



GROANS FROM
OLD BONES

Being Some Versification
By A Nonagenarian

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By the same author

Non-Fiction
Conversations with my Cat
Kingston through the Years

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William F.E. Morley, 1920 –

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF
MY DEAR WIFE BETH.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to present for your reading enjoyment a collection of Bill's poetry. Bill is a very complex person, and you will see the many sides to him in this collection of his works. His poems will touch your heart, have you laughing and centering you at times with reality. Bill shares with us his appreciation for life and all living things.

I have been so very fortunate to have had the sole privilege to work with Bill, compiling and editing this book. It has been my pleasure to work with him all these years, and I refer to him as one of my dearest and closest friends.

Barbara E. Kelly
Editor

PROLOGUE

Tales of old,
Of Yesteryear
Herewith retold
To please your ear.
If you can cope,
As I surely hope,
My heart with joy will cheer!

10 October, 2014

A Tribute to Brave Firemen

These brave firemen, one and all,
Were having a party in their hall,
When, suddenly, they heard the call.

It was the fire bell, loud and clear,
Striking each stout heart with fear,
For at fires, death's always near.

They slid down the pole to don their dress,
Knowing some poor souls were in distress,
Waiting for rescue to come: God bless!

So, blessings on our firemen brave,
For many are the lives they save.
May luck pursue each to his grave!

11 January, 2016

A Song of Peace

Peace comes welling from within,
And its enemy is sin.
Peace comes when the wind is pure
And is the gift of love for sure.
Where there's love, sin can't prevail,
Commit sin, and love will fail.
So let us all beware of sin,
Then peace will rise up from within,
Our hearts cleansed from all that's wrong.
And voices raised in joyous song!

26 January, 2016

Life's Memories

The years go by and fill my head
With many memories of things done and said.
Of the friends I've loved in my long life,
With scenes of joy, but some of strife.
There are days of sunshine, and of cloud,
Of acts of shame, and some of which I'm proud.
There are bad words well said, but some are black.
Either way, they can never be taken back.
So keep thoughts pure, in a sound mind
Do unto others in a manner always kind.
Then, perhaps, if you're lucky you'll find
In the end your life has been worthwhile,
And you can look back with a happy smile!

November, 2015

Trials and Tribulations of the Aged

Trials I have and quite a few
Then there's tribulations too.
From the moment I awake,
All my muscles start to shake.
Then a shiver, down my spine,
And my stomach starts to whine.
Try to stand, fall back on bed,
The nurse comes in, thinks I'm dead.
Gives a shriek, falls in a faint,
I fan her just to show I ain't
They bring me breakfast, same old stuff.
I tell them that I've had enough.
They say I'm lucky, that I'm spoiled,
I tell them that their heads are boiled.
They can have all the luck I've had.
And soon they'd find that it's all bad.
I try to tell them I'm not sick
They say "Back to bed, and quick".
They say "At the age of 95,
You're just lucky to be alive".
"Look" they say "I am the nurse".
"Back to bed or you'll get worse".
"Look" I say, "I'm feeling fine
What say we share a glass of wine?"

November, 2015

The Drama of the Night

Behold the moon: it shines so bright
It gilds the lake in golden light.
Then shadowy clouds go drifting by,
Creating drama in the sky:
I see gods riding clouds at night,
They fill my heart with pure delight.
Needless to ask the reason why,
I dream of clouds in the moonlit sky.
As I lie in bed and watch this scene,
The window becomes my silver screen.

27 November, 2015

Lessons for Today

With the setting of the sun,
My long day is done,
It's time to relax and reflect:
What did I do, or would wish to undo?
What important things did I neglect?

Whatever did transpire,
Did it light a fire?
Make me feel the day worthwhile?
Was I aware of one need to care?
Did it end in sadness, or a smile?

There are so many ways,
In which one spends our days.
Some result from choice, and some from Fate.
There are many roads in life, of joy and of strife.
We must learn to love, and how not to hate.

30 November, 2015

The Nodding Years

Every action, every thought,
Holds a memory, as they ought.
For these are the constructs of our lives:
Sisters, brothers, husbands, wives.
Though we had them, some may be gone,
For we're all but flesh and bone.
Animate beings that mortal are,
When time comes, they'll cross the bar.
They sing, they laugh, they procreate,
To each Death cometh, soon or late.

So I sit in my well-worn chair,
And I really haven't any care.
I just muse on my family,
How precious they all are to me.
I think of the important things they do,
How each has won battles, and lost a few.
I think of all their hopes and dreams,
And how they are mine too, it seems.
How can I help these, with whom I'm blessed?
But, in truth, to help themselves is best.

So I curl up in my chair,
Giving thanks in, silent prayer.
My sweet wife will always be,
Present in my memory.
I'm grateful for my health and strength
And to have lived in years this length.
I now live quite comfortably;
My life just dwellers in memory.
How fortunate I am indeed,
But – a few more happy years I plead.

23 November, 2015

Tales of a Retirement Home

Its mealtime, but the choice is poor,
Both the offers I just abhor.
But I choose one, its only right,
Then I'm in misery all the night.

Another tale I'm to relate:
Middle of the night, need to urinate.
I rise and rush to the bathroom door
But leave a trail upon the floor.

Our talented resident plays violin,
But the noise to me is a catgut sin.
When she's done I join the applause
Because I think it's in a good cause.

