

Herbert Read (1893-1968)

"The Happy Warrior"

His wild heart beats with painful sobs,
His strin'd hands clench an ice-cold rifle,
His aching jaws grip a hot parch'd tongue,
His wide eyes search unconsciously.

He cannot shriek.

Bloody saliva
Dribbles down his shapeless jacket.

I saw him stab
And stab again
A well-killed Boche*.

This is the happy warrior,
This is he...

*German