

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

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

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

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

Chorus

Glor - y, vain glor - - y, you beck - oned us on___ ward,

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

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

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.