

## These Fought In Any Case

These fought in any case,  
and some believing  
pro domo, in any case.....

Some quick to arm,  
some for adventure,  
some from fear of weakness,  
some from fear of censure,  
some for love of slaughter, in imagination,  
learning later ...

Died some, pro patria,  
walked eye-deep in hell  
believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving  
came home, home to a lie,  
home to many deceits,  
home to old lies and new infamy;  
usury age-old and age-thick  
and liars in public places.

Daring as never before, wastage as never before.  
Young blood and high blood,  
fair cheeks, and fine bodies;

fortitude as never before

frankness as never before,  
disillusions as never told in the old days,  
hysterias, trench confessions,  
laughter out of dead bellies.

--Ezra Pound

**Note: Horace said, “Dolce et decorum est pro patria mori.” (It is sweet and fitting to die for one’s country.)**

## Dulce et Decorum Est

BY [WILFRED OWEN](#)

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—  
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.*

## **IRON**

GUNS,  
Long, steel guns,  
Pointed from the war ships  
In the name of the war god.  
Straight, shining, polished guns,  
Clambered over with jackies in white blouses,  
Glory of tan faces, tousled hair, white teeth,  
Laughing lithe jackies in white blouses,  
Sitting on the guns singing war songs, war chanties.

Shovels,  
Broad, iron shovels,  
Scooping out oblong vaults,  
Loosening turf and leveling sod.

I ask you  
To witness--  
The shovel is brother to the gun.

--Carl Sandburg

## **Grass**

PILE the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.  
Shovel them under and let me work—  
I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg  
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun. 5  
Shovel them under and let me work.  
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the  
conductor:

What place is this?  
Where are we now?

I am the grass. 10  
Let me work.

--Carl Sandburg