

# The Old Mans Song

*Ian Campbell*

## Capo 2

[G] At the turning of the [F] century I [C] was a boy of [G] five  
 My father went to fight the Boers and [F] never came [C] back a [G] live  
 My mother left to bring us up no [F] chari [C] ty she'd [G] seek  
 So she washed and scrubbed and [F] scraped along on [C] 7/6 a [G] week

When I was twelve I [F] left the school and [C] went to find a [G] job  
 With growin' kids my ma was glad of the [F] extra [C] couple of [G] bob  
 I know that better schooling would have [F] stood me [C] in good [G] stead  
 But you can't afford re [F] finements when you're [C] struggling for your [G] bread

And when the Great War [F] came along I [C] didn't hesi [G] ate  
 I took the royal shilling and went [F] off to [C] do my [G] bit  
 I fought in mud and tears and blood three [F] years or [C] there [G] about  
 Then I copped some gas in [F] Flanders and was [C] invalidated [G] out

And when the war was [F] over and we'd [C] finished with the [G] guns  
 I got back into civvies and I [F] thought the [C] fighting [G] done  
 I'd won the right to live in peace but I [F] didn't [C] have no [G] luck  
 For soon I found I [F] had to fight for the [C] right to go to [G] work

In 'twenty-six the [F] General Strike found me [C] out on the [G] street  
 For I'd a wife and kids by then and their [F] needs I [C] had to [G] meet  
 But a brave new world was coming and the [F] brother [C] hood of [G] man  
 But when the strike was [F] over we were [C] back where we be[G]gan

I struggled through the [F] 'Thirties out of [C] work now and a [G] gain  
 I saw the Black Shirts marching and the [F] things the [C] did in [G] Spain  
 But I raised my children decent and I [F] taught them [C] wrong from [G] right  
 Then Hitler was the [F] lad that came and [C] showed them how to [G] fight

My daughter was a [F] land girl, she got [C] married tae a [G] Yank  
 They gave my son a gong for stopping [F] one of [C] Rommel's [G] tanks  
 He was wounded just before the end and [F] conva [C] lesced in [G] Rome  
 Got married to an [F] Eyetye nurse and never [C] bothered to come [G] home

My daughter writes me [F] once a month a [C] cheerful little [G] note  
 About their colour telly and the [F] other [C] things they've [G] got  
 She has a son, a likely lad, he's [F] nearly [C] twenty [G] one  
 Now she says they've called him [F] up to [C] fight in Viet[G]nam

We're living on the [F] Pension now and it [C] doesn't go too [G] far  
 Not much to show for a life that seems like [F] one long [C] bloody [G] war  
 When you think of all the wasted lives it [F] makes you [C] want to [G] cry  
 I don't know how to [F] change things but by [C] Christ we'll have tae[G] try