

The Infantryman

He is born to the earth, on the day he enlists
He is sentenced to life on the soil,
To march on it, crawl on it, dig in it, sprawl on it,
Sleep in it after his toil.

Be it sand, rock or ice, gravel, mud or red loam
He will fight on it bravely, will die,
And the crude little cross, telling men of his loss
Will cry mutely to some foreign sky.

He's the tired looking man in untidy garb
Weather beaten, footsore with fatigue,
But his spirit is strong, as he marched along,
With his burdens for league upon league.

He attacks in the face of murderous fire
Crawling forward, attacking through mud.
When he breaks through the line, over wire and mines,
On the point of his bayonet is blood.

Should you meet him, untidy, begrimed and fatigued
Don't indulge in unwarranted mirth.
For the brave infantryman deserves more than your sneer,
He is truly the salt of the earth.

“A Gunner”