



Vanished Hands

*By a Crowe Lake Poet
Cora Alice Bleecker*

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Edited by Anne Philpot
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Vanished Hands

A collection of poetry



by a Crowe Lake Poet
Cora Alice Bleecker
March 27, 1865 - December 12, 1954

THIS IS MY MORNING VIEW

Orioles nest on the tip of a limb
Swaying and tossing in wind so dear
Clinging so closely to branches fine
Dreaming of days when summer was here.

Who was it fashioned you walls so strong?
What little architect drew your plan
With entrance only the home-folk knew
Cleverly hid from the eyes of man?

Summer sped swiftly, ere dark days came
Birds and their young were far away
Leaving their home on the elm tree limb
High and bare in the wind to sway.

Instinct is strongest of nature's laws
Schools cannot teach it or books reveal.
God holds the scales of effect and cause
He knows the reason - we only feel.

Cora Alice Bleeker



MORNING MIST

Such clouds of grey chiffon covering the Lake
Twisting and turning strange figures they mock
Like ghosts of grey wolf cubs crouching so low,
Like smoke of bombed cities, faintly aglow
Dividing and closing battalions in line
Marching and turning, wheeling in time
To catch the light breezes that come with the day
Fantastic and dreamlike, they vanish away.

Cora Alice Bleeker

EVENING

When evening sunset tints the western sky,
A distant chime rings out the closing day
A sense of peace has silenced human cry,
And man seeks rest along his humble way;
Then Life can hide the earthling's small offense
Among the shadows of the tranquil gloom,
And mortal should lose judgements and all sense
Thru magic of the slowly rising moon.
Yet when the day doth once more bring the light
The peace is gone, the noise and din return
And man's continues on his endless flight
To escape Death's passage where all must turn.
Dusk! then the sun sinks in the fading west
And man again knows peace and welcome rest.

Cora Alice Bleeker

TREES

Pale green of birches
Deep green of pine
Dead green of grape leaves
Hanging in line.
Grey green of poplars
Leaves all a-quiver
Dark green of cedars
Skirting the river.

Summer is prodigal
Wasting her dyes
Flinging her greenery
High to the skies.
Then low like a carpet
*Soft verdure is seen
While I in my hammock
Lie floating between

Cora Alice Bleeker

*In another version, Cora writes:
"Green flooring is seen"

ROADS

The long grey roads, the endless roads
They travel up and down
Through miles of lonely countryside
And many a busy town.

They swerve and dip, then steeply rise
To climb a crested hill
Then turn aside to pass a while
Through moor lands wide and still.

They pass the humble cottage home
Where children throng the door
And by the farmers' patient herds
And barns and stacks in store.

By schools and churches, lawns and flowers
Nor turn aside to stay
In quiet cities of the dead
With shafts of granite grey.

They know the yellow green of spring
When first the fields awake
And wealth of sheaves and summer leaves
And toll of autumn take.

They pass a well remembered spot\
That once to me was home
But changing years have dimmed the tie
And later loves have grown.

Till I am quite content to know
That roads that lead afar
Can always lead back home again
As star-shine points a star.

Cora Alice Bleeker



MOTHERHOOD

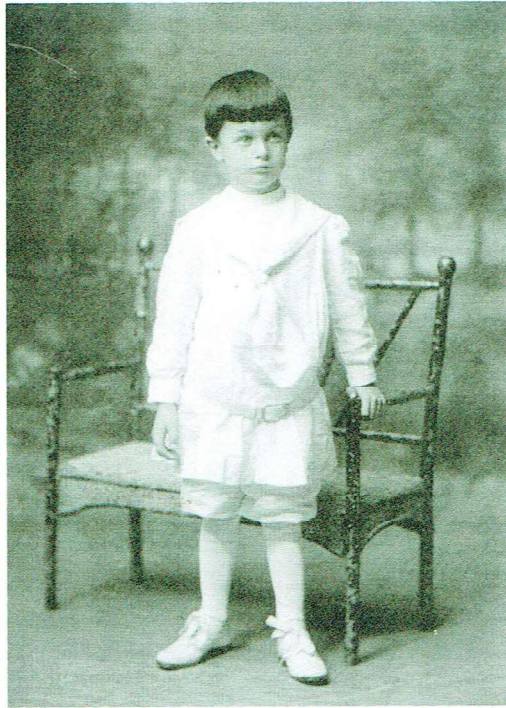
I do not ask to keep him always near me,
Dear son of mine in whom my heart is bound,
The thought I hold to comfort and to cheer me-
In life's long conflict he his work has found.