When Mary Anne offers an evening of voice,
I retire early, that's my choice.
Next morning she asks: Did you enjoy?
I'm running out of synonyms for "Oh Boy!"

20 November, 2015

My Dear Brother

Deep down I feel a longing,
For what? I do not know.
Perhaps it's for my childhood,
So very long ago?

I search my inmost memories
But nothing comes to mind.
I enjoyed a happy childhood,
My parents both were kind.

Ah, my memory wakes a thought:
Yes, time was another,
My closest friend of all.
It was my long-lost brother.

He drowned when he was twenty,
In the cold North Sea.
But his essence lives yet,
Within his brother: me!

21 November, 2015

An Epic of War

I was sent to Canada,
An allied friendly shore,
There in peace to learn to fight
In Britain's gallant war.

We trained to fight our enemy,
That peaceful Poland did invade.
It was an unprovoked attack,
So Britain came to Poland's aid.

Her cause was just, the world could see.
Germans wanted to expand,
Said they needed elbow room.
So they attacked their neighbour's land.

Such aggression was not well viewed.
The League of Nations* made demands.
But Hitler would not withdraw his troops.
The sad result was World War II:
The world was up in arms!

The last was in old Kingston,
River Thames ran past my door;
Sister Kingston in the New World,
Dwells on Ontario's shore.

*Forerunner of the United Nations

20 November, 2015

Question Number One

If the world were one great sea,
With but the tiniest bit of land,
Could we all live happily,
On a diet of fish and grains of sand?

Would we all develop gills,
Breathing water just as well?
And how would we then pay our bills?
In sand dollar bills, and cents of smell!

11 November, 2015

A Tale of Modern Crusoes

In a remote Pacific isle,
Off shipping routes by many a mile,
In a small and sheltered bluff,
Watered by the rains enough
A fruitful valley flourished there,
With fruit trees, both peach and pear,
Along the rocks were climbing grapes,
And juicy berries of many shapes.

Now, stranded on this fruitful isle,
A shipwrecked crew came, soon a smile,
For they all thought it very nice,
Indeed, it looked like Paradise.
But though it was all helter-skelter,
They soon built themselves a shelter,
To protect them from the blazing sun,
And all were happy, everyone.

Such contentment could not last,
And soon there came a stormy blast.
It took down their cosy shelter,
Which had been all helter-skelter.
The trees were all blown to the ground,
And the fallen fruit was quite unsound.
The crew was now in a sorrowful state,
And, one by one each met his fate.

12 November, 2015

The Answer

Madness is a great disguise
The impossible happens before your eyes.
Nonsense language masks the truth.
Accept the unlikely? Yes, forsooth!
What is real? What is false?
Are you alive? Have you a pulse?
Is there another world for me?
Can I reach it, remaining free?
Is there comfort, no despair?
Get me a one-way ticket there.
I must leave my present life,
Full of love, adrift with strife.
I dream always of a better world
Where I can rest with wings unfurled.
To rest at last in the arms of Peace
That will be my last release!

6 November, 2015

A Lover's Sorrows

In the stillness of the night,
When all I have is candlelight,
That's the time the mind is free,
Recalling many a fantasy.

I dream of my true love-one, now departed,
Leaving me just broken hearted.
Of all those happy vows we made,
Which cruel Fate has now betrayed.

A lovely life it would have been,
The world our kingdom, you my queen.
But, sadly, it was not to be:
Fate has taken you from me.

The days are cold, the nights so long,
My heart no longer sings a song.
I think only of my lover departed,
And release from pain for one brokenhearted.

11 November, 2015
(Remembrance Day)

Weather – Or Not?

Sometimes it rains,
And when it's cool,
Then water drains,
Else stays in a pool.

Can't always have sun:
There are the clouds,
That cover the sun
In misty shrouds.

Then there's the moon
In all its phases.
When it's at the full,
Watch out for the crazies!

There are the stars,
Sparkling and bright.
They bring such charm
To the darkest night.

Beware of storms,
Blowing savage and free.
God save the poor sailors
Way out at sea!

But be grateful for weather,
And the changes we see.
If it were always the same,
How dull life would be!

1st November, 2015

Repentance

Now I've fallen to the lowest grade,
Can a good circumstance come to my aid?
I've drunk the bitterest drop in life's cup
Is there a hand that can lift me up?

I once was a good man, tall and erect,
And always did what was correct.
But I fell into evil ways,
Drank and caroused in all my days.

I beseech you to give me a hand
And lift me up to the Promised Land.
Before my soul's beyond repair,
And no one in this world will care!

Came there answer from on high:
You have sinned, now, know you why?
Why did you depart from the Golden Rule?
Now you've become the Devil's tool.

If you now really have a care,
Fall on your knees and confess in prayer
"I have fallen far from Grace
Into a dark and evil place."

Then the sweet voice from on high
Summoning the sinner to reason why
He had sunk in such disgrace
From a pure and holy place.

"Repent now and save your soul"
And a pure hand reached down that hole
To raise the penitent from his dark sin
And let the sunshine come flooding in.

He grasped the extended hand of Grace
And the light of Truth fell on his face.
An angel's voice was heard to say:
"Repentance is the only way".

So a lost soul was rescued by Grace
The way is open in every case
Fall on your knees in earnest prayer,
And you will be rescued from despair!

