by **A. Lawrence Vaincourt** in 1987. He was born in upstate New York and grew up in Canada. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during WWII and though he was later employed in a number of jobs, he was a writer at heart. A regular columnist, his writings, probably most especially that poem, have been seen around the world. The poem was even carved into a marble monument at West Point. He passed in April 2009. The poem was set to music by his son, composer Randy Vancourt, it has been released several times as a recording, most recently on November 1, 2013 by legendary singer Connie Francis, and can be heard at: http://www.strictly- country.com/ConnieFrancisasoldierdiedtoday.html His website is

http://vaincourt.homestead.com/author.html

A SOLDIER DIED TODAY

He was getting old and paunchy And his hair was falling fast, And he sat around the Legion, Telling stories of the past. Of a war that he once fought in And the deeds that he had done, In his exploits with his buddies; They were heroes, every one.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors His tales became a joke, All his buddies listened quietly For they knew where of he spoke. But we'll hear his tales no longer, For ol' Bob has passed away, And the world's a little poorer For a Soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many,
Just his children and his wife.
For he lived an ordinary,
Very quiet sort of life.
He held a job and raised a family,
Going quietly on his way;
And the world won't note his passing,
'Tho a Soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth,
Their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing,
And proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell of their life stories
From the time that they were young
But the passing of a Soldier
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution
To the welfare of our land,
Some jerk who breaks his promise
And cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow
Who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend
And the style in which he lives,
Are often disproportionate,
To the service that he gives.
While the ordinary Soldier,
Who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal

And perhaps a pension, small. It's so easy to forget them, For it is so many times That our Bobs and Jims and Johnnys, Went to battle, but we know,

It is not the politicians
With their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom
That our country now enjoys.
Should you find yourself in danger,
With your enemies at hand,
Would you really want some cop-out,
With his ever waffling stand?

Or would you want a Soldier--His home, his country, his kin, Just a common Soldier, Who would fight until the end. He was just a common Soldier,

And his ranks are growing thin, But his presence should remind us We may need his like again. For when countries are in conflict, We find the Soldier's part Is to clean up all the troubles

That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor

While he's here to hear the praise,

Then at least let's give him homage

At the ending of his days

Perhaps just a simple headline In the paper that might say:

"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING A SOLDIER DIED TODAY."