

# GRAND PRÉ

CHARLES H. JOHNSON

Across the North there sweeps a level hill  
Which plunges to the sea at Blomidon;  
But where beyond that sea one's gaze has gone  
A further distant range confines it still.

Beneath our feet vast orchards march in files  
Down to long packing sheds and railway line.  
Beyond them towers a masquerading shrine,  
There dyked lands stretching out for miles.

This is Grand Pré. 'Twas French we may review  
Reputed scene of a fantastic tale  
So skillfully commercialized men pale  
And women kiss Evangeline's bronze shoe.

There is a tale most absolutely true—  
A British garrison was slaughtered here  
By troops, whom local village guides brought near  
Their neutral oath forsworn, a pirate crew.

So were their lands made forfeit to the crown  
Their persons banished from New Scotland's shore  
Their native place a wilderness once more  
Until the Yankee planters built their town.

They called it Horton for an English lord  
Then most of them sold out, their fortunes made  
To Irish Presbyterians who stayed;  
And built a meeting-house of hand-made board.

And soon an Irish teacher built a school  
Called it Acacia Villa for its trees  
Assured that laddies from such homes as these  
Would love their books and grace his careful rule.

## THE DALHOUSIE REVIEW

A generation passed. The school lived still  
The ancient name Grand Pré was used once more  
The Yankee and the Celt one aspect wore  
And Time was set to work her greater will.

A boy whose blood linked these two ancient strains  
Was student, prefect, teacher, each in turn  
Was barrister, M. P., and we discern  
Prime Minister in Canada's war pains.

Sir R. L. Borden had but his two hands  
Worked hard, thought much, ah lack and once for a'  
Defined the sovereign place of Canada  
Within the British Commonwealth of lands.