Comparison Of Two Owen’s Poems Essay, Research Paper

All Wilfred Owens’s poems seem to rhyme. The ends of the alternate lines rhyme in most all of his

poems for example in “The send off” The 1st line ends in way and the 3rd in gay. This is repeated

with other rhyming words all through the poem. On the 7th and 9th lines the rhyme is tramp and

camp. In “Ducle et decorum est” we can see the same format of rhyming. The end of each

alternate line rhymes i.e. the ends of the 1st and 3rd lines in this case sacks and backs, and the end

of the 9th and 10th lines fumbling and stumbling.

Both these poems were written in the 1st world war and are by the author Wilfred Owen

who died seven days before the end of the first world war. Both suggest that the out come of the

war was grim for the vast majority of solders who if they came home at all would ether return

home dead or injured.

Death seems to be mentioned a lot in Wilfred Owen’s poems for example the title of

“Ducle et decorum est” in an English translation means It is sweet and fitting to die for ones

country. Throughout the poem more pictures are painted of death and funerals e.g.

“As under a green sea I saw him drowning.”

“He plunges at me guttering, choking, drowning”

From the next quotes we can see that Wilfred Owen must have suffered from nightmares about

the war and the trenches. He says

“In all my dreams before my helpless sight”

“He plunges at me guttering, choking, drowning”

“If in some smothering dreams you too could pace

Behind the wagon that we flung him in”

Pictures of death are also painted in the poem “The send-off” and I think that Wilfred Owen is

trying to put forward the idea that when you are “sent off” you never come back.

“A few, a few too few for drums and yells,

may creep back silent to village wells”

The quote below shows us that Wilfred Owen saw “The send-off” as a funeral. The quote leads

you to get the impression that death is mocking the flowers and spray and turning them into

flowers and spray for funerals.

“Nor there if they yet mock what women meant

Who gave them flowers”

The quote

“Shall they return to beating bells”

on line 16 is almost asking a question. Will they return? I think this shows us that Wilfred

Owens’s view of war from personal experience tells us that he hated the war and saw it as a grim

affair. The next quote tell us that he saw the men as dead as soon as they got on the train.

“Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray

As men’s are dead”

The next quote has an oxymoron in it Grimly gay.

“And lined the train with faces grimly gay”

By doing this Wilfred Owen tells us that the solders that are lining the train are happy but this is

shadowed by the fact that they are going to war and may not becoming back this makes the title

seem ironic “The Send-off” I feel that this implying that they may not come back and they have

been sent off into the unknown.

“We never heard to which front these were sent.”

In Dulce et decorum est Owen tries to paint a very vivid picture of what life in the trenches was

like he describes the men as “Old beggars” and tells us that they were “coughing like hags” He

also uses the word trudge in line 5 and this tells us that the men are slowly moving towards their

destination and are not physically or mentally fit but are slowly lifting one foot after the other and

placing it down into the “sludge” (mentioned in line 2). They seem to have known energy left at

all. He mentions that the men “marched asleep” and this gives you an idea that they had not slept

for few days and what sleep they did get was not worth mentioning. So I won’t. The men had

quite clearly been injured or had lost their equipment he says

“Many had lost their boots

But limped on blood-shod”

He tells us that the men were “Drunk with fatigue” and were deaf even

“to the hoots

of gas shells dropping softly behind”

This enforces the picture that Owen has so vividly painted of the men. Coughing, ill with no

equipment trudging through the sludge of no mans land.

Wilfred Owens experience of war seems to be portrayed in both Dulce et decorum Est and The

send off. In Line 2 of Dulce et decorum Est Owen mentions “we” and I feel that this implies that

he is writing from personal experience and not from something that he has seen while he was in

the trenches. This is both his view and the view of his men as he says “we”.

“Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through the sludge”

Both these poems leave the reader with a melancholy thought in the send off Wilfred Owen

describes the solders coming home to a village they do not know and in dulce et decorum est he

says that dulce et decorum est is a lie and that we shouldn’t tell our children that its sweet and

fitting to die for ones country. I like the way the last line is short in both poems it gives the poem

more of an impact.

I think that Wilfred Owen is trying to bring the horrors of war to the reader in the last verse of

each poem. In dulce et decorum est he asks the reader if they could follow the wagon with the

injured solider in and in the send off he relates the soldier’s return to the village and asks how

many are going to come home.