

Growing Old

By Edgar A. Guest

I used to think that growing old was
reckoned just in years,
But who can name the very date when
weariness appears?

I find no stated time when man,
obedient to a law,
Must settle in an easy chair and from
the world withdraw.

Old age is rather curious,
or so it seems to me.

I know old men at forty and young men
at seventy-three.

I'm done with counting life by years or
temples turning gray.

No man is old who wakes with joy
to greet another day.

What if the body cannot dance
with youth's elastic spring?

There's many a vibrant interest,
to which the mind can cling.

'Tis in the spirit age must dwell,
or this would never be:

I know old men at forty and young men
at seventy-three.

Some men keep all their friendships warm,
and welcome friendships new,

They have no time to sit and mourn,
the things they used to do.

This changing world they greet with joy
and never bow to fate;

On every fresh adventure,
they set out with hearts elate.

From chilling fear and bitter dread,
they keep their spirits free

While some seem old at forty,
they stay young at seventy-three.

So much to do, so much to learn,
so much in which to share!

With twinkling eyes and minds alert,
some brave both time and care.

And this I've learned from other men,
that only they are old
Who think with something that has passed,
the tale of life is told.
For age is not alone of time,
or we should never see
Men old and bent at forty and men young
at seventy-three.