29 October, 2015

A Farmer's Life

We plough the fields and sow the seed,
So the harvest meets our need.
Repair the old barn's leaky roof
And the cattle feed to their behoof.

In the dairy, the busy milk maid,
Sees that butter and cheese are made.
In the henhouse, eggs are taken,
To go with morning coffee and bacon.

So the farmer's day begins,
After prayers, to save his sins.
Then he's ready to face the day,
In rain or sunshine, come what may.

25 October, 2015

These to Be Admired

Love of life, respect for self,
Esteem for friends and animals,
Have not greed, but regard for self.
These, I've observed, are life's main rules.

26 October, 2015

The Doleful Tale of "The Hercules"

'Twas on a summer's morning
With fresh, brisk Westerly breeze,
That sallied forth from Portsmouth,
The good ship "Hercules".
Her mission: to sail westwards.
To lands of the orange trees.
And gather a full load,
That would her owners please.
Six days out from Portsmouth
When the wealth was still warm
The vessel did encounter,
The fiercest tropical storm.
"All hands on deck!" was ordered,
To shorten sail right quick,
But to many of the sailors
Were below sea-sick.
Alas, the gallant vessel
With her courageous crew,
Sank to Davies locker,
Just where no one knew.
The widows looked for their cherished
Out from Portsmouth Head,
But, sadly the ship had perished
And all the crew was dead.

25 October, 2015

Boys Will Be Boys

There had been a rainfall,
Leaving many pools of mud:
Just right for naughty boys
To make up balls of crud.

I saw young girls were playing
As boys came along:
Margret, so sweetly dressed,
Singing her lovely song.

In all the world I've never seen
So tempting a target,
For the naughty little boys
As my darling Margret.

They were making cannon balls
Of the thick black mud.
As soon as they saw us,
They gathered their balls of crud.

This seen, I nimbly stepped aside.
But Margret was not so quick.
She had her lovely gown all smeared
With mud balls, black and thick.

A lesson may be found here,
And for all girls it annoys:
That every girl must suffer
Because "Boys will be boys".

21 October, 2015

My England, Once

Oh England, Fair England,
Whose ways in my soul are sewn.
The leafy lanes, the lakes,
Those green hills once my own.

Although I've wandered far from her
Made dear Canada my home,
How sweet those days of my happy years
Before I chanced to roam.

Of course, perfection she never was:
We paint our youth in gloss;
And wherever else we choose to live,
We'll always feel a loss.

But England still will raise her young,
And nurture well their roots,
In that sacred soil where blood was spilt,
But the wise old owl still hoots.

20 October, 2015

The Evening of My Day and Life

Full Westerly is the golden sun,
My eyes are sinking in my head.
Now this lovely day is done,
And I must prepare myself for bed.

As I disrobe, my dreamy mind
Wanders over the day's events,
Recalling things now well behind,
But already memories are intense.

We feel each day remains unique,
But the same things happen every day.
Some small distinctions may well peak,
As why things occur, and in what way.

All too soon our years have passed,
And memories begin to fade.
When our memory's gone at last,
Then my memoirs are my aid.

21 October, 2015

Youth Speaks

(Now present another view)

Ah, delight of winter
When the air is cold
How I'd enjoy it
Before I get too old
Skating on the lake
Skiing down a hill
Takes my breath away,
Gives my heart a thrill
I draw upon my vigor
Youth is for the young
I raise my voice to Heaven
The sweetest song is sung!

9 October, 2015

Ode to Spring

Icicles in dripping thaw,
In streams the trout now seen.
The snow is melting underfoot
Trees are budding green.

The air still chilled by frozen ground
The clouds are scudding past.
The snows and ice of winter
Now disappearing fast.

The sun is high by noon.
Its welcome warmth is felt.
Early birds are coming back
And drink the snowy melt.

We start to shelve our winter clothes,
No need to wear a hood.
And then to don our shorts again
On the table, springtime food!

19 October, 2015

On the Rocks

The captain stood on the sloping deck,
Growling at the rocks ahead.
He summoned his crew to come top deck,
Warned: Tomorrow we may all be dead!

Our brave vessel cannot withstand,
Those rocks beneath our bow I fear.
The sea's too rough to launch our boat,
I'm sad to say our end may be near.

No one lives on this land about,
For I see not a single light.
I think we must be all alone,
With none to aid us in our plight.

Let's bend our knees and say a prayer,
Then each hold hands together.
We must hope we'll survive the night.
And tomorrow brings us better weather!

With the dawn came clearing skies,
And the seas not near so high.
They all awoke in better humour
And each one gave a grateful sigh,

Soon they spied a rescue vessel,
Approaching at a rapid speed.
All were saved; they'd learned a lesson:
Ne'er abandon hope in time of need!

16 October, 2015

Autumn

With September, start to say goodbye,
To warm sun and cloudless sky.
Green fields, and trees with leaves.
Another log upon the fire,
See the warm flames leap up higher.
Now the harvest is stored to dry,
And southwards many birds do fly.
Soon the trees are black and bare,
And Jack Frost's touch is everywhere.
Don warm clothes, cover nose and ears,
The cold will well your eyes with tears.
Dark smoke from many chimneys rise
Snow flakes flitter in dark skies.
Say goodbye to summer's cheer,
Now we face the winter drear.

