there would have been very little in the way of enlightenment or a new point of view that any satirist could have offered. A burlesque would have been a much more feasible form; E. K. Brown was right to complain that in trying to steer a course between satire and burlesque Klein "clouded" his lines "by the varying intent." 44

The small amount of war poetry in First Statement cannot be said to show much homogeneity in technique or attitude. Its most interesting publications were probably the war poems of Irving Layton, with their obvious linguistic skill and habitual ironic viewpoint, and those of Raymond Souster, with their angry disgust with the world at war, and the best sections of The Hitleriad. Souster's impatient anger is further developed in Direction, which, though it published a few other poets, is chiefly Souster's magazine.

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E. K. Brown, loc. cit.
VII. WAR POETRY IN DIRECTION
Direction began late in 1943, an unpretentious mimeographed magazine consisting of contributions from various men on the R.C.A.F. station at Outremont, Quebec. The enthusiasm of the three founders of the magazine, David Mullen, Raymond Souster, and William Goldberg, is recorded by a fragment of a letter which served as an introduction on the cover of the first issue:

Dave and Ray rushed in like two madmen, seized me by the arms and legs, and ... carried me into the shower room. Bolting the door, they fired a salv o, "Let's get a magazine out". "Let us make a declaration of our fighting faith". "Let us denounce the Canadian Author's Association, including Sir Charles G. D. Tradition. God, they're all dying on their feet..."\(^1\)

The first issue also contains a note on the other Canadian little magazines which criticizes their various weaknesses as Raymond Souster sees them:

Contemporary Verse of Vancouver has published much good but little fresh and vital poetry. Preview of Montreal serves us with a rehash of Spender, Auden and Macneice brought up to date with a Canadian setting, and any future claim to fame it may make will rest upon the fact that it first published Patrick Anderson. First Statement, also of Montreal, has been the most experimental, and perhaps for that reason, the least successful. But its experimentation is healthy and it has less interest in names and more of sic literature than its contemporaries.\(^2\)

an appraisal which tends to make the other little magazines, with the exception of First Statement, into branches of the literary establishment.

Direction's first issue, then, contained the work of the three founders and a few others with whom they came into contact. The second issue attracted contributions from Irving Layton, William Porritt and Miriam Waddington, as well as from the initial writers, who by this time had been transferred to different bases. The fourth issue was a kind of anniversary issue, with the entire magazine being made up of contributions

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1. Direction (November, 1943), 1.
2. Ibid, p. 3.
from the four who wrote almost all the material in the first issue: William Goldberg, David Mullen, Raymond Souster and Wesley Scott. The other issues all published a variety of writers except for number 7, which consisted of selections from Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*. The last issue of *Direction* appeared late in 1945.

David Mullen's art work is his main contribution to the magazine, though he also wrote several poems and prose pieces. He proved himself to be, incidentally, one of the very few artists who are not totally defeated by the severe limitations of the ubiquitous mimeograph machine. Of particular interest are Mullen's cartoon representing the Canadian Authors' Association presiding over a bound and gagged Canadian Art, and the wartime "Christmas Card", both of which appeared in the first issue, and the covers of several of the later issues, notably numbers five and six. Mullen's best war poem in the magazine, "Campaign"\(^3\) is a nightmare vision of a campaign which takes place in a surreal atmosphere in which apprehension has distorted the natural laws of motion, sound and time. When the frozen moment is finally ended the horror becomes real:

- then it comes--
- a scream like a white rocket
- one boy wants his mother
- another sings--
- Goya should see this.

The poem unfortunately ends with some rather contrived Christian imagery, whose relationship to the rest of the poem is obscure.

William Goldberg was apparently in charge of the actual production of the magazine, as it is his address that is given as the correspondence address of the magazine. Goldberg's poems in *Direction* are highly personal

\(^{3}\) (undated), 2-3.
and lyrical, such as "Letter to C.O."\textsuperscript{4} with the formal letter, "I respectfully request permission to marry under the provisions of Para 1360 (4) for the R.C.A.F.", as a superscript, followed by a highly traditional and rather psalm-like encomium of the poet's bride. Goldberg's poems in Direction are all closely related to his own roots, whether they are the relationships to home, family or locale.

