

Nobody's Land

August/September 2019

Capo 1

Summer of '16, first of July
Lads from Newcastle, Suffolk, & Eye
Covered the ground where no birds fly
Toward lads from Munich and Bremen

G Em C Am
D C G
G Em C Am
Cmaj7 C D

The real estate came dear that day
Twenty lives a foot, they say
As the scything wind swept all away
In a rush of rag and bone

Did you watch the sunrise over Black Forest pines
Stroll the banks of the Somme
Did you see the Devon grasses shine
As cattle wandered home

D Cmaj7 C G
C Am D
D Cmaj7 C G
Em C D

Did you think that you would wake today
With a rifle in your hand
And for king and country lay
In the soil of Nobody's Land

In Whitehall, Paris, and Berlin
They watch the list of names come in
And toast in cognac, schnapps, and gin
The valor of their kind

The girls in white patrol the Strand
Ivory feathers in their hand
To smite the lads who would not stand
So ardently for glory

Did you see the sunrise over Black Forest pines
Stroll the banks of the Somme
Did you see the Devon grasses shine
As cattle wandered home

Did you think that you would rest today
With a locket in your hand
As the distant pipers play
In the grasses of Nobody's Land

Tommy, Soldat, and poilu
Took the shilling, Mark, or sou
Did what they were bound to do
Pro patria mori (x3)

Remembering the first day on the Somme in World War I, this tries to see that day's carnage not just as a British tragedy but as an international day of insanity. I've adapted the melody slightly from Eric Bogle's "Green Fields of France."