
Charles J. Frenzer First World War poem

CAWL Archives: First World War

11-12-1918

1918-11-12, Frenzers First Cruise

Charles J. Frenzer

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Recommended Citation

Frenzer, Charles J., "1918-11-12, Frenzers First Cruise" (1918). *Charles J. Frenzer First World War poem*. 1. https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cjfrenzer_poem/1

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Franz's First Quiz.

I remember well when the call came out,
I was down on the narrow gauge,
And the stories of all the atrocities,
Were driving me wild with rage,
They called for all who were staunch and true,
and asked for support of the red, white and blue,
I read all the posters throughout the land,
They are the work of an artist hand,
I listened to speeches from boxes and stands,
The crowd that was present was hot by a hand,
They argued all topics with accuracy,
and all condemning autoeracy.

II

They told ^{us} of all the allies had won,
And the many great things that had to be done,
They mentioned the Marne, and the battle of Mons,
And told us of all who depended upon,
The Bold and the Brave that America had,
Then looked at me and said "My Lad"
If you would but heed your country's call,
Another could enter this spacious Hall,
For we need more room to spread the truth,
And we try to impress upon all the youth,
That the time has come We hear France say,
America, Repay, Repay.

III

I felt ashamed when he spoke to me,
For I knew right there that Liberty,
And all that meant so much to me,
Was threatened by autocracy,
My blood then boiled, it stirred to his,
My Boy you simply must enlist,
I heeded my conscience and followed the band,
It led me to the recruiting stand,
They spoke of France and other nations,
Then asked me if I had relations,
In any of the foreign ~~lands~~ lands,
And I replied, For Ireland

4.

They looked me for Erin's Isle,
I left the gathering with a smile,
I believed that I had fared quite well,
For I'd often heard her for Ladies and drills,
Her other places quaint and pretty,
And capped with Colleen's fair and pretty,
Would cause a man from any clime,
To forget all those he left behind,
These songs and praises which I've read,
I must confess went to my head,
I never dreamed that the time would come,
When I'd rue this day for what I've done.

5.

They slipped me out on an English Cruiser,
I knew right then that I was a looser,
The Chow, The Ship, the work, the brack,
Sent crashing downward to the earth,
All my desires to be a Sailor,
I could not help but think a failure,
They fed us Pork and Canned Mice,
I really think it drove me silly,
The Cruise which lasted sixteen days,
Caused all of us to stamp with rage,
I fret so blue I could have cried,
When Lo - We hit that den old Glids,

6.

We docked at the Land of Kets and Thistle,
And all the Jobs where all a-bristle,
My one great desire was to be set free
And to leave that tub of a Ship Demostones,
We made few friends on board that boat,
But it seems a shame that it should float,
It dives and dips on the smallest waves,
And threatens all with Watery graves,
They should take that boat into Mustram,
And feed her to the Out Marins,
So a man that will cause more Thrills,
I saw all the Subs of Kaiser Bills,

7.

We reached our camp in the Month of July
And when I looked at the place I thought I'd die,
We were all tired hungry and worn,
I never will forget that Wednesday morn,
It seemed as tho we were foreign leaders,
And not our bold brave Country's defenders,
The view of the real American land,
Caused a lot of us to act with greed,
We devoured all to our hearts content,
We finished it off with a bottle of stout,
Then began our work all layed out.

8.

I've been here for quite a spell,
And if this is heaven what is hell,
It's known to me as the land of a dreamer,
But to me it is filled with degraded Sinners,
The land in its self is a beautiful sight,
Tho the people here are a wholly fright,
I've roamed into quite a few of the towns,
And all have caused me to look down,
And I long for the day I will be sent back home,
They way they live and the way they die,
It's hard for me to try and describe.

9.

Now that I told you what I've seen,
I want to describe those "Fair Colleen's,"
Some are quite fair and looked real neat
But Oh: My Friends: Where are their ~~the~~ teeth?
It looks like the work of a hand grenade,
When you gaze into that toothless cage,
We followed some for over a mile,
And we are interested until they smile,
Most of the girls have but one,
And even that is nearly gone,
Stick to your old girl in old New York
They smother these from County Cork.

10.

I've told you of my naval life,
But not of the part I take in this strife
I really envy the drafted man,
And if I could but go over again,
To the time that I stood in that spacious hall,
Did turn my back to the Navy Call,
Not that I think the Navy bad,
But the pace of it all is driving me mad,
I long for the roar of the guns and a trench.
I never did like to sit at the bench,
The boys in France are driving life,
And I envy the part they take in the strife.

11.

I've made my choice and must bear the burden,
And yet I know I'm heavily laden,
By having been sent to the Emerald Isle.
And yet I bear it all with a smile,
Please do not think that lack of nerve
Forces me into the Naval Reserve,
I really intended to do my bit,
That really the reason why I shipped,
I left my home, for the defense of the nation,
They classified me in Irish Aviation,
I think I am gifted with grit and luck
But in this outfit I am out of luck.

12.

I asked for transfers many of times,
But they have told me on the line,
My seat is taken not to complain,
But bear all this abuse and pain,
I wish to warn my boys and all,
That they should heed their country's call,
But go where fight and actions grand,
But steer quite clear of Ireland,
There's nothing here for those who'd fight,
And I am trying to steer you right,
Tho, there's plenty of gin and wine and stout,
But the best thing here is the first boat out.

By Charles J. Fenner.

U.S. Naval Aviation Base
Queentown, Ireland,
Nov. 12, 1918,