As the magazine developed, a larger number of contributors appeared, though it still published mainly the work of its founders. Irving Layton contributed to very few issues, but "Newsboy"\textsuperscript{5} and "Petawawa"\textsuperscript{6}, two of his best-known war poems, appeared here. Both these poems employ a much more sophisticated and literary vocabulary than any of Direction's other war poems, which are usually verbally unassuming or highly colloquial.\textsuperscript{7}

Wesley Scott's work in Direction is not very memorable, but "On the Wheel of this Bitter Night"\textsuperscript{8} is interesting because it is so apparently imitative of Patrick Anderson. Nathan Ralph also contributed to Direction: "Forgotten Regiments"\textsuperscript{9} is concerned with the experience of returned servicemen, but it is a rambling effort, far too long for the little it conveys, as is Kay Smith's "Thanksgiving, 1945"\textsuperscript{10} with its unmistakably trite flavour of the Canadian Nature Poem. Another rather interesting poem is John Avalon's

\textsuperscript{4}1 (November, 1943), 6.
\textsuperscript{5}2 (undated), 9.
\textsuperscript{6}3 (undated), 5.
\textsuperscript{7}"Newsboy", particularly, has an air of linguistic virtuosity—the power of words, not so much of poetic imagination, is what transforms the boy from a seller of reports, to a "Joshua", to a centre of power at whose mysterious agency newsworthy events are caused to happen.
\textsuperscript{8}6 (December, 1944), 7.
\textsuperscript{9}5 (October, 1944), 1-3.
\textsuperscript{10}10 (undated), 4-5.
"Song of the Psychopaths",\textsuperscript{11} which was apparently part of a longer work entitled "The Nazi Nihilists." With its monotonous rhythm and rhymes and its simple language of melodramatic extremes, the poem has the character of a chant spoken by a troop of devils, perhaps, as part of a macabre pageant of some kind.

But it is really Raymond Souster's work which gives Direction its vitality. Each issue contains at least four or five of his poems—sometimes the shorter ones, many of which appeared also in the other literary magazines; and sometimes the longer ones, which seem to appear only in Direction. The sense of impending disaster which is so noticeable in Souster's work in The Canadian Forum appears here as well, but the most striking characteristic of Souster's early poems in Direction is their cynicism, an express conviction that beauty is at least a more or less opaque cover for inevitable putrefaction underneath. This point of view is adopted out of impatience and disgust with the condition of a world which repeatedly denies the best and encourages the worst that is in mankind.

Evidence that the disgust expressed by many of the poems is a result of impatience with a world that denies the poet's ideals is found in "When I Write About the Murder"\textsuperscript{12}, a poem somewhat in the nature of a credo. The poem is apparently occasioned by a question from a friend concerning the poet's reasons for writing on the subjects he chooses. Souster's answer is not that of a cynic or an aesthetic but the classical one of a moralist. The future may be "ours to give and ours to deny/ by the words of this minute and this hour", and so it becomes a duty to "underline" love, tenderness, truth and freedom and to express "savage and bristling hate of all

\textsuperscript{11}3 (undated), 7-8.
\textsuperscript{12}5 (October, 1944), 7-8.
war all lies all greed all slavery under what name it hides itself."

The resolution to express hatred of these things under whatever disguises they may assume results in the determination not to be taken in by fine appearances—or even innocent ones, and gives an atmosphere of cynicism to Souster's poems. "Phoney War" is a good example of this. War at a distance, in this poem, has the unreality of a motion picture, and the unreality is underlined by the tongue-in-cheek reference to death, which is included almost as an afterthought and facetiously attended by tombstone angels:

And every man is a hero and his name will be remembered long, long after the war is over,
And if you should accidentally die, your soul will lie at rest on the breasts of a dozen angels.

"The Invader", which also appeared in The Canadian Forum, with its concentration on the lurking fear which is present even when the "madman radio" cannot be heard; and almost all of Souster's "spring" poems—"With Spring", "False Spring", "Green, Wonderful Things", and "Late March" share the determination to see beyond the deceptive loveliness of nature to the corruption with which man has infected the universe.

"Behold a Child is Born" (a second version of "Home Front" which appeared in Contemporary Verse) has a related theme—while a man is dying, in a wrecked plane, his friend at home lives through the normal trivalities of existence. The ordinariness of everyday life for one individual is

13 8 (July, 1945), 6.
14 8 (July, 1945), 6.
15 3 (undated), 4.
16 Ibid.
17 First Statement.
18 First Statement.
19 Direction 8 (July, 1945), 6.
ordinary in appearance only, since any moment of it may coincide with the moment of death for someone who is part of that ordinary life.