12 October, 2015

Ode to Wildflowers

Where are the wildflowers of my youth
That brightened every byway?
They sometimes braved the very edge
Of a busy highway.

They fought the dust and driest ditch,
Flourished with no attention;
And in lively garden books,
They rarely gain a mention.

There was colour where they survived,
To make dark corners brighter.
With little rain and uncertain sun,
They cheered the country hiker.

12 October, 2015

The Country Girl

She was pure, from the country,
When she came to town,
But that is where her morals
Were sadly to fall down.

She met a city slicker,
Took her to a bar and grill.
He knew liquor would be quicker
To gain his wicked will.

She became a Fallen Woman
Could not go back home.
So it was in city streets,
That she was left to roam.

Bravo for the Salvation Army,
Who met her one dark night.
They took her to their citadel,
Made sure she was alright.

She was forever grateful:
Set up a charitable trust,
To help poor country girls
Be saved from cruel male lust.

12 October, 2015

Music and Mood

In those glorious upper realms of music
Where can we ever find the equal to hark
Then the lovely strains of Mendelssohn,
Of Handel, Mozart, and especially Bach?

‘Tis to J.S. Bach that I refer,
Though lesser Bach’s exist.
But the strains of J.S. Bach, once heard,
Will forever in the mind persist.

His music is ethereal,
It cheers the darkest days,
Lifting your heart above the gloom,
And knits up sleeves care that frays.

So if it is a cloudy day,
And your mood is cloudy too,
Then play your favourite music
To dispel a mood that’s blue.

11 October, 2015

Goodnight!

‘Tis midnight; how the hours do fly!
Since early evening, they’ve since passed by.
I must to bed, and get some sleep,
For all too soon dawn’s light will peep.
How swift time’s passage, on the fly,
In the twinkling of an eye!
Erstwhile, sweet dreams until the morrow.

13 October, 2015

Some Questions for Truth

Will there be a place that matters
Left in this world, that's not in tatters?
A place that says "Man has been here
But the world has naught to fear.

Man has built hospitals, bridges, dams;
Has produced bread, butter and hams."
Came answer "Also war and pillage,
Famine, sickness in many a village."

"But we have physicians, well-trained farmers.
Have built protection from things that harm us."
"Ah, but of bombs and tanks and war,
Horrors never seen before?
Poverty and child abuse:
For these there's surely no excuse!"

"The worlds not perfect, nor is man,
But most do the best we can.
Often it's not an easy task
But to do one's best is all we ask."

With that, Truth turned back and fled.
What happened next, best's left unsaid.

2 October, 2015

Motto

All I ask Fate is: "Please be kind.
Keep me pure of heart, and sound of mind!"

Stages of the Ages

It's neat to meet,
Bliss to kiss.
Copulate and celebrate.
Then lament, as a parent.

Oh joy for a boy,
A pearl for a girl.
Then – throw up
As they grow up.

But isn't it heaven sent
To become a parent!
Though would you rather
Be a grandfather?

But, by my troth,
It's nice to be both!
Then reflect on the past:
With peace at the last!

28 September, 2015

The College of Life

I had my education,
At the College of Hard Knocks:
Life's a bowl of cherries,
Mixed with lemons and some rocks.

When you sit at Life's Table
You may lose a few teeth,
But you'd better say a Grace,
Or you'll end up underneath!

Look up the Bright Side,
The other side's Life's Thief!
Be brave and be bold,
Or you'll only cave to grief.

To graduate from life's college
The grindstone must have your nose.
Then after working hard,
You'll have carried life's sweet repose.

30 September, 2015

Orchard Harvest

It was the season of ripe fruit,
With orchard branches hanging low.
Harvest workers were in pursuit,
Their ladders and baskets on the go.

Their gentle hands were swift and sure,
As they felt each fruit was sound.
From dawn to sunset they'd endure,
Casting the bad fruit to the ground.

So the harvest weeks passed by,
The fruit all taken to the storage sheds,
Weary workers paid, and said goodbye;
Returned to their homes and their warm beds.

Thus another fruitful year has passed,
But another fall will soon arrive.
If all goes well, as did the last,
The orchard owners will still thrive.

25 September, 2015
(Bill's 95th Birthday)

A Prayer of Thanks for an English Birthright

My roots have sucked their juices
From your fertile river banks;
My lungs have breathed in full
Your sweetness, with my thanks.

My toddlers' feet have trod
Your rich and ancient soil,
And I have loved to share
Your worthy daily toil.

My feet carry winged heels,
Your arts nourished my early years.
The music of your age-old lyres
Well my eyes with grateful tears.

It ignites my heart with fire,
Your mellow richness so appears,
Filling me with an elegant poise,
And proudly conquering all my fears.

Epilogue

For all of this I give my grateful thanks.

19 September, 2015

Paradise!

Wherever there is sunshine
That's where I'd like to be,
Especially if the sun shines
On sand and tall palm tree.

I never want to wander
Away from such delights.
I love it in the sunsets,
Of warm summer nights.

I hope that I may live
Full happy and for long,
Near a sunlit palm tree
With the wind's melodious song.

31 August, 2015

The Witching Hour

The witching hour of the darkest night.
Fairies all have taken flight,
Leaving hob-goblins to rule the air.
With witches flying everywhere.
Each goblin has a sweetheart elf;
They fly in pairs till the clock strikes twelve.
Then each couple forms up for the dance,
And the air is filled with sweet romance.
Music has all swaying to and fro,
Until silver light of dawn does flow.
Then hobgoblins to each elf does bend,
The message of his love to send;
Escorts his sweetheart to her bower,
And kisses her with the gift of a flower.

