

Band Played Waltzing Matilda, (The)

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This is one of the rare song sheets published on this website that extends beyond one page. We apologize but didn't wish to omit any of the lyrics.



[C] Now, when [C] I was a young [F] man I [C] carried me [Am] pack,
and I [C] lived the free [G7] life of- the [C] rover.
From the Murray's green [F] basin to the [C] dusty out[Am]back,
well, I [C] waltzed my Ma[G7]tilda all [C] over.
Then in [G7] nineteen fifteen my [F] country said,
“[C] Son, it's [G7] time you stop rambling,
there's [F] work to be [C] done”
So they gave me a [F] tin hat and they [C] gave me a [Am] gun
and they [C] marched me a[G7]way to the [C] war. [F] [C]
And the [C] band played [F] Waltzing Ma[C]tilda,
as the ship pulled a[F] way from the [G] quay.
And [F] 'midst all the cheers, the flag [C] waving and [F] tears,
we [C] sailed off for [G7] Gallipo[C]li. [G7] [C]

And how [C] well I re[F]member that [C] terrible [Am] day,
how our [C] blood stained the [G7] sand and the [C] water.
And how in that [F] hell that they [C] called Suvla [Am] Bay,
we were [C] butchered like [G7] lambs at the [C] slaughter.
Johnny [G7] Turk, he was ready, he'd [F] primed himself [C] well,
he [G7] showered us with bullets and he [F] rained us with [C] shell
And in five minutes [F] flat he'd blown [C] us all to [Am] hell,
nearly [C] blew us right [G7] back to Aus[C]tralia [F] [C]
But the [C] band played [F] Waltzing Ma[C]tilda,
when we stopped to [F] bury our [G] slain.
[F] We buried ours, and the [C] Turks buried [F] theirs,
then we [C] started all [G7] over a[C] gain. [G7] [C]

And [C] those that were [F] left, well, we [C] tried to sur[Am]vive,
in that [C] mad world of [G7] blood, death and [C] fire.
And for ten weary [F] weeks I kept [C] myself a[Am]live,
though a[C]round me the [G7] corpses piled [C] higher.
Then a [G7] big Turkish shell knocked me [F] arse over [C] head,
and [G7] when I woke up in me [F] hospital [C] bed
And saw what it had [F] done, well, I [C] wished I was [Am] dead, -
never [C] knew there was [G7] worse things than [C] dying. [F] [C]
For I'll [C] go no more [F] Waltzing Ma[C]tilda,
All around the green [F] bush, far and [G] free.
To [F] hump tent and pegs, a [C] man needs both [F] legs,
no more '[C] Waltzing Ma[G7]tilda' for [C] me. [G7] [C]

So they [C] gathered the [F] crippled, the [C] wounded, the [Am] maimed,
and they [C] shipped us back [G7] home to Aus[C]tralia.
The legless, the [F] armless, the [C] blind and in[Am]sane,
those [C] proud wounded [G7] heroes of [C] Suvla.
And [G7] when our ship pulled into [F] Circular [C] Quay,
I [G7] looked at the place where [F] me legs used to [C] be.
And thanked Christ, there was [F] nobody [C] waiting for [Am] me,
to [C] grieve, to [G7] mourn, and to [C] pity. [F] [C]
But the [C] band played [F] Waltzing Ma[C]tilda,
as they carried us [F] down the gang[G]way.
But [F] nobody cheered, they [C] just stood and [Am] stared,
then they [C] turned all their [G7] faces a[C]way. [G7] [C]

And so [C] now every [F] April I [C] sit on me [Am] porch,
and I [C] watch the pa[G7]rade pass be[C]fore me
And I see my old [F] comrades, how [C] proudly they [Am] march,
re[C]viving old [G7] dreams and past [C] glory.
And the [G7] old men march slowly, old [F] bones stiff and [C] sore;
they're [G7] tired old heroes from a [F] forgotten [C] war.
And the young people [F] ask "What are [C] they marching [Am] for?"
and [C] I ask me[G7]self the same [C] question. [F] [C]
[C] But the band plays [F] Waltzing Ma[C]tilda,
and the old men still [F] answer the [G] call.
But as [F] year follows year, more old [C] men disa[F]ppear,
some day [C] no one will [G] march there at [C] all.

[C] Waltzing matilda, [F] waltzing matilda,
[C] who'll come a-[Am]waltzing ma[Dm]tilda with [G7] me?
And their [C] ghosts may be [G7] heard as they [C] march by that [F]
Billabong,
[C] Who'll come a-[Am] waltzing ma[G7]tilda with [C] me?