And yet I wonder oft did I prepare him
For all the traps and pitfalls he must face
The quick temptations ready to ensnare him
And cast a shade on boyhood's easy grace

When first to keep and cherish he was given me
So soft and sweet, so tender, for my care,
It seemed that Heaven's love had newly shriven me
To write my work on book so pure and fair.

'Twas mine the duty and the right to mould him,
No other hand could take the place of mine,
With all my love and wisdom to enfold him
And make of him God's creature, true and fine.

To hold the thought forever there before me
What he became was due to me alone,
My work must stand to hearten or to score me,
No second chance could for my faults atone.



**And if my heart was filled with pain and sorrow
When faced with anger or with black despair,
Then sudden smiles from sadness hope would borrow,
As tempests' rages and clear the air.**

**So oft I strove and failed of full attainment,
(Tis only age that gives us grace to know)
Escaping by my trying life's arraignment,
That in the end my finished work would show.**

**My finished work? not so the world regards him,
Yet through his life unconscious hands will guide
Not knowing what enjoins or what retards him,
But choosing right from wrong whate'er betide.**

**And so pass on through ages yet uncounted
A mother's love, unselfish and supreme,
Unwritten tales of obstacles surmounted,
I think of this, with leisure now to dream.**

CROWE LAKE MORNING

A dawn wind stirs the tree-tops
Grey darkness lifts its pall
And sweet and clear, from cedars near
A bird's faint call.

White birches show more plainly
The Eastern sky grow bright
Dark pines stand clear, with down dropped spear
A squirrel stays its flight.

Like silver disc the lake lies
On sea of mist afloat
Earth's charm unfolds, the stillness holds
A loon's long note.

From every shore the hills now
Through mists and clouds appear,
Their outlines rise against the skies
A fish leaps near.

The western isles seem nearer,
With headlands, rocks and bays,
Then dip of oar from farthest shore
Man's quest betrays.

* * *

At noon the wind blew strongly from the west
And every wave was tipped with foamy crest
Tall trees were bowed, the leaves in spirals whirled,
And peace and silence an unknown word.

MOONLIGHT

An eerie, ghostly, fairy light
Comes in my window pane at night
And touches all the common things
With magic soft an angel's wings.

The footboard of my wooden bed
Glow like some polished figurehead,
A chest of drawers, defaced by scratches,
A wavering ray of moonlight catches.

Framed pictures hanging in a row
Look strange and hostile, though I know
Their every detail through the day,
Fantastic now they seem to sway.

A pale dim light on closet door,
A square reflection on the floor
Are both a mirror's tricky gleam
Repeated by a chance moon-beam.

If it were possible that we
The soul of things could somehow see
The faithfulness of rooms that stand
And wait our coming, our command.

The waiting chairs with arms outspread,
Pillows to rest a weary head,
The sturdy character of floors
And ready willingness of doors.

An insight swift as radium's gleam
Might show things other than they seem,
Changed to a higher, wiser plane
Like moonlight through a window pane.

Cora Alice Bleeker

SHUT IN

Shut in from nature's full and free observance
With outlook strictly bounded, set and guarded,
My window shows a clear-cut picture, framed
By hanging curtains, drapes and such prim fancies.
Four oblong panes of glass set straightly upright
In frame of wood against the winter's blasts,
Without a scene whose details, living, vivid
Are etched against a sky of evening beauty.

Acacias, stripped of all their lacy foliage
Stand like some half grown urchins, twisted, ugly,
All their uncouthness showing in their branches
And half defiant in their wintry stillness.
An elm whose tall and pliant loveliness
Has been o'erborne by pressure of gaunt branches
And, in its ceaseless quest for light and freedom
Grown all aslant like leaning tower of Pisa.

