

What does music tell us about the soldiers' and communities' experience of war?

Music was an important element of the wartime experience. Songs were written and sung for many reasons – to promote patriotism, entertain, pay tribute to great feats of courage and sacrifice, offer some respite in the trenches and help people cope with loss. These songs were written by people who experienced the war either as a soldier, or as a part of a community from where soldiers had gone to war.

Music like art, poetry and some elements of photography is an interpretation of events. The composer shares his or her views, values and intentions with the listener. Therefore music too needs to be interpreted carefully.

The first two songs were written some 100 years ago. The third was written in 2014.

- 1 Look and listen to these songs and use these analytical questions to help you understand each one. Then decide what they help you understand about the experience of soldiers during the war, and the impacts of the war on local communities. You could make this a group activity, each group choosing one song to interpret and then share with the others.

ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS	MY ANSWERS
Name of the song	
What is it about?	
What is its style?	
What is its tone?	
What emotions does it create?	
How does it create these emotions?	
What is its message?	
What does it help me understand about the experiences of a soldier, or the experience of a community at war?	

Australia Will Be There

(War time version)

There has been a lot of argument going on they say,
As to whether Dear Old England should have gone into the fray,
But right thinking people, all wanted her to fight;
For when there's shady business, Britannia puts it right.

Refrain

Rally round the banner of your country,
Take the field with brothers o'er the foam,
On land or sea, wherever you be;
Keep your eye on Germany.
But England home and Beauty have no cause to fear.
Should Auld acquaintance be forgot
No! No! No! No! No! Australia will be there
Australia will be there.

2nd Verse

You've heard about the "Emden" that was cruising all around,
It was sinking British shipping where ere it could be found,
Till one fine summer morning Australia's answer came;
The good ship "Sydney" hove in sight, and put the foe to shame.

3rd Verse

When Old John Bull is threatened, by foes on land or sea,
His Colonial Sons are ready and at his side will be,
From Afric, India, Canada, come men to do or die,
And Motherland is glad to hear Australia's battle cry.

Song written by Skipper Francis, a Welshman by birth who immigrated to Australia in 1913 due to ill-health. The song was first performed in 1916.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7-enJy5jdQ>

Le Madelon

Pour le repos le plaisir du militaire
Il est là-bas à deux pas de la forêt
Une maison aux murs tous couverts de lière
Aux Tourlourous c'est le nom du cabaret
La servante est jeune et gentille
Légère comme un papillon
Comme son vin son oeil pétille
Nous l'appelons la Madelon
Nous en rêvons la nuit nous y pensons le jour
Ce n'est que Madelon mais pour nous c'est l'amour
Quand Madelon vient nous servir à boire
Sous la tonnelle on frôle son jupon
Et chacun lui raconte une histoire
Une histoire à sa façon
La Madelon pour nous n'est pas sévère
Quand on lui prend la taille ou le menton
Elle rit c'est tout l'mal qu'elle sait faire
Madelon, Madelon, Madelon

For days off, the soldiers' pleasure
Is over there, just inside the forest
A house with walls covered in ivy
The Raw Soldiers is the name of the cabaret
The maid is young and pretty
Light as a butterfly
Her eyes sparkle like wine
We call her Madelon
We dream of her at night and think of her during the day
She is just Madelon but for us she is love
When madelon comes to serve our drinks
Under the table we graze her skirt
And everyone tells her a story
A story in their own way
Madelon is not severe to us
When one of us takes her waist or her chin
She laughs that's all the harm it can do
Madelon, Madelon, Madelon

The lyrics are by **Louis Bousquet** (1914)
and the music by **Camille Robert**.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Im4tViuVoJM>

La Chanson de Craonne (English: **The Song of Craonne**) is an anti-military song of World War I written in 1917. The song was written to the tune of *Bonsoir M'Amour* (Charles Sablon), sung by **Emma Liebel**. It is sometimes known by the first line of the chorus, **Adieu la vie** (Goodbye to life).

La Chanson de Craonne

Paroles

Quand au bout d'huit jours, le r'pos terminé,
On va r'prendre les tranchées,
Notre place est si utile
Que sans nous on prend la pile.
Mais c'est bien fini, on en a assez,
Personn' ne veut plus marcher,
Et le cœur bien gros, comm' dans un sanglot
On dit adieu aux civ'lots.
Même sans tambour, même sans trompette,
On s'en va là haut en baissant la tête.

Refrain

Adieu la vie, adieu l'amour,
Adieu toutes les femmes.
C'est bien fini, c'est pour toujours,
De cette guerre infâme.
C'est à Craonne, sur le plateau,
Qu'on doit laisser sa peau
Car nous sommes tous condamnés
C'est nous les sacrifiés!

