

The King's Shilling

Written by Ian Sinclair of the Folk Group 'Mirk'

Thought by many to be a traditional song, 'The King's Shilling' was written by Ian Sinclair of the folk group Mirk in the 1970s. This poignant anti-war song gets its message across gently, but effectively.

My love has left me wi bairnies twa
And that's the last o him I ever saw
He jined the army and he mairched awa
He took the shillin
He took the shillin and he's aff tae war

*Come laddies come, hear the cannons roar
Taak the King's shillin and we're aff tae war*

He looked sae prood and sae gallant then
Wi his kilt and sporran an his musket gun
And the ladies kissed them as they mairched awa
They sailed awa boys
They sailed awa boys by the Broomielaw

Chorus

The pipes did play as they mairched alang
An the men they sang oot their battle song
March on march on cried oor Captain gay
For King and Country
For King and Country we will fecht this day

Chorus

The battle echoed tae the sound o guns
And bayonets flashed in the mornin sun
The drums did beat and the cannons roared
And the shillin didn't seem
The shillin didn't seem much worth no more

Chorus

Some lost the battle, and their bodies fell
Cut doon by bayonets and musket gun
And many o these brave young men
Would never fight for
Would never fight for their King again

Chorus

Repeat first verse and Chorus

*aff=off
alang=along
awa=away
bairnies=babies, young children
doon=down
fecht=fight
jined=joined
laddies=boys, young men
mairched=marched
oot=out
prood=proud
sae=so
shillin=shilling
taak=take
tae=too
twa=two
wi=with*