Grass
*Carl Sandburg*

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz¹ and Waterloo².
Shovel them under and let me work—
   I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg³
And pile them high at Ypres⁴ and Verdun⁵.
Shovel them under and let me work.
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:
   What place is this?
   Where are we now?

   I am the grass.
   Let me work.

¹ Major battle of the Napoleonic wars, fought on December 2, 1805; nearly 25,000 casualties
² Final battle of the Napoleonic wars, fought on June 18, 1815; nearly 60,000 casualties
³ Major battle of Civil War, fought from July 1-3, 1863; 46,000 to 51,000 casualties
⁴ Site of three major WWI battles (1914-1917) in Belgium; more than 850,000 casualties.
⁵ Site of major WWI battle from February-December 1916 in France; nearly 715,000 casualties