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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OUR BOYS, AND OTHER POEMS ***

Our Boys and Other Poems



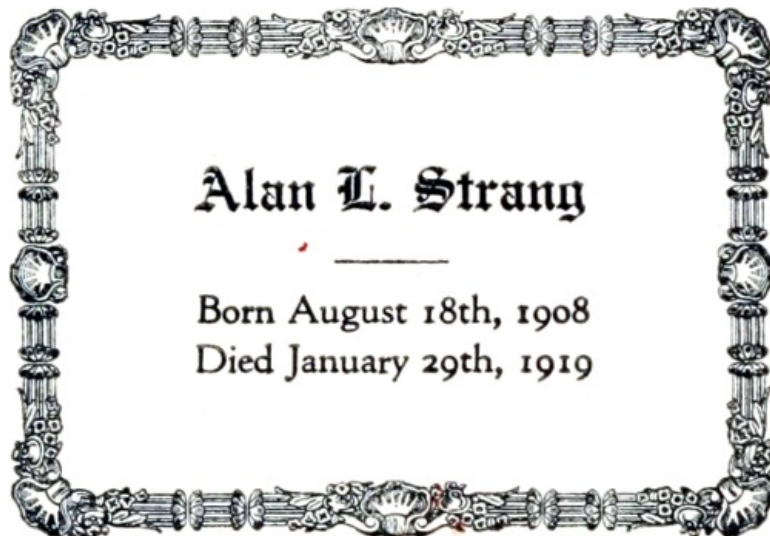
by

ALAN L. STRANG

California's BOY POET

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BY J. L. STRANG





Introduction

Alan L. Strang was born in Spokane, Washington, August 18, 1908. Living there until he was four years old, he came to California in 1913 with his parents, making their home in Redwood City.

He had a gentle, loving disposition, was always frail and delicate and possessed a mental development far in advance of his years. He was taken to the Great Beyond January 29, 1919.

The poems contained in this book were written prior to his tenth birthday. Considering the age of the author we feel that the work contains real merit, while the sentiment expressed betokens that patriotic spirit which never fails or hesitates when our country calls for men.

J. L. S.

To the Reader of this Book

This little book's a letter,
I send direct to you;
I hope that you will like it,
And read it thru and thru.
And after you have read it,
Just send a thot to me;
Your thots will help to make me
The "Poet" I would be.

Yours very truly,

ALAN L. STRANG,

Redwood City, California.

Our Boys

[Pg 12]

Written after the United States entered the war, fighting on the side of the Entente Allies.

Halt! Attention! Salute the flag,
The boys are marching by;
They're going forth to win the war
For us to do or die.
Our country needed fighting men,
Her liberty to save;
These boys responded to the call,
And all they had they gave.

[Pg 13]

All loyal hearts are beating fast,
And hope our bosoms fill;
For liberty shall reign supreme
O'er ocean, dale and hill.
With no regrets for parted hopes
Or futures cast aside,
Our soldier boys are marching by;
They are our country's pride.

Our Soldier Boy

[Pg 14]

Written as a tribute to my brother, W. M. Strang, with the Engineers.

He said, "I'm Daddy's soldier boy,"
When he was five years old;
And then went out and built snow forts,
Although the day was cold.

[Pg 15]

The snowballs were his hand grenades,
A stick his bayonette;
And with a home-made wooden gun
The foe he bravely met.

In five more years he joined the "scouts"
And hiked across the hills;
He learned to wear a khaki suit,
And do military drills.

And so the years passed swiftly on,
And now he is a man;
He's in the trenches over there,
Fighting for Uncle Sam.

I know he'll make the Huns regret
They started this big fight,
For he knows the cause he's fighting for
Is liberty and right.

A Small Boy's Desire

[Pg 16]

Written for the first thrift stamp drive.

I want to be a soldier
And march away to France;
I want to find a wicked "Hun,"
And shoot him in the pants.

[Pg 17]

I want to be a soldier,
And wear a khaki suit;
I want to have a sword and gun
And all the "Boches" shoot.

I want to be a soldier,
And have an aeroplane
To drop bombs on the German towns,

And fly back home again.

