

THE END

Basil J. Raymond

Why have I died,
Half climbed the hill to see the land beyond
While lime-dust dried
My eyes in death, I wide-searching long
To see the end?

Why do I sleep
While comrades over the crest have passed,
Left me to keep
Dead hands that clasp the rifle fast?
Is this the end?

Of those I loved
Across the fires of long ago, I spoke;
Now lips are dumb,
With war the wheel of life is broken
To jagged ends.

I willed to conquer
And took Death's hand to see the land ahead
As others have before.
Do you leave me silent, crouching in a gravel bed,
And to what end?

O God why—why
Must I look up the slope and never see?
Why did I die
Before the land across the hill belonged to me?
To make an end?