Sometimes in Souster's poems the ordinary or beautiful is stripped away entirely, resulting in a macabre vision such as "The Carousel sic of Madness."20 This poem is an excerpt, apparently, from a longer work. In the selection which appears in Direction, the poet declares that the world has gone mad and presents a panoramic view of it doing so. The poet's point of view is that of one entirely disillusioned—the war is not the evil in the world—it only seems worse than the other evils man perpetrates because it is a focussing of all man's usually dispersed negative capabilities. Attempts at reconstruction or renaissance will only result in more evil:

And how can we ever build
New cities on the rotten dung
Of our past that clings to us
With the sure odour of decay
No matter what we say or do
Or how hard we try
To shake it we are still doomed
Because we are what we are
And we will always go on dying
On the inglorious battlefields
For this same right

The right to our own separate filth.

"The Carousel of Madness" has the form and style of a declamation or a harangue on the theme of the inescapable sinfulness of man. It lacks the control and condensed quality of Souster's later poems in Direction. "Letter to Newmarket"21 which deals with the possibilities of change in returned soldiers presents a similar inevitable return to evil as one of the alternatives open to the returning fighters.

Some of Souster's poems in Direction are pieces of poetic journalism

20 2 (undated), 8.
21 6 (December, 1944), 5-6.
whose effects are similar to those of the stark photography of some war correspondent. "Air Raid", for example, documents the aftereffects of an air raid, and "The Camp" presents a series of clippings from the consciousness of an inmate of Dachau. "Dreams Were Always Cheap" comes as close to tenderness as any of Souster's poems in Direction, but its tenderness is as cautious and defensive as that of "Go to Sleep World" in First Statement.

Since the sickness of the times affects even the sweet dreams the poet wishes for his loved one, the poet resolves not to risk his own:

I also have dreams but they're too tender
To risk having them maimed and broken by this time--
These lean nervous years when the password is surrender
And a poem is a poem because it has a rhyme.

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22 (November, 1943), 8.
23 (October, 1944), 8-9.
24 (undated), 5.
VIII. CONCLUSION
Basically there are two conceptions of war which appear in the Canadian poetry of the two world wars. To one group of poets, war has a place in a system of belief: it is a necessary patriotic and chivalrous duty, whose unpleasant and destructive aspects are compensated for, or even transformed by the sacred nature to the values which the war defends. War is a heroic adventure: there is honour to be won in the conflict. At the other extreme, war is seen as an unjustifiable hell which man persists in imposing on himself in order to defend values which, partly because they lead to and allow for war, are indefensible. War is, to poets who hold this view, at best a kind of collective insanity. Those who, at the time of the Second World War, also held strong leftist political views, tended to see war in terms of class: the working classes forced by the bourgeoisie to fight to maintain the system which oppressed them.

In English First World War poetry the first view of war is associated with a traditional and heroic kind of war poetry which was soon replaced by the disillusioned view of the soldier-poets. Such a split never occurred in Canadian First World War poetry, which was uniformly patriotic, and even usually couched in the metaphors and concepts of chivalry. Canadian First World War poems were paeans to the bonds of honour binding the soldier to his fellows and to his country, essentially colonial poems concerning "Mother Britain", or rollicking battle songs, all of which were much stronger in rhyme and rhythm than in thought.

A division between these two ways of thinking does appear in the Canadian poetry of the Second World War, however. But the difference has to do not so much with the developing realization that the concepts of chivalry are not valid in technological warfare, as in English First World War poetry, but with a very strong split among Canadian poets at the time between
"traditionalists" and "modernists". The conception of the war which was expressed by the "traditionalists" was basically unchanged from that of the Canadian First World War poets (some of them, indeed, were the same poets): war appeared as an exploit, a heroic adventure undertaken out of duty for one's country. The idea of Britain as Canada's mother in need of filial assistance appeared quite frequently, and this concept seemed to bring to the surface a large number of nostalgic emotions about England, and particularly about the English countryside, which found their way into the poetry of the traditionalists. These themes were expressed, for the most part, in unexceptional rhyme and metre, with lavish use of the stock of figures of speech inherited from the last of the English Victorians. The most sonorous and dignified of the war poetry of the traditionalists is that of A. S. Bourinot, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, and Nathaniel Benson, though many others tried for a similar effect and were less successful in bringing it off. Examples of traditionalist war poetry are numerous in the Canadian Poetry Magazine and in Voices of Victory, in which latter source the nostalgic admiration for England and things English is particularly noticeable. To quite a remarkable extent this type of war poetry is limited to these sources and the pages of newspapers and popular magazines. The war poems in the new little magazines can very seldom be labelled "traditionalist." They showed a considerable aversion to expressions of patriotism of any sort, and though a few sentimental pieces and decorated elegies do appear, these new publications tended to favour "modernist" informality of technique.

