Never such innocence
Never before or since

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‘I could see out over an area of ten square kilometres …. The men were all so tiny and lost in it that I could hardly see them.

A shell fell in the midst of these little things, which moved for a moment, carrying off the wounded - the dead, as unimportant as so many ants, were left behind.’

Fernand Léger, Verdun
Georges Leroux, *Hell*
We are unfeeling dead who, through some dangerous trick of magic, are still able to run and kill.

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
C. R. W. Nevinson, *The Harvest of Battle*
‘Here, among the massacred trees which in the fog surrounded us in a ghostly scene, everything was shapeless, there was not a piece of wall even, not a fence or gate still standing’

Henri Barbusse, *Le Feu*
Paul Nash, Void
‘From time to time one of us disappeared up to their waist in the mud, and if our comrades had not come to their rescue, holding out their rifle butt, they would certainly have gone under. …

Traces of blood on the surface of some heavy shell-holes told us that several men had already been swallowed up.’

Ernst Jünger, Storms of Steel
Henry Tonks,
*Saline infusion*
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads - those ashen-grey
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?
Have you forgotten yet?...
Look up, and swear by the green of the spring that you’ll never forget.

Siegfried Sassoon, *Aftermath*
Henry Tonks, *An Advanced Dressing Station in France, 1918*
In the horizontal abyss, extending stretcher after stretcher, gradually getting smaller as far as the eye could see, out towards the pale opening of daylight, the bric-a-brac of limbs and heads moving, cries and moans waking one another and spreading like invisible ghosts.

Henri Barbusse, *Le Feu*
Ugo Matania, Verdun hospital
A whole night long
crouched close
to one of our men
butchered
with his clenched
mouth
grinning at the full moon

Giuseppe Ungaretti, *Vigil*
Bill Lewis, *World War One*
If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Wilfred Owen *Dulce et decorum est*
Otto Dix, *Transplantation*, 1924
Bloody saliva  
Dribbles down his shapeless jacket.

I saw him stab  
And stab again  
A well-killed B.

This is the happy warrior,  
This is he...

Herbert Read, *The Happy Warrior*
Adolf Erbslöh, *Destroyed Forest near Verdun, 1916*
Who know it wasn't I,
But someone just like me,
Who went across the sea
And with my head and hands
Killed men in foreign lands...
Though I must bear the blame,
Because he bore my name

Wilfred Gibson, *Back*
Austin Osman Spare, *Operating in a Regimental Aid Post*, 1918
Neck-deep in mud,
He mowed and raved -
He who had braved
The field of blood

Wilfred Gibson, *Mad* (1914)
Georges Paul Leroux, *Soldats enterrant leurs camarades au clair de lune*, 1915
When you see millions of the mouthless dead
Across your dreams in pale battalions go,
Say not soft things as other men have said,
That you'll remember. For you need not so.
Give them not praise. For deaf, how should they know

Charles Hamilton Sorley, 1915
Gassed soldiers