

# Poems of war



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Can you imagine them? Young men, waving back at their lives, as they are shipped off to fight the “glorious” war. Glorious. What a way to describe something so destructive and demoralizing, yet people of that time were so naive that they didn’t know what to believe.

The community in the 1910’s believed that war was glorious, and to be a soldier in the war proved that you are a courageous, dedicated person. There’s nothing more courageous than dying for your country. Some soldiers who fought in World War I wrote poems, which challenged the community’s thoughts on war. Siegfried Sassoon was a soldier in the First World War, who was one of the many who wrote poems challenging the idea that war is noble and glorious. One of Sassoon’s poems, *Survivors*, demonstrates the horror, brutality and the realism of war that is seen to outsiders as “glorious.” From the first line of the poem, Sassoon challenges the community’s idea with the use of sarcasm. “No doubt they’ll soon get well.

Sassoon insinuates that this will not be the case, but suggests that the men will remain sick and may never recover. Sassoon challenged the ideas of the community by using metaphors in his poem. Sassoon says the soldiers are “learning to walk.” Many of the men at war have lost their legs, and have to undergo rehabilitation.

Many of the soldiers left the war shattered, both mentally and physically. Not only did the men have shattered bones, but also their hopes, dreams and aspirations had been shattered. The community’s thoughts on war were shared with the soldiers before they were shipped to war. The soldiers saw

war as an adventure, but were shattered when they found out that the only adventure they would be enduring, would be survival. I bet they weren't as shattered as the family members were when their soldier didn't come back from war.

Robert Graves, a soldier in the First World War, also uses the word shattered in his poem 'A Dead Boche' to challenge the ideas on war, which the community held. He uses it to describe the environment, showing the destructive nature of war. Glorious, isn't it. 'A Dead Boche' is a poem, which describes Graves' personal, yet gruesome recollection of a dead German soldier found in the woods. He describes the soldier as a crop-haired. Graves insinuates that the soldier not only had his hair cropped, but his life had also been cropped due to the brutal nature of war. It wasn't until after the war that we found the true nature of what war was like. The poems written by the soldiers opened the community's mind and aspects on how brutal and devastating war actually is, and have now changed the views on war from many people.