4 September, 2015

A Promise Sought

Though the way be long
And the roads so steep,
I can never forget
The promise I must keep.
And promise to keep I will,
No matter how long, and steep the hill.
My legs are now weary
My mind now is numb
I will still persist
Whatever may come.
I'm mounting the hill
And struggle I will.
Though I'm all aches,
And parched with thirst,
The promise I made
Will ever come first.
I see approaching now
The glistening summit
Though I'm fraught with fear
That I may plummet.
But, I reach the highest peak,
The promised accomplishment that I seek!

24 July, 2015

A Newspaper Advertisement

I like short walks, with a cane and lady fair,
And watching the sun set; being out in fresh air.
I like good books, and good music too.
Playing with my cat is a thing I do.
I love all animals, travelling far and wide,
I'm not much on secrets, for I've nothing to hide.
I don't worship wealth, but I'm not poor.
It's good to have enough, yet not want even more.
I keep clean, and take care of myself,
Ensure that I preserve good health.
I live alone, for I've lost my dear wife.
Is there anyone out there who'd care to share my life?
(Address: Anon.)

26 July, 2015

The Thieves and Their Treasure

It was a dark and stormy night,
The wind rattled the roof-top eaves.
And because there was no light,
Abroad was a band of thieves.

They broke through outer doors
Just as silent as could be,
And crept through many floors,
To see what they could see.

They found a heavy chest,
With metal bands around.
But when put to the test,
The lid sprang with no sound.

Inside were golden caskets
And diamonds aplenty,
Which they scooped into their baskets,
Until the chest was empty.

They put back on their sandals,
Picked up their heavy load,
Blew out all their candles
And quickly hit the road.

Back home they sold their treasure,
Retired to a tropic retreat,
Their lived a life of pleasure
Till they all died from the heat.

17 July, 2015

Night Noises

Midnight and the werewolves flee
Not the time for you, nor me!
I feel a nod of my sleepy head,
So, clean my teeth and go to bed.

Outside it's dark, the bats in flight.
It really is a frightful night.
I hear the hooting of the owls,
It cools my blood and stirs my bowels.

I turn over, try to sleep,
And under the covers my head I keep
But I still hear the noisy owls
So to the covers I add the bedside towels.

Still I hear the owls and hoots,
So I rise, dress, don my boots,
Get pan and lid and make a clatter,
The silence of the night I shatter!

Lights come on now all around,
And other noise adds to the sound:
Dogs are barking, people shout!
I'm back to bed, turn lights out!

30 June, 2015

Friends

You have some friends in Heaven,
And many more on Earth.
If you didn't have some friends,
You could never know your worth.

If you had enemies,
You'd surely share their view;
But I don't really suppose,
They'd speak well of you!

So value all your friends,
You can never have too many;
And feel sorry for those,
Who don't seem to have any.

27 March, 2015

Spring: When All Life Springs Anew!

After snowdrops and the crocuses
Have bravely broken the freeze,
Come daffodils and tulips,
And blossom on the trees:
Lilac blooming everywhere,
In purple shades and white,
Spilling their fragrance in the air
All day and through the night.
I swoon from the scent, without a care,
Am thrilled by the enchanting sight,
As weasels and rabbits appear from burrows,
And the sun-warmed soil is plowed in furrows.
What magic there is in the new life of spring:
What more could we want to make use sing!

27 March, 2015

A Boy's Life

When I was a fresh-faced lad,
And the world was bright and new,
I was always into mischief
Doing things I shouldn't do.

Life was a bowl of cherries,
And I sucked each, one by one.
There never was a livelier lad
Who had such rollicking fun!

From early every morning,
When I leapt out of bed,
To have fun was my motto.
Ah, what a life I lead!

At school I pulled the hair
Of the girl who sat in front,
And cared not for the penalty
Paid for such a naughty stunt.

I broke many a window,
With a rock or stick.
Was absent from my classes
Even when I wasn't sick.

Quite often I'd go fishing
Down at a local pool;
But mother never knew that
I hadn't been to school.

However, I was lucky
Because I am quite bright,
So always had good marks
To take home every night.

Now that I am older,
Will soon be leaving school,
I can't go on deceiving
For then I'd be a fool.

I'll walk the straight and narrow
And never tell a lie.
Try to be an honest man,
Until the day I die.

25 March 2015

Cared For, to Caring For

When I was a babe in arms,
Many commented on my charms.
But when I lay in swaddling clothes,
I always had a runny nose.
When I stood up in my crib,
There was drool all down my bib.
Whenever I let out a howl,
Dad came running with a towel.
When Mum picked me up to rest,
I would nibble on her breast.
When I was gently laid to sleep,
I would start to yell and weep.
The only time that I was quiet,
Was after a spanking for a riot.
Before I became a full-grown lad,
I must have driven my parents mad!
But – now I'm taking care of them,
While they wait for retirement home, pro tem.

