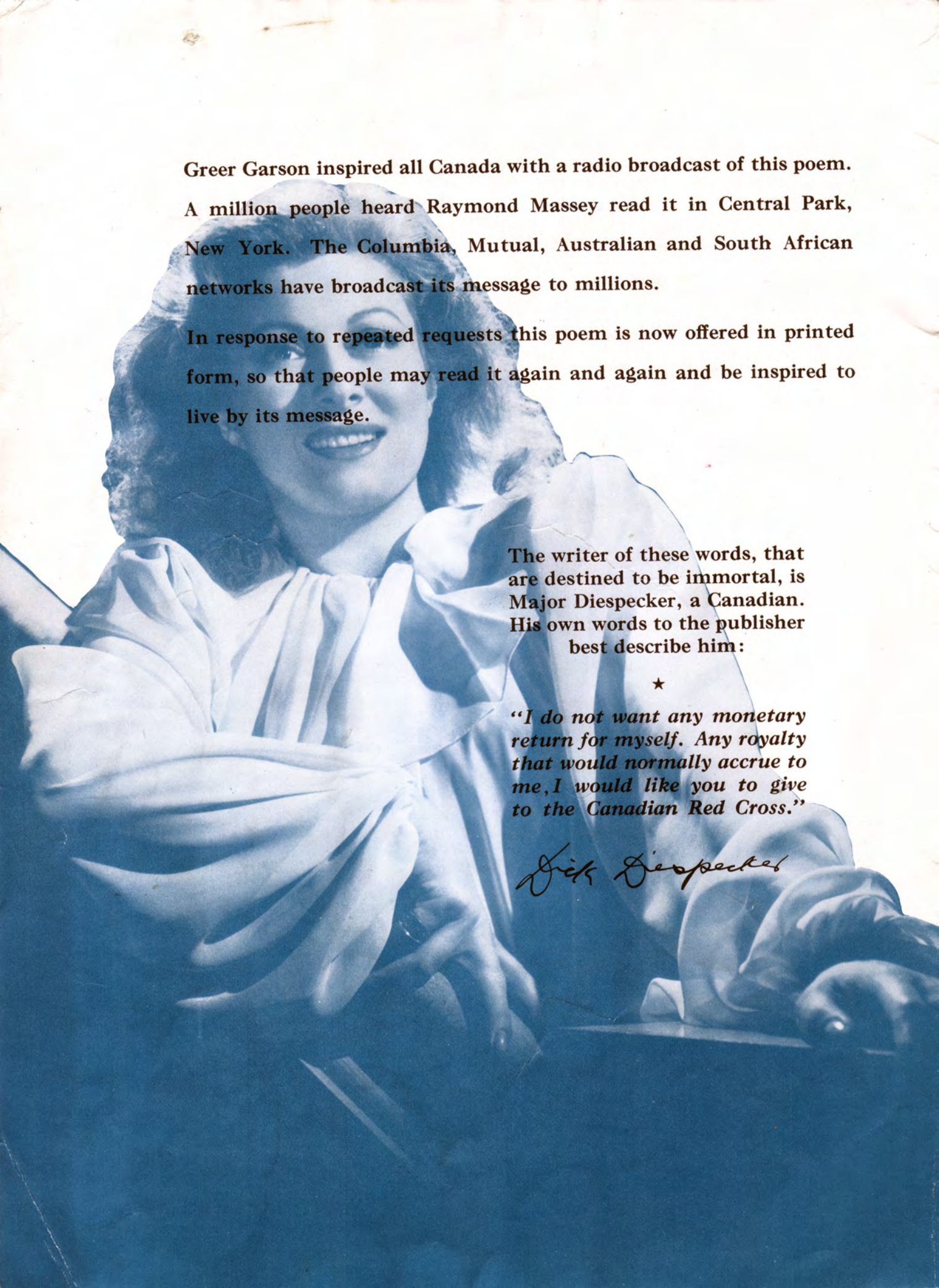


P *Prayer for Victory*



Major Dick Diespecker

POST-WAR THOUGHTS BY A SOLDIER



Greer Garson inspired all Canada with a radio broadcast of this poem. A million people heard Raymond Massey read it in Central Park, New York. The Columbia, Mutual, Australian and South African networks have broadcast its message to millions.

