



Thoughts on the
Passing of the
Old Church

Tewksbury Center, Mass.
October 13, 1918 -





OUR tears are flowing fast tonight
As helpless we look on,
While lurid flames in mocking glee
Destroy our old Church Home.

The church where sire and grandsire stood
In happy days of long ago
Lifting their hearts to God in prayer,
In reverence bending low.

The church for which they sacrificed,
Denied themselves and toiled,
On which at last they gazed with pride
As they came with one accord.

The memory's handed down to us
Of the famous old stringed band,
Which far surpassed in their dear hearts
The finest organ in the land.

Oh, yes! we see it all tonight
And in fancy hear again
The rafters ring with sacred notes
From flute, and bass, and violin.

The clock placed on the gallery front
Long years ago was given
By Deacon Trull from our sister church
Who has been many years in Heaven.

And so we travel down the years
To yet another generation,
Who, honoring all their fathers did,
Believed in church progression.

For so *they* planned and toiled and gave
Each one his right proportion,
Until again the music rolled
From out a grand new organ.

The choir soon filled with boys and girls
Who gladly wished to do their part;
And many happy ties were formed
In matters of the heart.

Now time flew on and once again
We saw our efforts blessed
When funds were raised, nine thousand strong,
That our church might be new dressed.

First of all those windows rare,
Placed to the friends passed on
By those who held their memory dear,
Were a delight to look upon.

The tablet placed to pastors three
Who first gave us ministration,
Each one for many, many years
As became the situation.

The pulpit and chairs from one of her sons,
With the cabinet on the wall
Containing the service our ancestors used,
Are gone forever, beyond recall.

The pews arranged by loving hands
In whose beauty we took such pride
Are nothing but ashes and smoke tonight,
While a gap is yawning wide.

And now we think of Old Home Week
When back the children came
To greet their friends of bygone years
In their native town again.

The old church then threw wide her doors
To those who came from far and wide
Regardless of religious views
As they sat there side by side.

For the addresses to which we listened
Which in Spirit drew us nearer,
Were by a priest and a son from our neighbor church
And the unity made Old Home Week dearer.

Our thoughts fly now to '87
When an absent daughter came
And left us money for a clock
To memorize her name.

That clock for over thirty years
Has proved its timely worth
By guiding us through day and night
With hourly strokes sent forth.

Our last gift came in 1910
With the recasting of our bell
When another daughter to the front
Came saying, "All is well."

And so with thought that all *was* well
We let our hopes run high -
Tonight 'mid charred and shattered ruins
Our bell lies open to the sky.

Many of our boys and girls now gone
Will mourn and e'er remember
Those childhood scenes that cluster round
Th' old church in Tewksbury Center.

But while the tears bedim our eyes,
We know our Father reigns,
Who out of wrong can bring the right,
Who comforts all our pains.

The blessings our ancestors earned and
received
Were for them quite sufficient reward;
So if we are strong in *their* courage and
faith
We'll rebuild the House of Our Lord.

— HANNAH J. CHANDLER