



## Scottish Poets and Poetry

### In Memoriam — Private David Sutherland

So you were David's father,  
And he was your only son,  
And the new-cut peats are rotting  
And the work is left undone,  
Because of an old man weeping,  
Just an old man in pain,  
For David, his son David,  
That will not come again.

Oh, the letters he wrote you  
And I can see them still,  
Not a word of the fighting  
But just the sheep on the hill  
And how you should get the crops in  
Ere the year got stormier,  
And the Bosches have got his body,  
And I was his officer.

You were only David's father,  
But I had fifty sons  
When we went up in the evening  
Under the arch of the guns,  
And we came back at twilight—  
O God! I heard them call  
To me for help and pity  
That could not help at all.

Oh, never will I forget you,  
My men that trusted me,  
More my sons than your fathers',  
For they could only see  
The little helpless babies  
And the young men in their pride.  
They could not see you dying,  
And hold you when you died.

Happy and young and gallant,  
They saw their first-born go,  
But not the strong limbs broken  
And the beautiful men brought low,  
The piteous writhing bodies,  
They screamed 'Don't leave me, sir'  
For they were only your fathers  
But I was your officer.