

John Brown's Body Lies A-Mouldering in the Grave



John Brown's grave in North Elba, N. Y. (near Lake Placid)

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave, /
 John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
 But his soul goes marching on.

Chorus:

Glory, glory, hallelujah, /
 Glory, glory, hallelujah,
 His soul goes marching on.

He's gone to be a soldier in the Army of the Lord, /
 He's gone to be a soldier in the Army of the Lord,
 His soul goes marching on.

Chorus:

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back, /
 John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back,
 His soul goes marching on.

Chorus:

John Brown died that the slaves might be free, /
 John Brown died that the slaves might be free,
 His soul goes marching on.

Chorus:

The stars above in Heaven now are looking kindly down, /
 The stars above in Heaven now are looking kindly down,
 His soul goes marching on.

Chorus:

Written: 1861 (The song originated with soldiers of the Massachusetts 12th Regiment and soon spread to become the most popular anthem of Union soldiers during the Civil War. Many versions of the song exist. One particularly well

written version came from William W. Patton, and is reproduced below. The Brown tune inspired Julia Ward Howe, after she heard troops sing the song while parading near Washington, to write her lyrics for the same melody, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Lyrics to Howe's moving lyrics are also posted below.)

History of the Song

John Brown by William W. Patton

Old John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave,
While weep the sons of bondage whom he ventured all to save;
But tho he lost his life while struggling for the slave,
His soul is marching on.

John Brown was a hero, undaunted, true and brave,
And Kansas knows his valor when he fought her rights to save;
Now, tho the grass grows green above his grave,
His soul is marching on.

He captured Harper's Ferry, with his nineteen men so few,
And frightened "Old Virginy" till she trembled thru and thru;
They hung him for a traitor, themselves the traitor crew,
But his soul is marching on.

John Brown was John the Baptist of the Christ we are to see,
Christ who of the bondmen shall the Liberator be,
And soon thruout the Sunny South the slaves shall all be free,
For his soul is marching on.

The conflict that he heralded he looks from heaven to view,
On the army of the Union with its flag red, white and blue.
And heaven shall ring with anthems o'er the deed they mean to do,
For his soul is marching on.

Ye soldiers of Freedom, then strike, while strike ye may,
The death blow of oppression in a better time and way,
For the dawn of old John Brown has brightened into day,
And his soul is marching on.

Battle Hymn of the Republic by Julia Ward Howe

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,
He has loosed the fateful lightening of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps
His day is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnish'd rows of steel,
"As ye deal with my contemners, So with you my grace shall deal;"
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel
Since God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

[Trial of John Brown](#)