

Oh, America, we have loved your native hills,
Your rocks and rills;
We have seen you wake at dawn and go to sleep at dusk.
We love you, America,
You and your depth and breadth of love.

I have stood upon a ship at night
And watched your stars come out so bright
And thought of God.
A moment, no more, then rush madly on;
Crashing through the black of night
I wondered who gave the waves such might...
Hush, not now - don't think there be a God,
Go on and on.

A July morn - hot - sultry and damp,
A bee buzzing in and out of camp...honey for a tree thinks me.
A hawk circles high in the sky;
Your eyes they reach the great distant peaks and wonder at this great feat.
Why was a land so full of ~~honey~~ plenty?
Who made the bee, the hive, the tree?
Who put such life in so small a thing?
Your heart thumps hard as you begin to believe.
A rustle in the nearby leaves, a squirrel makes up the tallest pine,
The hawk circles higher in the sky.

Enough! Away to the stream; enough of this silly talk and thought.
The gurgle of the brook is soft,
The water clear as palest gin,
The sun beats warm on the back of your neck;
Peace comes flooding through your veins.
The gurgle, gurgle of the brook,
"I made the brook, the brook, the brook,
The hills, the hills, the native rills,
I made, I made the sky."

A flash of red - a strike - I jerk;
My line is taut - a rainbow - and he gives up fast.
The cold silver of a living thing squirms in my hand.
This is for me I think - something real and solid that I can touch;
God, bah. That's for the church and all its cold and silly looks.
Give me my woods and fields and brooks;
My woods. My fields. My brooks. Mine, mine, mine.
The gurgle of the brook, brook, brook. My native hills. Mine.
Oh Hell! And with a start, peace comes in my heart.

A cold, frost, bitter December ~~noon~~ dawn.
The decoys out, the boat away; ah me, the beginning of a perfect day.
Gosh, I love this widening marsh, this ice, this tide, this great heart.
This is where life is wrought out -
Amidst the tides that come and ~~go~~ then go out...
The tides of men that have come and gone;
They lived and fought not far from here -
Lincoln and Jefferson,
Washington at Valley Forge. What was that he said?
Something about raising a standard?
How did he know which standard to raise?
What gave him such clear and direct vision?

A rooster crows up tp the sky,
 A streak of morning in the east,
 The mist gets up on its feet.
 Day has started...who started day?
 The dawn, the sun, the rooster crow,
 What makes the mist stand up and walk ?
 Man, could he do these things today?

Quack, Quack, Quack, and I crouch within the blind
 And watch the circling ducks of mine;
 Ducks of mine, mine, mine.
 Quacks cease and a rush of wings as they sail to meet the gun.
 The ring of shot, the folded wings, the splash, the clam, the wait again.
 Across the marsh in perfect V sail the geese to fields of rye.
 Their perfect flight is keen to watch
 As if they flew the beat by watch.
 Hudson's Bay, Saskatchewan, the mudflats of the greatest streams
 "ave seen these stately birds pass O'er.
 Such a flight - 6000 miles or more of air and ground.
 What brings these same birds winging back each year from such far-flung land?
 They must be wise...
 Who gave them the strength?
 Who made them wise?
 Who shows them the way to glide?
 God, He could do that.... God, God, God.
 The beat, beat, beat of wings.
 They trust their leader all the way.
 Who whispers "This is the way"- lead on and on and on...?"

