

FOUR FLANDERS POEMS

2.

“PROGRESSING FAVOURABLY FOR US”

30th May, 1915

YEA, all is well. God's sun is overhead;
Our farmers will be rich men by-and-by;
The wages of the labourer are high;
Our voters, strikers, stay-at-homes have bread.
Ye can sleep easy when ye go to bed,
Young stalwarts, whom no foe can terrify;
There are so many fools ready to die—
Victory *must* come, ere all of them are dead.
Nay, let it ne'er be told in future days,
That at the bidding of the Infidel
We left our ancient and unruffled ways.
What though he search the armouries of Hell?
Have we not armed out heroes with our praise?
What need they more? Nay, verily all is well.

FOUR FLANDERS POEMS

3.

TO THE LAGGARDS

1st June, 1915

THERE went a cry across the bitter land—
A cry from men in very urgent need—
To others of their own well-trusted breed:
“Brothers, will ye not lend a helping hand—
For we are overmatched and undermanned,
And daily we grow fewer?” And ye, indeed,
Answered us fair, “We follow where you lead;
Hang on, brave hearts, a little.” And so our band
In confidence resigned themselves to bear
Through the slow winter till the promised spring.
Giving you time to gather and prepare.
'Tis summer now, and still in patience dumb,
Still we hang on, hang on, half-wondering
If after all you ever meant to come.

Major Thomas Bouch lived at Ashorne House, Ashorne and is mentioned on the Roll of Honour in Newbold Pacey. He had been a regular soldier before the start of the Great War and returned to the army at its outbreak. He was on the Western Front but appears to have left the army in 1915. He was a writer and these two poems are part of “Four Flanders Poems” published in “Storms in Teacups” (see <https://archive.org/details/stormsintecups00bouc>). The poems perhaps reflect a bitterness already, that those in the line were not getting the support they need and others at home were profiteering.

To know more about Thomas Bouch visit web page researched and prepared by Dene Valley U3A member, Michael Dane:
<https://sites.google.com/site/newboldpaceyww1/roll-of-honour/thomas-bouch>