In response to repeated requests this poem is now offered in printed form, so that people may read it again and again and be inspired to live by its message.

The writer of these words, that are destined to be immortal, is Major Diespecker, a Canadian. His own words to the publisher best describe him:

★

"I do not want any monetary return for myself. Any royalty that would normally accrue to me, I would like you to give to the Canadian Red Cross."

Jick Diespecker

Prayer for Victory

By MAJOR DICK DIESPECKER,
CANADIAN ARMY.

I stood upon a hill in the fall of the year,
A lovely hill, soft and still green
With the breath of summer.
And the sun reached long golden fingers
Into the valley floor,
And lighted the autumn-painted trees
With the fires of God.
This was peace.
But over the ridge there was no peace,
Over the ridge was war . . .
Ghastly and bloody;
The quick and the dead,
Whirling in a mad blasting conflict . . .
Ripping the skies
And the earth,
And the churning sea . . .
And our men were there,
They were fighting and dying;
Sweating in the desert and the jungles;
Wheeling through the clouds;
Drawing their deadly beads
Under the choppy waves
Of a dozen seas . . .
This was war . . .
Bitter and uncompromising;

Gloves off and no holds barred;
Kill or be killed;
Exterminate, stamp out and smash forever
The threat to Freedom.
This was the dark, hard road to Victory.
And I thought,
When Victory comes . . . what then?
I looked up . . .
And saw the face of God . . .
Dear Lord, when Victory comes,
When the guns are silent,
And the bombs stop falling,
And the seas are clean and fresh and safe;
When the dying shall scream no more;
And the starving are fed;
And the soft green moss
Covers the tragic scars of ruined cities . . .
Then dear God, make us worthy of Victory.
Give us the strength to keep our pledge
To make a better world . . .
Not the world we've known,
The world of power against power,
The world of breadlines and bitterness,
A world that would not let a man work,
A world that watched unmoved,

