

To the German helmet you all behold  
From my trusty sword suspended,  
There's a tale attached, which I'll now unfold,  
Though to do so I hadn't intended.

The night air sizzled with shot and shell,  
Which burst with terrific crashes,  
And many a face in that hole of hell  
Went yellow and green—in patches.

The fact that a German eye could spot  
Of our guns but a sign or trace, meant  
That in less than a jiffy he'd plant a shot  
Right plump in that gun emplacement.

Now, when this happens too often, my friends,  
It is apt to become vexatious;  
It rattles a man, and frequently tends  
To get him darned pugnacious.

When for the twelfth or thirteenth time  
My guns went soaring sky-ward,  
I was livid with rage—didn't care a dime  
What happened, I give you my word.

So I hoisted a gun on my shoulder-blade,  
Its side with my neck caressing,  
And I marched to the front, as though on parade,  
My finger the trigger pressing.

I made for a point where a burst of flame  
Belched forth in a stream unbroken—  
That I courted death or a V.C.'s fame;  
This arm in a sling's the token.

The fire died down as I onward pressed,  
For my advent they none of them waited;  
When I reached their trench, as I might have guessed,  
I found it already vacated.

But thanks to their eagerness out to clear  
From the threat of my onslaught furious,  
They left this elegant souvenir  
Which I'm happy to show to the curious.

Thus spake our hero, but from what I hear,  
He spake with his tongue in his cheek, sirs;  
For he paid for that helmet a gallon of beer,  
To which fact I can certainly speak, sirs.

And as to the arm in a sling, from all  
The facts I've been able to garner,  
The mishap was caused by a slip and a fall  
On the skin of a ripe banana.

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