

The American Hero

The words of this stark war hymn were written by Nathaniel Niles. They express the sadness and seriousness of the loss of many lives during the Battle of Bunker Hill. Only the first verse of the song is included below.

The Battle of Bunker Hill (June 17, 1775) made the colonials realize that they were at last definitely committed to a war against one of the leading military powers of the world. It was on Bunker Hill and nearby Breed's Hill outside Boston that over 1,500 American and British soldiers were killed or wounded, after the British charged three times uphill into an entrenched American army. The British lost over half of their command. So strong was the memory of this battle that afterwards, whenever a British officer displayed initiative, it was said that he had not been at the battle of Bunker Hill.

Guitar

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four lines of music. Each line includes guitar chords above the staff and lyrics below. The chords are: Am, Em, Am, Em, Dm, C, Em, F, Em; Am, G, Am, G, Em, Am, Em, Am; C, G, Am, G, Am, Em; Am, Bm7, C, G, Dm, Bm, Am, Dm, C, Em, Am.

Am Em Am Em Dm C Em F Em
Why should vain mor - tals trem - ble at the sight of

5 Am G Am G Em Am Em Am
Death and de - struc - tion in the field of bat - tle,

9 C G Am G Am Em
Where blood and car - nage, where blood and car - nage

13 Am Bm7 C G Dm Bm Am Dm C Em Am
clothe the ground in crim - son Sound - ing with death groans?