I want to be a soldier
And do my little bit;
My country needs brave fighting men,
While here at home I sit.

Some day I'll be a big, big man;
I'll go to war and fight
The wicked Hun, or any one
Who does not do what's right.

But now the only way for me
To help my country win,
Is save my coin and buy thrift stamps,
So, boys, let's save our tin.

The Storm

[Pg 18]

The rough old Mr. Storm
Is whirling, swirling past
He makes the treetops bow their heads
And trembles at his blast.

[Pg 19]

He never stops to think
Of the damage he may do,
He's always rushing in and out
And hitting, batting you.

He pushes big, black clouds
Against the mountain tops;
The rain and hail comes rushing down
In large, round crystal drops.

The storm will soon be over;
See the rainbow in the sky.
The birds will sing on airy wing,
And the bright sun shine on high.

Do Not Worry

[Pg 20]

Do not worry over trifles, though
to you they may seem great,
All your fretting will not help you,
or your troubles dissipate.

[Pg 21]

If your sky is dark and gloomy,
and the sun is hid from view,
Bravely smile and keep on smiling,
And your friends will smile with you.

Happiness is so contagious, and a
smile is never lost;
Then why worry over trifles, tho
your heart seems tempest tossed.

Therefore go on life's journey
with an optimistic smile,
See the world is good to live in,
and that living is worth while.

How can we Fool the Rooster?

[Pg 22]

Written when the clock was set ahead one hour on April 1, 1918.

Our Rooster wakes at half-past five
And crows with all his might,
He tries to wake the people up
Before the day is light.

[Pg 23]

When Daddy hears the rooster crow
He knows he should awake
And light the kitchen fire, so Ma
Can cook the Johnny cake.

Now, maybe we can fool my Dad
That it's half-past five when it's half-past four,
And maybe the system's the best we have had
To fool some thousands of people or more;
But, how can we fool that rooster?

[Pg 24]

[Pg 25]

I have always thought our rooster had
A clock inside of his head,
And I don't know how we can fix it so
We can set the clock ahead.
I asked my Dad, and he said to me,
"Why, son, you surely know
A rooster's instinct wakens him
And tells him when to crow."

Now the hands of the clock we can turn ahead,
We can fool the people and feel content;
But the thing that worries me night and day,
And on which my entire thought is bent
Is, how can we fool that rooster?

A Wreath Of Flowers

[Pg 26]

Written for Decoration Day, May 30, 1918.

I wove me a wreath of flowers
To place in memories hall,
In honor of the brave and fearless men
Who had answered our country's call.
The men who had answered, and fought, and died
For the cause of freedom, our country's pride!

[Pg 27]

I wove me a wreath of flowers
With many a sigh and tear,
As a tribute to all the good and true
Who were given few honors here.
The man of humble piety
Who lived and died in obscurity.

A wreath of flowers, a little thing
For flowers wither and fade;
But the fragrance they shed is not soon forgot
By me, who the wreath has made.
So the virtues of those who have gone before,
Will always be treasured in memory's store.

EPITAPH

[Pg 28]

Our loved ones lay them down to sleep
And leave us here to grieve and mourn,
While we, our silent watches keep,
O'er their low graves whence they are bourne.
Some heroes are in battle slain,
Their names are honored far and near,
While others die on beds of pain
And no sad mourner sheds a tear.

[Pg 29]

This day we honor each and all
Whose soul has left its temporal case;
And be he great, or be he small,
We'll reverence his resting place.

The poems and story of Masata in part second of this book were written during the last month of the young Author's life.

He was taken to the Spirit Land, January 29, 1919.

The Lily of the Valley

[Pg 32]

I've a lily of the Valley
That I'm keeping here for you;
I care for and protect it,
And water it with dew.
It is a living emblem
Of the wonderful domain,
Where all is pure and love-like,
And where we feel no pain.

[Pg 33]

Yes, the Lily of the Valley
Is a tie twixt you and me;
For every time you see one
Think how happy I must be.
I'm an atom of the infinite,
How wonderful it seems;
Yet from your sphere the finite
But a thin veil intervenes.