The war poetry of Canadian "modernist" poets reflected the development of modern poetry in general, which expanded suddenly during the war years. The poetry associated with Preview tended to be strongly influenced by that of Auden and Spender, with some flavour of Dylan Thomas. Patrick Anderson, Bruce Ruddick and Neufville Shaw all produced war poems containing strong elements of Marxist propaganda and stylistic features of Auden and Spender.
P. K. Page's war poems, like her other poems, were stylistically complex and introspective. In his war poems in *Preview*, F. R. Scott tends to avoid the astringent wit and satiric barb with which he approaches many other subjects. The *First Statement* poets, not sharing Patrick Anderson's conviction that writing was one more front in the ideological war in which it was the poet's duty to fight, did not produce as many poems on the specific subject of the war. Among the war poems in *First Statement*, Irving Layton's are probably the most interesting, showing a depth of conception and virtuosity with language beyond the other war poems in the magazine. *First Statement* also published the first sections of A. M. Klein's *The Hitleriad* to appear. *Direction* was dominated by the work of Raymond Souster, who contributed frequently to all the Canadian literary magazines as well.

*Contemporary Verse*, the earliest of the new little magazines, published war poems from almost all the Canadian modernist poets who wrote on the subject, as well as a few rather sentimental traditional pieces, though never mere patriotic songs. James Wreford's Audenesque lines appeared in *Contemporary Verse* before he began contributing to *Preview*. Ralph Gustafson, whose war poems share with his other work a very obvious and extensive debt to G. M. Hopkins, also contributed several war poems; and Floris Clark McLaren published most of her war poems in this magazine. Many of the war poems that make up Birney's *Now Is Time* and part of *The Strait of Anian* appeared first in *Contemporary Verse*.

*The Canadian Forum* printed the most eclectic sampling of war poetry to be found in any of the literary magazines. Every kind of war poem is represented in its pages, from little drolleries such as Birney's "Lines for Lotus-Eaters" to symphonic odes such as Ralph Gustafson's "Epithalamium in the Time of War"; from the immediacy and colloquial informality of
Raymond Souster's war poems to the austere emotional analysis of A. M. Klein. All the groups of "modernists" are represented; so are many of the best of the traditionalists.

Such was the diversity of the "modernist" poets in Canada at the time that their war poetry can hardly be described as a body. Several main directions of approach taken to the subject of war can, however, be identified. The most immediate and direct approach to war among Canadian poets came, as might be expected, from poets who were personally involved in it. Bertram Warr, though his experience was probably more typically English than Canadian, was, of course one of these, as was Earle Birney, who recorded experience and emotions perhaps more typically "Canadian." Raymond Souster's poems also often reflect the flavour of life and the fluctuations of morale and emotion in air force bases in Canada, though it of course goes beyond that. Nathan Ralph, Vic Hopwood, and Murray Bonnycastle also wrote war poems closely connected with their own experiences as servicemen, as did Irving Layton, for the short time he was with the service.

Another group of poets tended to treat the war as one more front in the ideological battle between the political forces of the right and left. Poems of this type are best exemplified by some of the war poems from Preview, in which the war is seen as a kind of branch of the worker's struggle to throw off oppression, or as a united front of different ideologies against Fascism.

The satirical approach appeared in a number of poems, and particularly characterized the approach taken by A. M. Klein. Klein's satires are bitter and often, as in The Hitleriad, not altogether successful, though those with a more limited scope are more concentrated in effect. Many of Earle
Birney's war poems are also satirical, but they are more often humorous in intent, as is some of the irony of Raymond Souster and Irving Layton.

The intellectual and analytical approach is found in another group of poems, P. K. Page's minute emotional analyses of people affected by the war, and the whole group of poems by different writers which analyse the emotional climate of the years leading up to the war belong in this category, as do A. J. M. Smith's accusing considerations of responsibility, Donald Stewart's meditative discourses, and Margaret Avison's few war poems.