12 March, 2015

Taken Short

Disaster struck in the middle of the night!
No, not the Titanic, a personal plight.
The bathroom now was my best friend,
I thought visits there would never end!
While others slept quietly in their bed,
I was racing to the 'head.'
Fortunately I avoided a mess,
But for how long was everyone's guess.
Where it all comes from – anyone know?
Oh, just a minute: I've got to go.
Phew! That was close, right on the line:
I got to the bathroom just in time.

15 March, 2015

Reflections at My Nineties

Still I can stand, can don my clothes,
Can rise again after repose.
Walk in the woods, when leaves are wet,
But am not in the Paradise Garden yet.
Enjoy the benefits of my years,
Not be burdened by life-ending fears.

I enjoy writing, and reading good books,
The company of men, and women's sweet looks,
Thoughts of my youth, but know that's no more:
Accept my old age, don't find life a bore.
Am thrilled by a sunset, moonlight on a lake;
Know I must give, in order to take.

I give part of my wealth for the good of others,
For I know we are all sisters and brothers.
I respect all living things, old and new,
And the love for my family is especially true.
So, when all is said, I'm sound in mind and limb,
I'm finding life joyous, my conscience free of sin.

4 March, 2015

A Word to the Wise

An angry word, those years ago,
Slipped out, though half in fun.
The smile vanished, too late to know,
That damage had been done.

Thoughtless moments, long regrets,
Friendships shattered in a trice.
A slip of the tongue quick hate begets;
All I have now is advice.

Be careful when you speak in haste,
For words are weapons too;
And words that are in anger based
May oft be seen as true.

9 March, 2015

Thunderstorm

To and fro the branches go,
As the wind begins to blow.
The windows rattle in their frames,
The children give up their ball games.

The black clouds darken now the sky,
On the ground dust bunnies fly.
Then the first large drops of rain,
Splatter over the window pain.

Hurry up before the storm:
Get inside where it's dry and warm!
Lightning flashes everywhere;
Thunder shatters the trembling air.

The heavens open up its clogs,
And it's raining cats and dogs!
But soon the wind drops, and the rain
Ceases, and the sun is out again!

5 February, 2015

A Poet's Morning

In the morning, in the morning,
When the air is fresh and clean,
Oh, in the silver morning,
That's when my senses preen.

When the dew is on the grass.
And a mist is o'er the pond,
That's the time of day
Of which I'm specially fond.

When the honeysuckle sparkles
And the trees are touched with frost,
That's when imagination wakens
And in verses I am lost.

Oh, bright and shining morning,
When my mind's still free to choose,
And the voices of enchantment,
Sing from my poetic Muse.

6 February, 2015

Yuletide

Yule, Oh festive Yule!
Children home from school,
The days are now quite cool.
Snow is on the ground.
Let happiness abound!
Gifts now freely flow,
Smiles everywhere you go.
Music fills the air,
Gone is old despair.
Let the rafters ring,
As loudly we all sing.
Santa's on his way
With his gift-laden sleigh.
The turkey's cooking up,
Soon we'll sit down to sup.
Holly hanging everywhere,
And the Christmas tree is up.
The mistletoe is in the hall:
A jolly Christmas to you all!

1 November, 2014

A Rhyme to Live By The Prime of my Senility

I still eat, sleep, read and write
Try to stand and walk upright
Shower, shave and file my nails
A bathroom visit never fails.
Crossword puzzles keep my mind alert.
Careful not to fall so I don't get hurt.
Try to be cheerful, courteous where I am,
And not fall victim of any scam.
Never my personal care neglect.
Treat everyone with due respect.
Be friendly and have many friends to cherish
May love of family never perish.
Keep an eye on things that count,
Don't let correspondence mount.
Then when all is said and done,
There may be time for a little fun!

Date unknown 2014

Ritual of the Seasons

Summer's Farewell:

The summer's now fast fading.
All foliage turning brown.
Summer's warmth evading;
All leaves will soon fall down.

Autumn's Gold:

Say goodbye to greensward,
Let burnished gold abound!
Now we'll be trudging through the wood,
Leaves thick upon the ground.

Cold Descends:

Chrysanthemums still flowering,
The last to bless our eyes.
Clouds now are dark and louring,
And cold dull-gray the skies.

Winter Strikes:

The north wind now is master,
And strikes us to the bone.
It is a wicked blaster,
All warmth is now long gone.

Hope Springs:

A west wind whispers faintly,
The cold begins to clear.
Spring makes us all feel saintly,
To have survived the winter drear.

The Sun Returns:

The wind veers now to southernly,
Bracing, but warm to the face.
The bright shoots now, as eternally,
The hills and vales embrace.

18 October, 2014

The Oak and the Willow

The oak tree said to the sapling
“Now listen here young fellow:
I suppose you think you know it all
Just because you’re a willow?”
The willow answered politely:
“My dear old oak, good morning!
I’m sure I don’t know half as much
As you, but thanks for the warning!”
“I think I caught a touch of cheek
In your most pert reply.
I think that you must know your place.
Or we’ll not see eye-to-eye!”
“Well, I am just a tiny tree,
While you are way up high,
So it is very clear to me
That we’re not eye-to-eye.”
So now both were in agreement:
The young one knew his place;
The old one sat back contently,
Knowing that he’d saved his face.

7 October, 2014

Christmas Blessings

We wish you all a Merry Christmastide,
With a loving family at your side;
Whether you live with cold and snow,
Or in a clime where palm trees grow.