The Roses

[Pg 34]

I have roses in my garden,
And their fragrance fills the air.
How I love to watch them blooming;
For they all are very fair.

[Pg 35]

Some have deep red velvet petals,
Some again are snowy white;
And the little baby pink ones,
Surely give you such delight.

Pretty birds come to my garden,
And sing there the live-long day;
Yes the birds and pretty flowers
Help and cheer us on our way.

The Seasons

[Pg 36]

SPRING

[Pg 37]

Spring time is here with its sunshine and showers,
All nature is waking from its long winter sleep.
The gardens are blooming with beautiful flowers,
The song-birds are carolling melodies sweet.

SUMMER

The summer comes with glaring heat,
And we will have vacation;
We pack our grips for the seashore trips,
Or other recreation.

AUTUMN

The harvest moon is shining bright,
The leaves are falling everywhere;
How glorious is the autumn night,
How cool and bracing is the air.

WINTER

Jack frost is stalking through the land,
The ground is covered white, with snow.
We like to sit beside the fire
And tell the tales of long ago.

Wishes

[Pg 38]

A BIRTHDAY WISH.

[Pg 39]

I'm wishing a happy birthday,
To you my dear sweet friend;
And may every day be a happy day
Is the wish I will always send.

A CHRISTMAS WISH.

A Merry Christmas Wish to you,
And may your heart be gay;
May Santa bring you many things,
This Merry Christmas day.

A NEW YEAR WISH

A happy happy, New Year,
We all are wishing you;
We hope no sorrow you shall know
This whole year through.

Dreams

[Pg 40]

Away o'er the hills in the valley green
Away from the noise of the busy town;
I dream sweet dreams of the olden days
Of you in your beautiful wedding gown.

[Pg 41]

I dream that you come and sit by me
And you hold my hand and ruff my hair;
Your eyes shine with a sweet delight
That I used to see so often there.

Then my heart is filled with a hallowed love
And I know t'is but a little way
To the spirit land, and I know that I
Shall meet you there some glad sweet day.

Then our wedding day in the spirit land
Will be filled with love and joy serene;
And the infinite hand will guide us where
The waters are still and the valleys green.

Masata

[Pg 42]

Masata was an Indian boy, he lived on the banks of the Ohio River in Kentucky. During the Revolutionary War in 1771, the Americans were taking over the land very fast, and when Masata was ten years old his parents moved to the wild regions of the Dakotas, taking Masata with them.

[Pg 43]

Here he enjoyed life although it was much colder than in his native Kentucky, and in the Winter months he wore coats of fur made from bear skin.

The days soon became filled with interesting things for Masata. One day when he was roaming through the wilds, he heard a wild buffalo approaching. He seemed almost helpless, as he had nothing but a small bow and a few arrows, and the buffalo was only a short distance from him. He began to run in what he thought was the direction of his home, but instead he was going in the opposite way. In a few minutes he saw the smoke of a camp fire and ran toward it. By this

[Pg 44]

time the beast was very close to him and he was almost in despair, when the buffalo lurched forward, then rolled over dead. Three Indians hunting near by had hit him in a vital spot with an arrow. [Pg 45]

The Indians belonged to a tribe which was his father's most bitter enemy, and they took him before their chief. The chief ordered that he be let live for two moons, and he was given a bed of dry twigs to sleep on as the night was drawing near.

Time passed quietly for Masata until the approach of the morning of the second moon. He had been planning how he would escape from his father's enemies. Finally one morning he slipped into a bear skin and hopped bravely off toward the woods. The Indians thinking he was a bear, shot arrows at him and wounded him in the right arm, but Masata kept bravely on and was soon out of range of the arrows. Then he bandaged his wounded arm the best he could and set out for his father's wigwam. [Pg 46]
[Pg 47]

He arrived safely the same evening, and his parents were overjoyed to see him and know he was safe once more, and the tribe made a great feast, or as they call it, Pow Wow, as a welcome to his home coming.

While Masata was still a young "brave" their chief died and after a great ceremony, Masata was made Chief of the tribes, and was known as great and good ruler.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OUR BOYS, AND OTHER POEMS ***

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