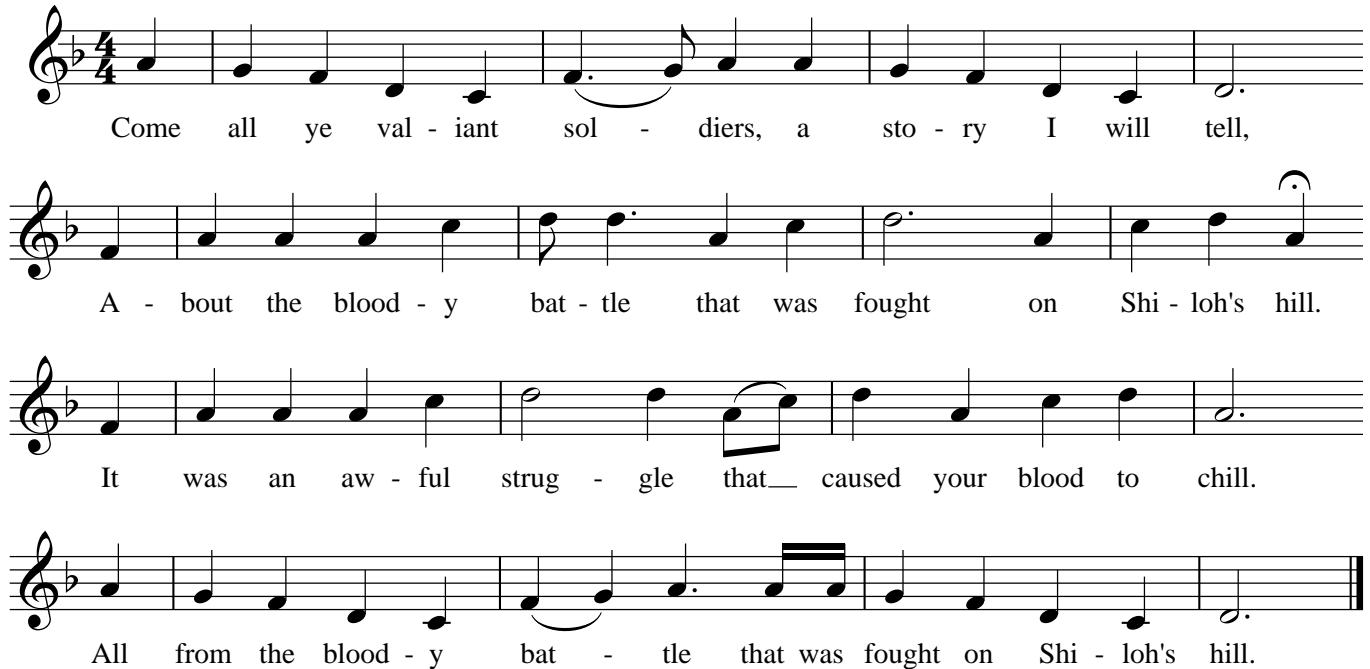


The Battle on Shiloh's Hill

Informant/Performer:
Judy Jane Whittaker
Anderson, MO, 1928

Source:
Vance Randolph
Ozark Folksongs, Vol. II
Columbia, MO:
State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-48



Come all ye val - iant sol - diers, a sto - ry I will tell,
A - bout the blood - y bat - tle that was fought on Shi - loh's hill.
It was an aw - ful strug - gle that caused your blood to chill.
All from the blood - y bat - tle that was fought on Shi - loh's hill.

2. 'Twas on the sixth of April, about the break of day,
The drums and fifes were playing for us to march away,
My feelings at that moment I do remember still,
When first my feet were tramping on the top of Shiloh's Hill.
3. About the hour of sunrise the battle first began,
Before the day was ended we fought them hand to hand,
The horrors of that battle did my soul with anguish fill,
The wounded men and dying all laid on Shiloh's Hill.
4. There were men from every nation laid on those bloody plains,
There were fathers, sons and brothers all numbered with the slain,
The wounded men were crying for help from everywhere,
And others were a-dying and offering God their prayer.
5. Very early the next morning we were called to arms again,
Unmindful of the wounded, unuseful to the slain,
The battle was renewed again, ten thousand men were killed,
And from their deadly wounds the blood ran like a rill.
6. And now my song is ended about those bloody plains,
I hope the sight to mortal man may ne'er be seen again,
I'll pray to God my Savior, consistent with His will,
To save the souls of those brave men who fell on Shiloh's Hill.

Background Information

"Before the battle [on April 6, 1862], Shiloh was the name of a little log chapel lost in the woods on the western side of the Tennessee River on the border of Mississippi.

Two days later it had become a word of horror both north and south, as the scene of the bloodiest battle that ever took place on the North American continent.

Six thousand men had been killed and twice that number wounded.

...This Missouri folk singer's report of the battle reflects the terror of the scene.

It is impossible to say whether the composer was a northern or southern sympathizer.

The bloody field of Shiloh reminded the whole nation that in war no one is ever really the victor."

Lomax, Alan, *Folk Songs of North America*