



The Green Fields of France

Eric Bogle, 1975

*Well, how do you do, young Willie McBride,
Do you 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.*

*I see by your gravestone you were only 19
When you joined the great fallen in 1916,
I hope you died well and I hope you died
clean*

*Or, young Willie McBride, was it slow and
obscene?*

***Did they Beat the drum slowly, did they play the
fife lowly?***

***Did they sound the death march as they lowered
you down?***

Did the band play The Last Post and chorus?

Did the pipes play the Flowers of the Forest?

*Did you leave ere a wife or a sweetheart
behind?*

*In some faithful heart is your memory
enshrined?*

*And, though you died back in 1916,
To that faithful heart are you forever 19?
Or are you a stranger without even a name,
Enclosed in forever behind a glass pane,
In an old photograph, torn, tattered and
stained,*

*And fading to yellow in a brown leather
frame?*

***Did they Beat the drum slowly, did they play
the fife lowly?***

***Did they sound the death march as they
lowered you down?***

***Did the band play The Last Post and
chorus?***

***Did the pipes play the Flowers of the
Forest?***

*The sun's shining down on these green fields
of France;*

*The warm wind blows gently, and the red
poppies dance.*

*The trenches have vanished long under the
plow;*

*No gas, no barbed wire, there's no guns
firing now.*

*But here in this graveyard that's still No
Man's Land*

*The countless white crosses stand mute in
the sand*

*To man's blind indifference to his fellow
man.*

*And a whole generation who were
butchered and damned.*

*Now young Willie McBride, I can't help
wonder why,*

*Do those who lie here know why they
die?*

*Did they believe them when they answered
the call?*

*Did they really believe that this war would
end wars?*

*Well the sorrow, the suffering, the glory, the
shame*

*The killing, the dying, it was all done in vain,
For young Willie McBride, it all happened
again,*

And again, and again, and again, and again.