

# Cry for a butchered Generation: The Battle of the Somme

(In memory of Walther Keienburg, \*1898, †1916 in France).

In 2016 it was a century ago.

He was a "great uncle" of mine, and he did not live past 18 years. There was no chance at all for me to meet him and get to know him (as I was born in Germany in 1953, 37 years after the great slaughter in the trenches that began on July 1, 1916). Only a name, cast in bronze on a war memorial, that is all that remains.

- REQUIAS IN PACE -

Just one name among a million names - young men from France, England, Scotland, Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Rhodesia and Germany - slaughtered for no comprehensible reason at Ovillers - La Boisselle - Montauban - Hardecourt - Maurepas - Cléry in northern France.

My eyes fill with tears and my heart bleeds every time I think of Walther Keienburg and hundreds of thousands of others.... "Nothing but stupid mutual mass murder" (Basil Liddell Hart).... The victims mostly made the same mistake: they believed the lies told to them by their politicians and followed the orders of some "wicked old men" in uniforms - into the clouds of poison gas, into the barrage of cannons and mortars, into the machine-gun salvos.

Young men: please never listen again when mean old men want to give you orders or promise you a promotion! The dirty old men were never the patriots they claimed to be, they were just looking for sheep to slaughter. It is your lives they want to steal from you, "It is always the old who lead us into war, it is always the young who fall!" (Quote: Phil Ochs, "I ain't marching anymore!").

Imagine, all of you, that there is war and no one goes there!

For all the soldiers or civilians who have lost their health or their lives: This is a melody and a song for all of you, no matter what nation you come from. No other melody, no other lyrics could better express the hardship, pain and misery you had to go through. May the Lord have mercy with your souls.

Even today, in the 21st century, the fields and forests around the Somme and Verdun are deadly, full of unexploded ordnance, explosives, even poison gas shells lurking beneath the surface. What did the generation of our (great) grandfathers do to their neighbors and brothers? Let's keep our eyes open and make sure that such mass murder can never happen again.

NEVER AGAIN!

Thank you for your attention and listening, and may peace prevail over the trenches!

***FarrierPete***

PS: Finally, I'll add another bagpipe tune, the "Highland Laddie".

## One Day We'll See Them

Lyrics written by Alex Campbell.

Melody: "Battle of the Somme" by Pipe Major William Lawrie,

1. The Darkness is fading, the day it is dawning

The fields they are empty, nae workers today.

The Farmers and young men all have been going

To battles in lands that lie far away.

Yet one day we'll see them come by the hillside

Husbands and sons will return to their homes.

Yet still my heart bleeds; the price of their young pride

Their widows and sweethearts left sadly to mourn.

2. The call when it came found their menfolk aye ready,

Each knew the reasons or that's what they thought.

Then came the doubting but still they were steady

Slow dying in cold clay a'cursing their lot.

Yet one day we'll see them, there on the hillside

Though knowing in hearts they are but a gleam.

The grief in the long glen, the gloom at the fireside

Will pass like a Spring breeze that never has been.

The bagpipe has been used as a war instrument since the early Middle Ages. Sometimes it makes me tremble when I hear it's sound in a "mixolydian scale" to drone pipes.