Willie McBride
(The Green Fields of France)

Well how d’ya do, private William McBride – d’ya mind if I sit here, down by your graveside, and rest for a while in the warm summer sun? I’ve been walking all day, and I’m nearly done. And I see by your gravestone, you were only nineteen, when you joined the brave heroes in 1915 - Well I hope you died quick, and I hope you died clean – or Willie McBride, was it slow and obscene?

Did they beat the drums slowly, did they sound the fife lowly, Did the rifles fire o’er you as they lowered you down?

Did the bugles play the last post in chorus, did the pipes play the flowers of the forest?

And did you leave a wife or a sweetheart behind – in some faithful heart is your memory enshrined? And though you died back in 1915, to some faithful heart are you forever nineteen?.

Or are you a stranger without even a name, enshrined forever behind a glass pane, In an old photograph, torn and tattered and stained, and fading to yellow in a bound leather frame?

Chorus

The sun’s shining now on these green fields of France – the warm wind blows gently and the red poppies dance. The trenches have vanished under the plow, no gas and no barbed-wire, no guns firing now. But here in this graveyard it is still no-man’s land – the countless white crosses in mute witness stand To man’s blind indifference to his fellow man; to a whole generation who was butchered and damned.

Chorus

And I can’t help but wonder, now Willie McBride, do all those who lie here know why they died? Did you really believe them when they told you the cause – did you really believe that this war would end wars? Oh, the suffering, the sorrow, and the glory, the shame, the killing, the dying – it was all done in vain, For Willie McBride, it’s all happened again, and again, and again, and again, and again.