When you arise to meet the dawn,
On the birthday when Christmas was born,
Think of children throughout the map,
Who have no Christmas toys to unwrap.

And if you get some gifts of money,
Give some to those who haven’t any.
These poor, if even late in season,
Are grateful in need, for any reason.

Therefore kind people all, rejoice!
Whether adults, or girls and boys.
Then, when Christmastide is past,
May kindness in your hearts hold-fast.

7 October, 2014

Stanzas for Autumn

We welcome Autumn's arrival,
After summer's breathless days:
The nights are cool for sleeping,
And we enjoy each morning's haze.
The sunset now is sooner,
Followed by a longer night;
Trees decked out in reds and yellows,
The autumn flowers still bright.

We close the summer cottage,
The last morning swim we take;
Shutter all the windows tight,
And we say farewell to the lake.
Then driving on our way back home,
We stop to buy veggies and fruits.
Soon we must change summer habits:
Adopt fall and winter pursuits!

23 July, 2014

Peace

In the quiet and gentle hours of night
It always feels to be so neat,
Curled up in a comfy chair,
Book in hand and cat at feet.
Outside the moon lights up the trees,
I hear the creak of wind-bent boughs;
Inside I'm happy, at my ease.
Above all, the silence the night endows.
All is well in my sheltered world:
May the Earth's peace-flag be unfurled!

25 July, 2014

Birdsong in Spring

An avenue of trees I see
Looking from my window,
How it always please me
As I gaze with arms akimbo.

The birds are singing all day long,
Singing sweet and clear.
Sometimes such a tender song,
I can't withhold a tear.

So departs another year,
Winter, summer, fall and spring,
And there's no greater joy to hear
Than the earliest birds that sing.

16 June, 2014
(Brer's Birthday)

Dawn's Spell

At the window I ponder:
Dawn fills me with wonder!
The light on my face,
Overcomes me with grace.
I'm just from my bed:
The whole day's ahead!
What will I be granted?
A day that's enchanted?
Or a day full of sorrow
Yearning for tomorrow?
Life gives it – you take it!
No, life's what you make it!
So, up, up, and away:
I'll just make this MY day!

18 July, 2014

Groans from Old Bones

I search my mind
For what can be,
The benefits of longevity.
I'm fairly sound
In wind and limb,
But my agility
Is rather grim.
But I recite
My ABC,
And know 2 plus 2
Do not make 3.
But what is worse
As you'll agree,
Is that every hearse
I ever see
I always think
Has come for me.
So in the end you plainly see
I've nonagenarian senility!

4 July, 2014
(Barry's Bay, Ontario)

Summertime

Lounging on the deck is fun;
Nothing to do but stretch out long,
Soaking up the rays of sun,
And quietly humming a joyful song.

I have a cold lime drink in my hand,
And gaze at the sparkling water.
Children are playing in the sand,
And I hear their happy laughter.

The sun is high, I'm in the shade
Of a hat pulled over my eyes.
Later I'm enjoying lemonade,
And ice cold Eskimo pies.

What more could I ask of this happy world,
That could make me more contented?
I addressed the gods as I lay curled:
Nothing! And the gods at once consented.

5 July, 2014
(Barry's Bay, Ontario)

Farewell to Plymouth Hoe

A fresh breeze scurries the swiftly-mounting clouds.
The sailors love to walk aloft, some climbing up the shrouds.
The stays are cast off from the bollards on the shore,
Where sweethearts and wives are weeping – may see their men no more.
The gallant ship is sailing, far off from the land,
Heading for the Indies, the isles of palms and sand.
Such is the story of the merchantmen of old,
As they carry cargoes, which it's hoped will bring back gold.
The crews leave their homeland, perhaps for many years,
Facing storms, starvation, and other sailors' fears.
They work on deck with ropes, and some work down below.
Always they are hoping for a crow's nest cry "Land Ho!"
Will there be a rich exchange of goods on shore,
So that they return home with profit once more?
The crew's wives are waiting to share the gain,
Or if this voyage fails then they all must share the pain.
Lives and wealth are risked in each and every venture,
For there's more to sailing merchantmen than just adventure!
Some crew may die of scurvy, some in awful pain,
Yet the sailors all are ready to put to sea again.
So let us all be thankful for those who sail the seas,
That we can lead our healthy lives in comfort and ease.

25 June, 2014

Canada Day, 2014

Canada, reaching ocean to ocean
(and then north to the Arctic Ocean)
Has been for all citizens a potent potion.
Its seacoasts, mountains, and vast plains
Its timber, mineral and its grains,
Mighty rivers and placid lakes
All of which a heaven makes!
We live in peace and harmony,
And we'll strive to keep her free.
We enjoy freedom from our birth,
Because we value sweet liberty's worth.
Pioneers, immigrants, we've stayed to strive
And since Confederation we're one-hundred-twenty-five.
So now we raise our national voice
And for our fair land we all rejoice!

1st July, 2014

Evening Bliss

In the quiet of the evening,
When all our work is done,
We're sitting in the garden
Watching the setting sun,
It's a time for sweet reflection
Of a happy day behind:
What have we accomplished?
What weighs still on our mind?
Let's hasten to complete the day,
Before the sun is on its way!

12 June, 2014

My Life in An Hour

The first ten minutes
I'm playing in the sand,
Or walking with parents
All hand in hand.

The next ten minutes
I'm strutting in jeans,
All fun and games
With other 'teens.

