

# The Battle of the Somme

Pipe Major William Laurie (1882–1916) He was in the battle, wrote the tune in hospital after it, and died of trench related illness a few months later. Words by singer/ songwriter Phyl Lobl.

The lark in the ev - - 'ning she drops to the ground now  
The dug - outs are qui - - et we wait for the morn - - ing

3 Bid - ding fare - well to the long sum - mer day.  
Feel - ing a thrill as the bat - tle draws near.

5 High on a ridge hear a gun hit the si - - lence,  
Dawn with her pale flush, sil - - vers the grey sky

7 Flames like a flow - - - er bright - en the sky.  
Sharp tongues of shell fire call up the day.

**Chorus**

8 Glor - y, vain glor - - y, you beck - oned us on - - ward,

10 Kitch - - en - er's call and your light led the way.

11 The bright light of glor - - y soon - - turned in - to dark - - ness

14 Splashed with the mud and the pain of the day.

The lines they are formed and the orders are given  
While General Haig sends his prayers to the sky.  
As we move onward our bayonets before us  
We know that those prayers were no better than lies.  
Rising and twisting the smoke curls above us  
I see by the green glow there's gas in its domes.  
We stumble and fall through the craters and shell holes,  
Watching the bombs turning trenches to tombs.

We're over the rise now, the line is before us,  
Enemy gun fire mowing us down.  
What hope have the bayonets and the rifles we carry  
Against a machine gun here on the Somme?  
Day's nearly done now the battlefield empties,  
The living are hidden the dead lying still.  
The wounded are calling for someone to save them  
But no one can help them, no body will.

'What's to be said of the life-time of man now,  
Shifting from sorrow to sorrow again.  
You button up one cause for mankind's vexation  
Only to find there's another undone.'  
Each generation has freedom to fight for,  
Choose between gun fire or words for your tools.  
Freedom's a phantom but reason could find her.  
Honour and glory a haven for fools.