The only unique type of war poem that is found repeatedly among Canadian war poems is the nature-war poem. A variety of approaches are used, and the sensitivity ranges from the simplistic, such as Lloyd Robert's "'Tis Only Man Who Wars" to subtle explorations of the relationship between nature's balanced world and man's world at war, such as Margaret Avison's "Gatineau" or Earle Birney's "Hands" and "Vancouver Lights." Sometimes nature provides a metaphor for war, as in Birney's "Dusk on the Bay", or LeClaire's "Now When the Long Fire Frozen" or McLaren's "No More the Slow Stream"; sometimes war provides a metaphor for nature, as in Livesay's "Invasion", and sometimes the two themes are inextricable, as in Wreford's "For Love" or Ronald Hambleton's "O Winter 1940". E. J. Pratt's conception of war as an eruption of a half-submerged savagery from man's pattern of evolution is also related to this group of poems, since so often in Pratt's war poems war appears as man's own distorted version of the conflict through which nature resolves evolutionary disputes.

The prevalence of "nature-war" poems among Canadian responses to the war points to the relationship between war poetry and Canadian literature in general, since Canadian writers have always shown a preoccupation with
nature. As might be expected, war poetry reflects the development of poetry as a whole. Just as Canadian poetry was for many years an isolated province of the British literary empire, imitating, with a considerable time lag, the successive movements in English literature, so the Canadian poetry of the First World War at its best only reaches as far as that of the backward-looking British war poets, who sought meaning for the present war in the ideologies associated with the wars of the past. New impetus for poetry developed very slowly in Canada through the years between the wars, and it was only after about 1942 that the sudden burst of publication and writing which permanently established the poets of the forties and fifties occurred. Consequently the contrast (leaving aside the poems of the Canadian "traditionalists", who can in some ways be regarded as throwbacks to the ideals and values of the First World War) between the war poems of the First and Second World Wars is startling, and in itself informative. Without the "debunking" phase of the English soldier-poets, like Wilfred Owen, Canadian War poetry moved from the First World War conceptions of the chivalrous, the actively heroic, and the military-religious crusade, to the anxious analysis, and ironic vision, and the passive heroism of those who endure of the Second. Where the tendency of the Canadian First World War poet is to propagandize, the Second World War poet will analyse. This analysis leads different poets in different directions—towards irony for Layton and Klein, fascination with individual adaptations in Page, anger in Souster, obsession with the macabre in Dermott, political commitment in Anderson, Ruddick and Shaw, accusation in A. J. M. Smith, and the desire to record, classify and describe in Birney. In the absence of any set of patriotic or religious values which could give meaning to the catastrophe that modern warfare had proven itself to be, each poet was forced to attempt his own explanation, to impose his own order on events, to make his own sense of the chaos.
But the poems of the Second World War do not assign a final meaning to war. War is described, its effects analysed, its horrors enumerated, responsibility assigned for it, and so on. But it is almost always the extrinsic aspects of war, or the poet's reactions to them, that are dealt with. Mark Van Doren said at the time that the war, "means whatever later men will decide it meant; we are too early for that, and at best can note with honesty the feelings it makes us have," and that the war poet is "trying to measure what cannot be measured yet, and he is not to be blamed if in the dark he takes up a variety of rulers." Perhaps it is in war poems written after both wars—after the First World War showed (or perhaps should have showed) western man that the rules of chivalry and the motivation of altruistic ideals were no longer of much consequence in technological war, and after the Second World War continued the process by showing him the immense scale of suffering and destruction that could be caused by the tools technology put at his disposal—perhaps it is only after this has been absorbed that any "meaning" can be given to the Second World War.

In this regard it is interesting to compare E. J. Pratt's "Autopsy on a Sadist" and Leonard Cohen's "All There Is to Know About Adolph Eichmann." Both deal with the problem of genocide. But Pratt, writing during the war, says that humans such as the officer who ordered the massacre at Liddice can only be explained by considering them exceptional evolutionary throwbacks. Cohen, on the other hand, implies that Eichmann, who superintended killing on an even more massive scale, was completely normal—that all humans are capable of such things. War becomes a part

2 See p. 56.
of man's being, try as he will to deny it; it is not the quality of man's capability to inflict suffering on his fellows that has changed, but only the quantity of suffering he can inflict.
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