By half-an-hour
I'm deeply in love,
And the best of life's
Sweet pleasures prove.

In forty minutes,
No longer free,
I have a happy
Family.

Old in an hour
Though young at heart,
But I'm not ready
Yet to depart.

17 June, 2014

Oh Barbara

I thank Fate for my amanuensis!
Without her, all my notes are senseless.
Life would be dull without my cat,
But perhaps I could get used to that.
And I find it very good
Always having my daily food,
And waking too; but my heart I think,
Without my amanuensis would sink.
Long may she live as my dear friend,
And our acquaintance never end!

21 February, 2014

Bedtime

I see you, nod your sleepy head:
It is time you went to bed.
Say your prayers turn out the light,
The angels of soft sleep alight.
The evening star through the window gleams,
And soon you're gently wrapped in dreams,
Oh, little child, so sweet and pure,
May goodness all your life endure.

[One of Barbara's favorites]
25 March, 2014

Dawn's Magic

A Crescent moon, and Venus bright,
Are saying goodbye to the night.
Below, a line of pink and blue
Says farewell to the sinking two.
Another glorious day begun,
Soon we'll see the rising sun.
How wonderful this world can be,
For the happy ones, like you and me:
So many wonders please the eye,
Looking up towards to the sky!
Below, some suffer a life of sorrow,
And dread the dawning of tomorrow.
We bless all those who suffer sadness,
And hope they soon find life's true gladness.

30 March, 2014

The Group

Those balmy days of summer,
Upper reaches of a stream;
Picnic on its grassy banks.
Each one of us would dream.
For our youth was full upon us,
Prospects we all thought were bright;
We all talked of our futures,
Until well into the night.

Now fifty years have vanished,
And another summer's here.
We've called again a gathering.
But smaller now I fear.
Many friends have moved away.
Some risen to wealth and fame;
Others passed to their reward:
Have left us but their name.

What does the future hold for us,
As we shall want to meet again?
Some still may die in penury,
Some senile, or are in pain,
Which one of us will be,
The remnant of our happy group:
Will it be you? Or me?

20 March, 2014

Struggles of a Would be Rhymers

I try to write some lines that rhyme
Word upon word, line after line –
Whoops! You noticed that didn't rhyme!
This poet's having a very hard time!
What else to write that will sound just fine?
(There – that now rhymes with line!
By summoning the poet's pain,
I found a word that rhymes again.)
Look, time is passing time is tight;
I'll try once more to get it right.
But I find it hard to write in verse:
The words all seem to come out worse!
Being a rhymers is such a curse!
If I just try harder, I'll do fine –
There, that sentence rhymes with "line"!
Yet, what I really hoped to say,
Is that rhyming just doesn't pay!

19 February, 2014

A Life Well Spent

I think on the whole that Fate is fair:
It does take here, but it gives back there.
And if you live a decent life,
A caring husband or a wife,
Doing the best to live debt-free.
Raising a healthy family,
That in the end you'll retire to leisure,
With grandchildren to give you pleasure.
It's how you face life's ups and downs:
With cheerful smiles or darker frowns?
For happiness in life you see
Is hardly won, it's never free;
From sense of humour never part.
So, go forth, be brave of heart;
Then I'm sure that you will see,
That Fate will take good care of thee.

(Throughout "Fate" may be replaced by "God" if you wish)

26 February, 2014

A Song for Seniors

In the evening of our life,
We should be mindful, in reflection,
Thinking both of care and strife,
But also moments of perfection.

Sometimes life is rich and full,
Yet will have some spells of sorrow,
While today is hard to pull,
We'll be pushed by joy tomorrow,

So, let elders all rejoice,
Stand up on highest mount:
We'll all sing out in heart and voice,
And all our blessings count!

12 February, 2014

Daydreams at Night

The stars are bright,
With a quarter moon;
Across the bay
A haunting tune.

The air is fragrant
From Mimosa's bloom.
Sea laps the shore –
The senses swoon!

So, here I am,
Back in my bed.
Tomorrow's woes
Refill my head.

14 January, 2014

A Teacher's Rules

Be quiet and listen, sit up straight.
Attend every class and never be late.
Behave, and do just as you're told,
Or you'll be sent outside, to stand in the cold.
If I catch you chatting with your chum,
I'll send you home with a note to your Mum!
Do your homework every night.
Be good children, never fight.
Don't use bad means to reach your ends,
And do be kind to all your friends.
Have no enemies in your class:
Don't get even, just let it pass.
Return from playtime at the bell.
Do all these things, and you'll do well.
Recall what I told you at age seven:
All good children go to Heaven!

(Recalling Polonius' advice to Laertes)
18 January, 2014

For Beth

A Sonnet of Sorrows

We were sitting in the sun, on a garden seat,
Side by side, in the spring of the year,
Holding hands, my sick wife and I.
Beth turned to me, said in words so sweet:
"I wish I could be better for you dear."
My heart leapt up, tears filled my eye:
In her dire distress, Beth thought still of me!
I was instantly touched by so plangent a plea.

The memory lingers, I'll never forget!
Beth died with dementia later that year.
The feeling endures for my precious dear:
With a heart full of love, there can be no regret.

There's no comfort in hoping that we'll meet again!
Death is forever; we survive but with our pain.

25 January, 2014



William F.E. Morley 1920 -

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