

Drummer hodge by thomas hardy essay sample

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My study aims to cover the key points of the poetry written during and about the first world war and the various factors which may have influenced it. We will start with 'Drummer Hodge' which was written during the Boer war by a writer named Thomas Hardy. The poem offers an unusual view of war which isn't often seen elsewhere. The poem is an existentialist paradox – Hodge was an unimportant figure in a major war and is representative of the thousands of casualties of the battle.

The poem begins ambiguously. "They" could refer to either friend or foe. Their identity is not as important as their attitude towards Hodge. Hodge is "thrown" into a pit "just as found", without a coffin and presumably without a service. His "homely Northern breast and brain" suggests Hodge was a simple, modest sort, but a valuable human nonetheless. Unlike the other poems, Drummer Hodge is very structured and never changes its six-line "1-2-1-2-1-2" form as opposed to Brooke's and Owens use of octaves and sestets.

Hardy uses Roman numerals to separate each stanza and to provide a classical feel to the poem. The mood of the piece is somewhat sympathetic towards the subject. Hodge could be anybody but is used as an example of the unfairness of war. In the second part of the poem, Hodge is referred to as being "fresh" — like a child too young to die. Hardy constantly emphasizes Hodge's foreignness and he makes it clear that Hodge was a complete stranger to the southern surroundings in which he fell. Words such as "... foreign constellations" and "... that unknown plain" are used to portray the fact.

In Brook's and Owen's sonnets, death is focused on and referred to throughout as glorious, brave and heroic while in Drummer Hodge, a death is portrayed as, sudden, unexpected, and ultimately unfair and inglorious similar to the surprise death of Brooke himself. In June 1914, Austria, Serbia, Russia, Germany, America and several other countries plunged into world war, engulfing Europe in one of modern history's bloodiest and most catastrophic conflicts. In fact, it is said to be the landmark and the beginning of modern history, it had a profound impact on the remainder of the century.

Before this ' great war' began, it was received in Europe with much enthusiasm, not since repeated. The public were led to believe it would be over by Christmas and would ' put an end to all wars'. As we know, that was not the case. On the favorable side, the war did give birth to a whole new genre of poetry, led mainly by Rupert Brooke, but also many others. The patriotism expressed in these pieces was printed regularly in newspapers so anyone not yet in battle would rush off to become a soldier and get their name in the memorials.

It kept the soldiers going and maintained their will to fight and die for their country. Many soldiers saw it as their duty to sacrifice themselves in the name of their homeland and any form of death in war was regarded as heroic and glorious. In the latter years of the war, the poetry became harder, more realistic and perhaps discouraging to aspiring soldiers as Owen, Rosenberg and Sassoon took over from Brooke and therefore it was not received with equal enthusiasm.

However, Brookes war sonnets are still read out in church memorials today, 'the soldier' in particular. Born the son of a schoolmaster in Rugby on August 3rd 1887, Rupert Chawner Brooke went on to become one of the most famous poets of the first world war, due largely to the success of his poem 'the soldier' that expressed the patriotic feelings of a generation at the time of his death. However this was only one of his hundreds of poems written over the course of his life-time, many dealing with subjects other than war.

Rupert was educated at Rugby, before moving on to study at Kings College, Cambridge. He was a good student and athlete and proved an extremely popular young man. In 1909 he moved to Granchester where he lived with his friends and wrote many of his non-war poems. In spring, became a member of the Fabian Society. He spent the spring of 1911 in Munich studying German where he met and fell in love with Flemish sculptress Elizabeth Van Rysselberg. When he returned to Granchester in May 1911, he began to work for his Fellowship at King's.

At the same time, despite the demands of his academic career, he completed his first volume of poetry, which he entitled 'Poems 1911'. This was published in early December, and produced a small profit within a few weeks. In the next twenty years it ran to 37 editions, totalling around 100,000 copies. In 1913, Rupert was finally awarded a Fellowship at King's. On 15th September 1914, he applied for a commission in The Royal Naval Division. Rupert Brooke actually saw little combat during the war.

It was during this period that he wrote his most famous poetry. He wrote a set of five sonnets which rewarded him in instant fame after 'the soldier'

was quoted in a sermon in St. Paul's church, London. He took part in an expedition to Antwerp but while sailing for the Dardanelles, he was bitten on the upper lip by a poisonous mosquito. He soon fell ill and at 4: 46pm on the 23rd April 1915, the day of Shakespeare and St George he died aboard a hospital ship in the Aegan of blood poisoning.

His companions buried him in an olive grove on the Greek island of Skyros. " We buried him in the same evening in an olive-grove where he had sat with us on Tuesday - one of the loveliest places on this earth, with grey green olives round him, one weeping above his head; the ground covered with flowering sage, bluish-grey, and smelling more delicious than any flower I know .. We lined his grave with all the flowers we could find, and after the last post the little lamp-lit procession went once again down the narrow path to the sea. "