Tall maple branches lift directly skyward
Close clustered as if gathered for protection
Dreaming of autumn's red and golden glory
Or of the coming summer's leafy sweetness.
Cedars, old-fashioned brown and stately ladies
Their full skirts spreading to the withered grasses,
and father back and reaching high above them
The tops of dark-hued pines are pointing upward.

Their background - there's an artist glowing colours
In horizontal lines are brushed and blended,
Pink fading into mauve, gold into grey,
With changing blues and purples streaked and
marked.

Dark clouds sail past as driven by unseen powers
Outlines swift moving, shapes form and disappear,
And clear above where colours now have faded
One calm far star proclaims a changeless God.

.....

The heavy clouds are hanging low to earth
The wind is driving fast the rain and sleet
The branches sway, tall elms are bowed and best
Like giant wrestlers when in strife they meet.

Courageous birds that but a short time since
Had thought that summer's halcyon days were near
Are hiding neath the cedars' thickest clumps
Waiting till March shall run his made career.

But through it all an undertone of hope,
Of surest promise of a fairer time,
Of joys must sweet, long days of sunny calm
And starlit nights, of happiness sublime,
Makes even dark and stormy days appear
As but a dim-lit hall through which our feet
Must pass to reach a room of light and cheer.
Spring-time of promise, thee we gladly greet.

Cora Alice Bleeker



LIKE SQUEAK OF RUSTY HINGE

Like squeak of rusty hinge
Like squawl of quinsied throat
The sound that those damned blackbirds make
Most surely gets my goat.

If they must yip and yap
Why don't they keep in tune?
With raucous voice and endless note
They spoil a perfect June.

With ears attuned to yips
We miss the expected yap
Why should such devil's note as this
Leave in one's mind a gap?

Oh for a weapon charged
With deadly missiles true,
I'd take the most extreme delight
In firing it at you.

Cora Alice Blecker

HIGHLANDS OF HALIBURTON

I know a rocky hill-top
A late sun shining bright
Paints shaggy moss and granite
With flecks of golden light.

An old old road climbs near it
Grass grows along the trail
With water scalloped gravel
Where twists and turns prevail.

Tall trees meet high above it
Nor sight nor sound is there
Of human habitation
Just earth - and sky- and air.

A calm that passes knowledge
Enfolds that lonely hill
Earth's arms reach up to hold one
So close, so warm and still.

Life's trials fade and vanish
No thoughts the heart can fill
But joy in God's Creation
That whispers "Peace. Be still."



Nancy Narrie

The flowers loved her, ever her hands had held
The touch that seemed to enthral them.
For her all growing things and plants
Put forth their utmost effort to surpass
In greenness and luxuriance of blossom
To turn her windows and her garden beds
Into such scenes of beauty that the passersby
Were drawn to gaze and turn and gaze again
And marvel that a woman could so charm
Life's dreary places; could create enchantment.

She had no children, yet she mothered many
Took them to heart and home and cared for them
As if they were her own; Made their lives happy
And started them through childhood's petty trials
And youth's heavier burdens, to be
The useful men and women of her dreams.
A full life, giving pleasure to the many
And happiness to her own, crowned with the gift
Of years and hope of rest and peace.



A PROTEST

At a crossing of a lazy village street
An old old elm had stood through changing days,
Its leafy form had caught the glances fleet
Of passers-by in all those quiet ways.

The oldest there had heard their fathers tell
That tree had been a land-mark when they came
With scanty store, to labour long and well
To gain a living, though not wealth nor fame.

Its massive trunk and deeply rutted bark
Showed what a giant's growth it still maintained.
Its branches trimmed and cut, it towered stark
And prayed to heaven man's hand should be restrained.

From laying low a relic of the time
When forests spread for leagues on every side
And human foot had known not land nor clime
Save the red Indians in his strength and pride.

Now Progress marked by speed and energy
Had caught that street in Transportation's stride
And nothing like the life of one old tree
Could cause that mighty force to turn aside.

And so had come the parting of the ways,
Should it be slain in venerated age?
Be left to finish out its length of days
Or die, a victim of the Speed-King's rage?

Cora Alice Bleeker
(March 27, 1865 - December 12, 1951)

ROY

He was a proud and valiant Knight
He sallied forth in armour light
A bag of clubs upon his back
More varied than a peddler's pack.

