

22 THE FIRST TREE

by an Ornamental Tree Society

We have planted it deep in the yielding soil,
Hard by the house of prayer;
And the cool air plays through its leafy top,
As it stands in silence there.

It is young like ourselves; but, day by day,
The dews of heaven will fall, --
And the gladsome rays of the summer sun,
That shines for each and all,
And, under their gentle ministry,
It will grow both stout and tall.

Then will the roots of the stately tree
Have spread both far and wide;
And perchance its branches will overtop
The church that stands beside;
And safe amid its clustering leaves
Will summer birds abide.

And those who, full of youthful life,
About the sapling played,
With sober mien and whitened locks
Will stand beneath its shade,
And ponder with a thoughtful brow
On the changes Time has made.

The years will roll, with a steady course,
To meet Time's infinite sea;
And the silent waves, in their fearful sweep,
Will engulf both you and me;
But still, like a beacon that tells of the past,
Will stand our first elm-tree.

Sources:

Christian Register, June 24, 1854.

True Flag, July 15, 1854.

Bertha's Christmas Vision, 1856.

The Shenstone Laurel (Marlborough, MA), March 31, 1861. (Anonymous)

Alger Street, 1964. (Title shortened to "The First Tree")

Newsboy, January-February, 1989. (Title shortened to "The First Tree")