

WELCOME TO THE CHAPBOOK

The chapbook has proven to be a very valuable tool to many writers in recent times. As this booklet illustrates, it is an excellent method of presenting poetry, especially the longer poems or a series of poems in a collection. Since they are bound together the problem with single sheets of paper disappear. The number of pages are not a problem, they can be any length, but it is advisable not to exceed over 60 pages as the staple bindings do not work well and another form of binding is desirable. Chapbooks are very versatile and can be used in poetry, short stories, prose and many other ways. They also make excellent gifts.

If you haven't explored the possible use of this type of medium, it might be a very helpful tool for you to consider. With the aid of the computer and available soft-ware the chapbook is very easily done and is cost effective.

Bill Kiene



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Amy Kitchener's ANGELS WITHOUT WINGS FOUNDATION AMERICA'S AWARD

DESERT ODYSSEY

(February, 1991)

by

G. R. HOLLOWAY

THINK ABOUT IT...

DESERT ODYSSEY

February, 1991

This great work clearly depicts an episode that took place during the Desert Storm war in which a number of our soldiers were killed by what the Military refers to as "Friendly Fire." Unfortunately the result is the same as if it had come from the enemy guns.

Ironically this poem could very well be depicting a future tragedy as once again it appears the world is about to do battle in the same place, the same enemy, only a different time, And as in all wars soldiers will die, not only from the wrath of the enemy but from "Friendly Fire."

God protect them.

CLOSING THOUGHT

By Bill Kiene

Must we do it all again?
What is it we are to win?
Do we gather friends to our bosom?
Or do we just plain lose 'em?

Tell me someone, I ask you please-
I do so from my bended knees-
Tell what war is all about,
So I no longer live in doubt.

Killed is dead you know,
Whether done by friend or foe.
So stop this parade of the dead.
Send everyone home instead.

We proudly present this fine poem as an example of the chapbook size and format. At the last minute, as we were going to press after making final corrections, the printer failed; therefore, we resorted to old-fashioned cut-and-paste methods, and ask you to forgive us our sins, such as glitches on page 3 and a few spots where type is pasted in--in font that does not match the original. We had already missed the deadline of 1/31/03 for mailing your News Letter, and, thus, decided you would prefer receiving our apology than not getting your contest results. *Wanda Sue and Bill*

"Sweet Jesus, Cap'n, time we oughta shoot!"
My gunner cried, a blond Telemachus,
His tongue undone, his trigger in control.
The radio confirmed no other tanks
Of ours were in the sector. No more choice,
Our time ran out, I ordered the attack.
How many gods had we provoked? I prayed:
Please my dear God, don't let us torch our own?

As images exploded we heard words:
An error! Static. Curses. "Hold your fire!"
We hit two U.S. tanks, off course for hours.
No one survived our deadly friendly blasts.
I could not break. I kept my men from breaking.
Penelopes were told their wait was over.
And who explains such useless costs to them?
And in this world who can explain to me?

Today I had a letter from the harpist.
Like mine, his children dread another war.
My students ask unanswered questions daily.
What Muse will guide us through the final course?
We study Homer's "man of many wiles,"
And could he in the end persuade himself
Of what was justified? What learned or gained?

DESERT ODYSSEY (February, 1991)

By G. R. HOLLOWAY

That Endless sea was dry: its wavy crests
Designed of sand, its granulated tides
Eternally unscheduled, owned by wind
Or gravity when over burdened heights
Slid down a concave swell. Or when disturbed
By men in motion and their weaponry
A mortar shell would spew a mighty splash.
The hole filled up like leakage in a bilge

Could be the desert has its own Poseidon.
And if he chose that realm for peaceful rest,
His hideaway for secret meditation,
He's still incensed at savage noisy lights
That ripped the dark and crazed the blistered sky.
Could be the god is still enraged enough
To heap more bile on mortals who set fires
That charred the clouds, and blasts that cratered hell.

My own seaworthy ship: a tank with eyes
To leap horizons, pierce the dark and relay
Images Athena couldn't conjure up.
My crew was trained but none was battle-wise
As those who followed brave Odysseus.
I make myself no such comparison,
No hero. No enchanted sojourn, nymphs
Or ogres – ah well, maybe counting colonels—

My Army unit got called up and there
I was, late of a college classroom where
I taught the classics: Homer, Virgil, Dante,
Themselves no strangers to the Fates and war.
And like all men who fight on foreign ground,
I wondered when I'd see my wife and home.
Professional professor, weekend warrior
For years – no incongruity in that.

And always on my right flank was the harpist,
Young and handsome, best damn driver there.
A tank – jock's normally a tougher cut
Than he who played as if retained for life
To grace Hellenic halls and royal feasts
With Menelaus praising his sweet hands—
Those proven hands that bullied steel and heat,
Commanding his big thunderbitch with verve.

Deployed in battle line, my bulky fleet
Of blunt and roaring vessels sailing sand
Was on alert, Our thermal sights blipped full.
Begged instruments for every shred of knowing.
Those guns made pale Lord Zeus's lightning bolts,
Made trash of other tanks. Our radios
Had words, the column was approaching fast.

I gave the order to destroy the targets.
Incredible the way our rounds homed toward
Their marks, made tracks and turrets flash and soar.
Grey-eyed Athena gasped, her aegis high
Above the rubble, sending us a hawk,
Grey-backed raptor screeching victory.
Her cloud expanded slower than our eyes.
My crew racked up their scores like arcade games.

In thirty minutes, wounded men arrived.
Elation dwindled in a grinding pall:
We watched as one man fumbled on his way
As if to hide a pistol in his sleeve.
On closer look, he held his severed arm
And died beside my tank as others groaned.
Two more made wine – dark seas with their own blood.
Iraqi armored troops, surrendering.

Back on patrol at dawn, the goddess glowed;
Homeric rosy fingers earned their poems.
The crews were sobered, combat had its bite.
Then, animated sights required decisions.
The shapes we read were not exact enough
To leave no doubt. But if we held off long
We'd be precisely in their range. Commanders all
Have grappled that chimera in their craws.