

It Took Every Soldier

*Soldiers line up at the station
Soon to fight for their nation
Wheels greased and engines fired
Duckling carriages warned of mire
All in uniform, harsh and stiff
Polished boots, new leather, no give
What awaits they do not know
Only to defeat the foe*

*Soldiers line up at the station
Soon to fight for their nation
Glancing up and down the line
All this will end by Christmas time
The train begins to pull away
Oh, how she wishes he could stay
No letter, no whisper, no sign of return
Heart for her hero begins to yearn*

*Soldiers line up at the station
Soon to fight for their nation
Hissing engines, coaches sway
Taking soldiers on their way
King and Country, proud to serve
But wartime is a learning curve
Flag-waving children watch in awe
They can't understand the truth of war*

*Soldiers line up at the station
Soon to fight for their nation
While young men go to join platoons
This platform fills with children soon
"Mummy, where did daddy go?
Are we going to get him?" "No."
Families divided by sorrowful partings
To mobilise, evacuate. Wartime starting
Brings fears unknown and country life
Far from bombs, but not from strife*

*Soldiers line up at the station
Soon to fight for their nation
"Last time I was here was with our Peggy
Getting the Sunday train to Skeggy."
"How do you think it'll be when we arrive?
You don't think there's a chance we won't
come back alive?"
"Nah, mate, over by Christmas, we'll be fine.
You'll be back on the train to the seaside next
summer, having a lovely time."*

*Soldiers lined up at the station
Humans, machines; all fought for this nation
For families ripped apart by war
The railway station: the guardian's door.*

A collaboration by creative writer Olivia Macnab, EMR Station Adopters, Staff and Community Rail Partners to commemorate the vital role the railway industry has played in times of conflict and the sacrifices made by railway staff around the world.

Poem written by

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