A. E. Housman (1859-1936)

9 Lancer

I 'listed at home for a lancer,
    Oh who would not sleep with the brave?
I 'listed at home for a lancer
    To ride on a horse to my grave.

And over the seas we were bidden 5
    A country to take and to keep;
And far with the brave I have ridden,
    And now with the brave I shall sleep.

For round me the men will be lying
    That learned me the way to behave, 10
And showed me my business of dying:
    Oh who would not sleep with the brave?

They ask and there is not an answer;
Says I, I will 'list for a lancer,
    Oh who would not sleep with the brave? 15

And I with the brave shall be sleeping
    At ease on my mattress of loam,
When back from their taking and keeping
    The squadron is riding at home.

The wind with the plumes will be playing, 20
    The girls will stand watching them wave,
And eyeing my comrades and saying
    Oh who would not sleep with the brave?

They ask and there is not an answer;
Says you, I will 'list for a lancer, 25
    Oh who would not sleep with the brave?

1922

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