

Six, seven, eight, nine take their places; six, seven,  
eight, nine brave their hail;  
Six, seven, eight, nine—how we count them! But the  
sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth fail!  
A tenth. *Sacré nom!* But these English are soldiers  
—they know how to try;  
(He fumbles the place where his jaw was)—they  
show, too, how heroes can die.

Ten we count—ten who ventured unquailing—ten  
there were—and ten are no more!  
Yet another salutes and superbly essays where the ten  
failed before.  
God of Battles, look down and protect him! Lord,  
his heart is as Thine—let him live!  
But the *mitrailleuse* splutters and stutters, and riddles  
him into a sieve.

Then I thought of my sins, and sat waiting the charge  
that we could not withstand.  
And I thought of my beautiful Paris, and gave a last  
look at the land,  
At France, my *belle France*, in her glory of blue sky  
and green field and wood.  
Death with honour, but never surrender. And to die  
with such men—it was good.

They are forming—the bugles are blaring—they will  
cross in a moment and then . . .  
When out of the line of the Royals (your island, *mon  
ami*, breeds men)