

**BATTLEFIELD BAND**  
**Anthem For The Common Man**  
**The Yew Tree**

A mile frae Pencaitland on the road to the sea  
Stands a yew tree a thousand years old  
And the old women swear by the gray o' their hair  
That it knows what the future will hold.  
For the shadows of Scotland stand round it  
'Mid the kail and the corn and the kye,  
All the hopes and the fears of a thousand long years  
Under the Lothian sky.

My bonny yew tree, tell me what did you see.

Did you look through the haze o' the long summer days  
To the south and the far English border?  
All the bonnets o' steel on Flodden's far field,  
Did they march by your side in good order?  
Did you ask them the price of their glory  
When you heard the great slaughter begin?  
For the dust o' their bones  
Would rise up frae the stones  
To bring tears to the eyes o' the wind.

My bonny yew tree, tell me what did you see.

Not once did you speak for the poor and the weak  
When the moss-troopers laid in your shade  
To count all the plunder and hide frae the thunder  
And share out the spoils o' their raid.  
But you saw the smiles o' the gentry  
And the laughter of lords at their gains.  
When the poor hunt the poor  
Across mountain and moor  
The rich man can keep them in chains.

My bonny yew tree, tell me what did you see.

Did you no think tae tell when John Knox himsel'  
Preached under your branches sae black  
To the poor common folk who would lift up the yoke  
O the bishops and priests frae their backs?  
But you knew the bargain he sold them  
And freedom was only one part,  
For the price o their souls was a gospel sae cold  
It would freeze up the joy in their hearts.

My bonny yew tree, tell me what did you see.

And I thought as I stood and laid hands to your wood  
That it might be a kindness to fell you.  
One kiss o' the axe and you're freed frae the racks  
O' the sad bloody tales that men tell you.  
But a wee bird flew from your branches  
And sang out as never before  
And the words of the song were a thousand years long  
And to learn them's a long thousand more.

My bonny yew tree, tell me what CAN you see.