When at the end of a week's leave
We're going to go back to the trenches,
Our place there is so useful
That without us we'd take a thrashing.
But it's all over now, we've had it up to here,
Nobody wants to march anymore.
And with hearts downcast, like when you're sobbing
We're saying good-bye to the civilians,
Even if we don't get drums, even if we don't get trumpets
We're leaving for up there with lowered head.

Good-bye to life, good-bye to love,
Good-bye to all the women,
It's all over now, we've had it for good
With this awful war.
It's in Craonne up on the plateau
That we're leaving our skins,
'Cause we've all been sentenced to die.
We're the ones that they're sacrificing

continued >>

C'est malheureux d'voir sur les grands boul'vards
Tous ces gros qui font leur foire;
Si pour eux la vie est rose,
Pour nous c'est pas la mêm' chose.
Au lieu de s'cacher, tous ces embusqués,
F'raient mieux d'monter aux tranchées
Pour défendre leurs biens, car nous n'avons rien,
Nous autr's, les pauvr's puotins.
Tous les camarades sont enterrés là,
Pour défendre les biens de ces messieurs-là.

au Refrain

Huit jours de tranchées, huit jours de souffrance,
Pourtant on a l'espérance
Que ce soir viendra la r'lève
Que nous attendons sans trêve.
Soudain, dans la nuit et dans le silence,
On voit quelqu'un qui s'avance,
C'est un officier de chasseurs à pied,
Qui vient pour nous remplacer.
Doucement dans l'ombre, sous la pluie qui tombe
Les petits chasseurs vont chercher leurs tombes.

Refrain

Ceux qu'ont l'pognon, ceux-là r'viendront,
Car c'est pour eux qu'on crève.
Mais c'est fini, car les trouffions
Vont tous se mettre en grève.
Ce s'ra votre tour, messieurs les gros,
De monter sur l'plateau,
Car si vous voulez la guerre,
Payez-la de votre peau!

Adieu la vie, adieu l'amour,
Adieu toutes les femmes.
C'est bien fini, c'est pour toujours,
De cette guerre infâme.
C'est à Craonne, sur le plateau,
Qu'on doit laisser sa peau
Car nous sommes tous condamnés
C'est nous les sacrifiés.

On the grand boulevards it's hard to look
At all the rich and powerful whooping it up
For them life is good
But for us it's not the same
Instead of hiding, all these shirkers
Would do better to go up to the trenches
To defend what they have, because we have nothing
All of us poor wretches
All our comrades are being buried there
To defend the wealth of these gentlemen here.

Eight days in the trenches, eight days of suffering,
And yet we still have hope
That tonight the relief will come
That we keep waiting for.
Suddenly in the silent night
We hear someone approach
It's an infantry officer
Who's coming to take over from us.
Quietly in the shadows under a falling rain
The poor soldiers are going to look for their graves.

Those who have the dough, they'll be coming back,
'Cause it's for them that we're dying.
But it's all over now, 'cause all of the grunts
Are going to go on strike.
It'll be your turn, all you rich and powerful gentlemen,
To go up onto the plateau.
And if you want to make war,
Then pay for it with your own skins.

Good-bye to life, good-bye to love,
Good-bye to all the women,
It's all over now, we've had it for good
With this awful war.
It's in Craonne up on the plateau
That we're leaving our hides
'Cause we've all been sentenced to die.
We're the ones that they're sacrificing.



http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x30dzv_chanson-de-craonne_news



My Condah Boy

Your name is on the honour board
That hangs on the mission church wall
With Ernie, Walter and Bill
Brothers who answered the call
From Lake Condah Mission Station
To the trenches of Western France
For the empire and for dignity
You cast your lives to chance.

My Condah boy
My Condah boy
My dark eyed only son
My Condah boy
My Condah boy
Your duty was bravely done.

The moon shines on the Lake here
And the old men sing their songs
Of battles long ago, of victories rarely won
Is your spirit resting peacefully
Beneath some foreign soil
Is a mother looking over you
Giving thanks for your bloody toil?

CHORUS

My Condah boy
My Condah boy
My dark eyed only son
My Condah boy
My Condah boy
Your duty was bravely done

I will never hold you in my arms
I will never stroke your hair
I'll never find your resting place
Somewhere over there
Will your sacrifice shine a light
For your people back here at home
Will the freedom's flame burn brightly now
For a mother left alone?

My Condah boy
My Condah boy
My dark eyed only son
My Condah boy
My Condah boy
Your spirit will live on

(Words and music by Tim Gurry 2014)



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St Mary's Mission Church honour board



Walter Saunders

AMM P00889.012

- 1 Write a song about World War 1. How will you interpret the experience? What values, emotions and messages will your song present? How does your interpretation compare with the songs of yesteryear? How does it compare with those of your classmates in your school and your partner school?