Shake myself! Life is getting dull/
 No ducks, no luck, back in again.
 You rush from fun to fun - and find satisfaction must be a pun.
 You seek it in the flame of youth,
 The girls, the dates, the hurts, the pains -
 It all adds up to zero and no more.
 The glitter that you thought was gold has turned to brass.
 It glitters no more.
 You chase on, hurrying on the run,
 Afraid to slow down...
 Afraid of that voice that persists and slips in.
 What voice? What persists?
 There's no such thing - it's all my imagination.
 But I don't slow down, I run on.
 College seemsto be the spark,
 It satisfies and then grows stale;
 Frats, parties, girls galore - jealousies, hurts, aches and more;
 Closed hearts, closed eyes, ~~sleep no more.~~*****

~~Life?~~ Who made life?/
 Invented the heart that aches to know the answer for its use, it's part;
 Invented? Or was it made?
 Created is the word.
 The preacher used to say, "Created in God's own image today."
 Cold, pious minister - far away; fights at home so they say.
 None of this sissy talk for me; move on move fast, dpn't stop to think!
 Live and let live, that's the way; get all you can today;
 Cut the other fellow out, step on his date,
 Make life rough - you're first-rate.
 Argue, hate, shoot the bull, put yourself in the center;
 That's where you belong. Why fear?

"What about the guys you hurt?
The bruised of heart and not of limb?
What about the broken hearts because you stopped the spark?
What about the cost of sin that creeps in?
Sin is death - "
But always I,I,I. It hounds you to your bed and wakes throbbing in your head.

Hell, what a life! Hell? Who made Hell?
The Devil, the fiery stone, the pains, the groans.
Heaven must be if there is a Hell.
Wonder who made Heaven and Hell?

Have a beer and join the fun;
Whoops you're on and off again;
Round 2, make it 3...4,5,6, you down them quick.
Life, yes life takes on a spark - things look different in the dark;
Besides, the girls are on the mark.
Forget, forget, forget - it pounds in your head
And you stumble in the yard for air.
Sleep, sleep, how can you be so dear?
Sleep and sickness combined;
Part of the Devil's heart, such slime.
The sun looks ugly in the sky, you notice no one passing by.
"What makes you run away from me, you who I have chosen to be free?"
Out with that damned voice, out!
It won't get me - I'll make my way;
Alone and lonely you trudge your way,
You find yourself full of fear;
Life is lived, not stumbled clear,
But walked with mind and heart at peace
That men might wash at Galilee's feet.

Oh Hell. No, damn - not Hell again.
Move on - there are things you haven't tried.

The runner flashes down the field amid the roars and shrills;
Skirts and dodges all the way to score and break a deadlocked tie.
It's you. You feel that life is new.
People pat you on the back. It's false - no, it's real; you take it back.
You feed on ego and your pride;
Vanity and conceit sit at your side.
Life takes on meaning, so you say -
Something inside answers, "nay".
Ah bah! Off to the dance; you were the hero of that game.
Then a thought creeps through your heart,
"Was it your run or the team win that made you spark?
Would you feel as you do if Sammy had made that run for you?"

Get out! That voice that haunts and hunts you down.
But you can't lose it.
Keep going on - there is still more to taste of life.

The war - your part. You think how sharp those bars look on your collar.
Do they satisfy? Well not quite...
"Not at all", comes creeping through your heart.
They do, they do, they do! "Do they"?

Oh, what's the use!
Overseas at last and yet the same old heavy past.
Oh, for a guy who could understand - oh, for a chance to talk.
"Forget it, kid, you're growing soft - keep moving fast as Hell!
Don't slow down - you'll lose your place with those who set the mark."
A nightmare is this life to you.

Home again, discharged, free.
Free from what? That voice? No.
It whispers in your ear and haunts you in your sleep.
What's that? There's something special in that voice today;
"Why not give in and see how you can live with me?
Give in, give in, give in and live with Me."
A hush, a pause, completely quiet;
The voice calms and then inspires;
Your life pours out in floods of tears
And humility is very near.
Something breaks and thaws,
New life comes flooding through the walls.
Forgiveness is peace and love and open heart;
Peace, and that still, persistent Voice ~~is~~ reigns supreme -
And all the world seems painted new with green and amber and palest blue;
And all the hurt is gone.
The defeat, the scorn.

My rocks, my rills, my native hills,
My brooks, my bees, my heart, my trees.
My love is for you and Anyman, that they may walk God's Good Road again -
And the Voice deep within me whispers, "My child",
And I answer with a smile, "Yes, Lord".