

# The Soldier's Letter

Dear ma - dam, I'm a sol - dier boy. My speech is rough and plain. I  
write you of \_\_\_ your sol - dier boy and per - haps it will cause you pain. I  
write you now \_\_\_ this let - ter for he told me so \_\_\_ to do. It  
comes from one who loves \_\_\_ him and per - haps it will ease the blow.

From the first, you may believe, his woe he tried to hide,  
And, if you'll pardon a soldier boy, I will tell you how he died.  
I being twelve years the oldest, he always clung to me  
And often from the younger ones he sought my company.

The night before the battle, 'twas in a crowded tent,  
The boys they all were praying and many a knee was bent.  
They knew that on the morrow and ere the fight was done  
That some of those assembled there ne'er would see the set of sun.

As we walked out through the crowded tent, dear soldier boy and I,  
As we stood calmly gazing all on the clear, blue sky,  
He spoke of home so far away and friends he loved so dear.  
Now I have none to talk about, but still I like to hear.

He told me of his mother; the night he went away  
She threw her arms about his neck but could not bid him stay.  
He named his sisters one by one, and then the red flush came,  
He told me of another, but I won't recall the name.

He said, "My dearest Jimmie, should it be my lot to fall,  
Will you write and tell my mother how I loved and thought of all?"  
I promised him that I would write, didn't think 'twould be so soon,  
The battle was three days ago; he died today at noon.

The morning of the battle fast fell the shot and shell;  
I was fighting close behind him and I saw him when he fell.  
I picked him up quite tenderly and laid him on the grass;  
I know it was 'gainst the orders, but I guess they'll let it pass.

You see, it was minnie ball that struck him in the side,  
We did not think it fatal till the night before he died,  
And when he found that he must go he called me to stand by,  
"Tell mother that I thought of her and was not afraid to die.

"Oh, underneath my pillow you will find a lock of hair;  
The name is on the paper, send it in my mother's care."  
He bade farewell to comrades all, then turned away his head,  
He breathed a prayer to heaven and the soldier boy was dead.

I send you back his Bible; it was his joy and pride;  
We turned the leaves together just the night before he died.  
I send you back his hymn book, likewise the lock of hair,  
The name is on the paper; I send it in your care.

Oh, I will keep the belt he wore, for he told me so to do,  
The hole is in the side just where the ball it did pass through.  
And now I've done his bidding I have nothing more to tell,  
But I will always mourn with you for the boy we loved so well.