

That's What He Did For His Country - song lyrics

American Old-time song lyrics from www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

That's What He Did for His Country.
Copyright, 1891, by Frank Harding.,
Written and Adapted by W C. Robey.

At the door of the poor-house some sad sights are found
Among famished souls who at night gather round;
And although I'm familiar with scenes of distress,
My feelings sometimes are quite touched, I confess.
I recently witnessed a sight I deplore:
A poor man came limping, quite lame to the door,
He'd once been a soldier, he'd begged for a bed-
And sadly I learned from the words that he said:

Chorus.
He was one of the Sixth Brigade, one of those heroes true,
Stricken down at Gettysburg, while fighting as soldiers do
Neglected now and left to starve, with age his eyes were dim;
That's what he did for his country, and his country did for him.

When I spoke to the man, he confided in me,
And told me of "Sherman's great march to the sea"
He'd fought hard in battle, defended his flag,
Until it was rent like an old tatter'd rag;
"Is this my reward?" he exclaimed with a sign,
"In the poor-house, a pauper, they leave me to die?"
I'm too old for service, no pension I'm paid;
They didn't say that when they needed my aid.-Chorus.

Almost ev'ry day the old soldier I'd meet.
Till I heard he'd been crushed by a car in the street;
Away to the poor-house, at once, he was borne.
To die as a pauper, unwept and forlorn.
And as he lay there rack'd with anguish and pain,
He thought he was charging the foemen again.
The reward for his valor, his country denied,
Although he'd fought bravely, forgotten he died.-Chorus.