

"war!" by edgar
wallace and "come up
from fields, father" by
walt whitman essay
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[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



**ASSIGN
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In this unit I have studied war poetry. In this topic I have studied example from authors and poets such as Rudyard Kipling, Robert Southey, Walt Whitman, Thomas Hardy, Edgar Wallace and the most famous Lord Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate and creator of ' Charge of the Light Brigade'. The wars that these particular poets have based their pieces on are the Boer war for Hardy, Kipling and Wallace, the Battle of Blenheim for Southey, the Battle of Balaclava for Lord Tennyson and the American Civil War for Whitman.

Out of all the literature I have studied in this unit I have decided to examine in detail the two poems ' War!' by Edgar Wallace and ' Come up from Fields, Father' by Walt Whitman. In slightly less detail I will look into the ' Battle of Blenheim' by Southey.

First I will look at the piece of poetry exhibited by Walt Whitman, ' Come up from the Fields, Father'. This poem as I have mentioned is set in the American Civil War. This was a war, which was between the north and the south of the USA. The cause of this war was a dispute about slavery of the ethnically challenged. The south was fighting to keep slavery. Among their officials for the army were Jefferson Davis, Robert Lee, Joseph Johnston, " Stonewall" Jackson, James Longstreet, Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, John Singleton Mosby Braxton Bragg, John Bell Hood, James Ewell Brown Stuart and Jubal Early. The north were strongly opposed to the idea of the enforced rules that were imposed on blacks, such as separate buses. Their officials for the war were Abraham Lincoln, Edwin M. Stanton, Winfield Scott, George B. McClellan, Henry W. Halleck, Joseph Hooker, Ambrose Burnside, Ulysses S. Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman, George Henry Thomas,

Winfield Scott Hancock, and George Gordon Meade. The war was concluded in 1865 when General Lee of the South lead his army into a bit more than they could handle. Therefore the north abolished slavery and peace was restored in the USA.

This poem looks at how this war affected the people who didn't fight in the war but observed it, specifically the female role model.

Whitman writes 'Come up from the Fields, Father' in free verse. As a consequence there is no rhyme scheme. What he lacks in rhyme and rhythm he makes up for with rather large injections of assonance. For example 'This is not our son's' which has a repetition of the 'I' as well as the 'O' vowel. He uses this technique to quicken the pace at which the reader reads the text. Assonance is scattered throughout the poem. Not only does he use assonance to this effect but two other techniques (alliteration and monosyllabic wording) as well, I use the example for alliteration which is in the title and the first line: 'from the fields father'. For a monosyllabic sentence a good example would be 'white in the face and dull in the head'. To contrast with the assonance speeding up the poem he uses hyphens and, at the end of the lines, endstopping to slow down the poem. For example 'And come to the front door mother-here's a letter from thy dear son.' The hyphen in the middle gives a pause and the full stop shows a pause in between lines. There is no example of enjambement, where the line runs into the next, in the poem therefore every line is endstopped.

Scattered around the poem are many personal pronouns, mainly describing the son. An example would be ' here's a letter from our dear Pete.' The ' our' makes the son seem like a possession of the parents. This is the main personal pronoun used throughout the poem, though ' thy' is used when it is used to describe the relationship between the mother and and son. It shows that the mother was closer with Pete than any other family member. It is used almost as a warning of what effect the death would have on the mother.

Whitman devotes verse two to describing the scenery. He does this effectively. He uses two rhetorical questions ' smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?'

The second poem I will look at (' War') is set in the Boer War. The second Boer War started when the english learnt of the discovery of gold in the provence of Transvaal. They felt could drive out the Brits. The English felt they had txo keep control of the Natal colony and the Cape colony as Europeans were gaining more independence. They were invaded by the Boers after war was declared. Thousands of lives were claimed of both Afrikaans and Britans.

The poem ' War' is written in an ABABCDCEEEE ryhme scheme (although slightly deviated in the second stanza ' soul...hand')

There is a motif used to portray the hardships of war as if it were a compulsory. ' And its War!' is repeated until the last verse in which the conjunction is changed to ' But its War!'. This is what is used to portray the

necessary hardships. It justifies the death of the soldier. In 'Come up from the Fields, Father' there is a slight motif (may be seen more as repetition) but as it is written in free verse it is hard to follow through on and repeat in every verse. The semi-motif is 'come father- ...come mother-'. To describe the scene in verse one Wallace uses onomatopoeia to give imagery 'mutter of guns'. This is comparative to the 'bees were lately buzzing' in verse two of Whitman's poem. Not as much assonance is used in 'War' as there is a lot more rhythm and rhyme.

The difference of views Whitman and Wallace are portraying can be shown by the pronoun types I looked at earlier. As I have said, Whitman has an abundance of personal pronouns, however Wallace is not focusing on the people but the general effect of war. He uses an impersonal pronoun 'take it out' to take all ownership and personality away from the soldier.

The last poem I will look at will be 'The Battle of Blenheim'. The battle of Blenheim was in the War of Spanish Succession. The battle included the forces of the Grand Alliance of England, Austria, the United Provinces, Prussia, Denmark, Hesse and Hanover. They were commanded by John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, and Prince Eugene of Savoy. The other army was the French and Bavarian armies, which were commanded by Camille d'Hostun de la Baume, Duc de Tallard; Maximilian Emanuel, Elector of Bavaria, and Ferdinand, Comte de Marsin.

'The Battle of Blenheim' has a motif to compare with 'War' and also to compare with war the motif changes to show a form of irony 'But 'twas a

famous victory' showed he realised that war was pointless. Another regular verse pattern and rhyme scheme is established in this poem, ABCBDD.

Pathetic fallacy is used in the first line of this poem, 'It was a summer evening'. This technique is used by Whitman, 'moderate wind'. Both create a false sense of security.

In conclusion, the poem that made the most impression on me was 'War' as it had a good rhythm and the motif was put to good effect. I think that the free verse in 'Come up from the Fields, Father' did not work as well as it could have done with a regular structure or rhyme scheme. I liked 'The Battle of Blenheim' and I thought it worked but it didn't pose as much of an immediate impact as 'War'. It made a big impact on me.