He hastened to the rendezvous
Not loitering like me or you
But with determination grim
To do or die - just fancy him.

Plus fours or slacks or common pants
Or slickers if the weather's bad
No storms can bunker me, he rants
Ah. He's a gay and fearless lad.

His eyes grow fierce. His face looks grim.
His end sticks out, his feet toe in.
He swings his club with lightning twist
(Tis done by a most dextrous wrist.)

He swats that ball poor pallid thing
Till hills around the echoes sing
Then follows it in fiendish glee
Rejoiced that all around can see.

How easy 'tis if in the know
And that he's competent to show
For hours he can thusly roam
But me - ah me - he can't write home!



THERE MUST BE SOME BRIGHT LAND

**There must be some bright land
Where we can be together
Such love as we have known
Cannot be lost forever.**

**For touch of vanished hands
My hands have ached unduly
They cannot understand
Who have not loved so truly.**

**You will be there to meet me
(You will grasp my hand)
To wave to me and greet me.
God will understand.**

**There in that heavenly haven
We will rest in endless peace
All partings here forgotten
All troubled longings cease.**

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Cora Alice Bleeker



Cora Alice Bleecker March 27, 1865 - December 12, 1954

SARAH MARIAH JOHNS + GEORGE WILLIAM BLEEKER

(4/8, 1839 - 2/17 1929)

(4/ 27 1824 to 6/ 17, 1895)

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1. George Bartholomew Bleeker died in 1903 at 42 years, having married Miss Waterhouse a niece of Mrs. Reg. Pearce, and having two sons, George and McLaren
2. Charles Archibald Bleeker Sept. 1857 to March 13, 1945
3. Fred William Bleeker, Aug. 15 1868 to Oct. 1910
Lived in brick house, now United Church Manse
Married Miss McWilliams - daughters, Thelma & Dora (lived in California)
4. Maggie A. - July 30, 1865 to May 2, 1889
5. Minerva - daughter was Jen who moved to U.S. with husband, George Malloy
6. Bert - referred to "Sariah Mariah, the Bed's On Fire!" - Jeweller in the U.S.
7. Frank "Pete" - moved to U.S.

Feb. 3, 1886

CHARLES ARCHIBALD BLEEKER + **CORA ALICE POWERS -**
(Sept 2, 1857-March 13, 1945) (03/27/1865 - 12/12/1951)
Father - Amos Powers
Mother - Dinah Burton
Sister "Addie" Adelaide
Brother - Albert in Oregon
Sister Lucy Shepherd in Windsor

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1. Ernest Carley (Carl) Bleeker (March 20, 1887 - Nov. 23, 1913
Lived with Aunt Addie (sister of Cora) for high school at Brockton, Mass. U.S
- attended Harvard (Forestry)
2. Gilbert Roy Bleeker - Aug. 10, 1889 - May 5, 1982
- Went out west (Mich., Minn. & Oregon) to work with his uncle Albert, Cora's
brother, and the Powers cousins in Oregon
3. Charles Howard Bleeker - Jan 1, 1902 to January 18, 1995
Married Marjory Evelyn McInnis on Oct. 6, 1944 (met in Meaford, Ont.)
Went to London Ontario to live with Dr. & Jen Fidler for high school
At 16 worked in office at Deloro
At 17, lived with Dr. Carmichael for Grades 11 and 12
Attended Queen's University, Deloro in the summers

Children: John Gilbert Bleeker - March 30, 1947 -
Sarah Jane - October 6, 1949 -
Margaret Susan (Peggy) March 30, 1955 -

MIRIAM SAVAGE

- Worked for Sun Life, coming to Marmora from Montreal after her parents died
- Brought by Howard Bleeker to act as a housekeeper for his parents, and lived with the Bleekers for 27 years, assisting at home and later in the Bleekers' office (CPR ticket agents, secretary for hydro office and insurance.
- Upon the death of Howard's parents, Miriam was given the Bleeker business by the Bleeker brothers. She eventually bought what is now the Marmora Herald office, maintaining the business and living upstairs. In addition to all the above duties, Miriam was also the Village Clerk