

PROUD, MAD LAND!

by H. Kelsey Bicknell

Mad land! Mad land! Proud, mad land! America!

Sod and stone and sweated furrow;
Flow'r and tree and massive skies;
Beaten paths to far horizons;
Laughter, weeping, painful cries;

Anger, love, despairing mothers;
Faith and blood of centuries spilled;
Steel and mortar strewn upon her;
Passion sold and feeling killed.

Mad land! My love! America!

Factory, shop, and legislation;
Numbers reeking ghosts of names;
Pillared dwellings, cemeteries;
Rust and paint and tortured games;

Smoke and prisons, lakes and newsprint;
Famine, riot, postage, fears;
Government and people blinded,
Average income, desperate years.

America! Proud, mad, land!

Standing where the centuries gather life on life and dream on dream
Standing where the feet of patriots, and the hearts of seeing pilgrims,
and the hands of frontier sculptors scored this nation's destiny.
Standing now upon that threshold, looking back and looking forward,
Holding hard the strength invested; we can know our nation's pride.

Proud land! Proud land! America!

Let every nation, every monarch, every peasant laborer
to look upon our weaknesses be confident that where we fail is
measure only of our will.
A mighty will to search and struggle, try and do for meaning
laid to life and worth.

Know well, as we know, history's pages scrawled in haste against our years.
Know their reason, talent, bravery,
Know their love, their high commitment.
Listen hard as voices tell of epic battle fought in anguish
Spirit-bound by freedom's plan that gave us birth.

Another century tomorrow!
Yesterday, one moment in our want to be.
We dare! We can! We will!
This people called "America" we will!

Proud land! Proud land! My love!

America!