

The Gathering

Fish

The newspaper headlines were big and bold;
our country was going to war,
To fight for the freedom of nationhood,
to defend us from invading hordes,
The general pointed with steely glare,
delivered the rallying call,
We signed off our lives with a stroke of a pen,
joined our pals in the line
We took the King's shilling with pride.
From the towns and the cities we came,
from the fields and the countryside,
the mines and the factories
Volunteers on the square, labourers and unemployed,
clerks and delivery boys
Skirling pipes charge the air, raising the cheering crowd,
casting out any doubts
Victory will soon be assured,
we know God's on our side at the heart of the gathering
Farewell to our homes and our families,
Farewell to the lives we once knew
Farewell to our youth and our innocence
We marched off with the band to the promise
of a brave new world
And I'll write you a letter each passing day
and I'll cherish your every reply
I'll tie them with ribbons and Flanders lace;
hold them close to my heart in a sweet embrace
Tell the children that I shall return
laden with medals and dripping with garlands
We'll sit by the banks of the Tyne
and I'll regale you with stories of honour and glory
We'll make up for all the lost time, jig to the fiddles,
and weave the White Willow
In the evening like ferns we'll entwine,
our bodies surrender we give to the gathering
I'll long for my home and my family,
I will long for the life I once knew
I'll long for my youth and my innocence
I'll long for a brave new world.
In the holds of the ships out of training camps
From the railheads to trudge open roads
Shouldered rifles on heavy souls
Our fears will add to our load
Farewell to our homes and our families,
Farewell to the lives we once knew
Farewell to our youth and our innocence
We marched off with the band,
pals in battalions to the promise of a brave new world
Joining the gathering,
pals in battalions to fight for a brave new world
Pals in battalions, we took the King's shilling
and paid for a brave new world