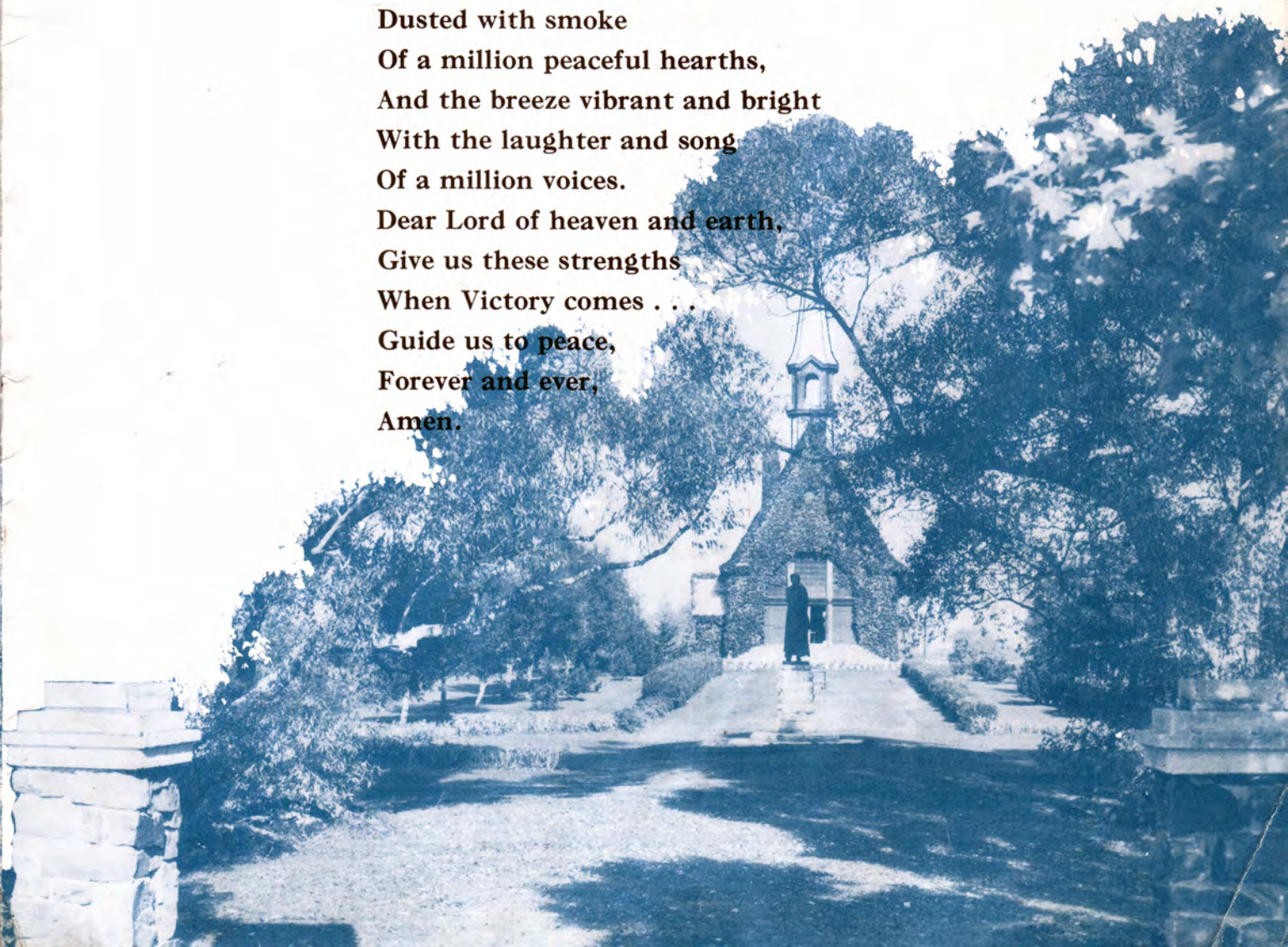


While the beasts of aggression
Swallowed the little people one by one;
A world that lived divided,
Where everyone locked his door against his neighbor,
Where the mad were strong,
And the wise were weak . . .
Give us the strength to take Victory,
Quietly and with gentle hands,
And mould a great new friendship . . .
To take it like a garden,
Ripping the weeds
From the rich, black earth,
Burning them in the fires of Truth,
So that never again
Will there be a Hitler or a Mussolini,
A Himmler or a Goebbels;
Never again a blitzkrieg;
Never again the bitter treachery
Of Pearl Harbor;
Or the tragedy of Coventry;
Or blood running in the hills of Bataan.
God give us strength
To set our own house in order . . .
To open our doors in friendship,
To set all men free;



To live, not alone,
With the door locked,
And the windows barred,
Watching through the shutters,
The bitter struggles of the little people.
This time, dear God,
Let every nation take its rightful place,
In the world of men,
Free and untrammelled . . .
Bonds of friendship but not chains of bondage;
Let the strong be wise,
And the weak, protected,
Let the sun light the darkest street,
And the rain of wisdom
Wash the slums of the earth,
Into vague memories.
Let the wheat grow,
And the fruits ripen,
And dear Lord, let them be eaten,
Not left to rot or burned or buried
While men starve for want of them.
Give us strength and wisdom,
Truth, honesty and faith;
Maintain our anger against aggression,
And give us humility before you,
Dear Lord.

Give us the power and the purpose
To make children laugh;
To give work to the men who fought for us;
And comfort to the women who suffered;
And peace to the aged . . .
Hope to the devastated,
And release to the enslaved,
Food to the hungry,
And strength to the weak.
Let this hilltop be the world,
Soft green and eternally at peace,
With the leaves drinking life
From the Sun;
And the long blue horizon
Dusted with smoke
Of a million peaceful hearths,
And the breeze vibrant and bright
With the laughter and song
Of a million voices.
Dear Lord of heaven and earth,
Give us these strengths
When Victory comes . . .
Guide us to peace,
Forever and ever,
Amen.



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CANADA



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