

It Will All Be Over By Christmas: A Play For Railway Stations

Characters:

5 soldiers
4 officers
4 VAD Nurses
Paperboy
2 Reserve Army Ladies

Props:

Soapbox to stand on for messages
Paperboy stand
sandwich board
[Big placards on sticks](#) – your country needs you / (alternative on reverse) -
Whistle?

A crowd of people

HEADLINE: Read all about it! Read all about it! [Britain at War!](#)

ADMIRAL stands on soapbox. People crowd around. He takes out a paper from his pocket.

CHORUS SONG: HUM: Roses are blooming in Picardy

ADMIRAL: We are at war. And I have here a message sent to me from our king:
“At this grave moment in our national history I send to you and, through you, to the officers and men of the fleets, of which you have assumed command, the assurance of my confidence that under your direction they will revive and renew the old glories of the Royal Navy, and prove once again the sure shield of Britain and of her Empire in the hour of trial.”

VOICE Three cheers for His Majesty and The Royal Navy!
Hip Hip!

CHORUS Hurray!

VOICE Hip hip

CHORUS: Hurray!

VOICE Hip hip

CHORUS: HURRAY!

PAPERBOY: British Expeditionary Forces marching to Flanders! Read all about it!

CHORUS SONG: It will all be over by Christmas
By Christmas we'll be marching home
And the snow will be falling, and we'll all be calling
We've not got a day more to roam, from home.

It will all be over by Christmas
By Christmas the marching will stop
And the Boche will be losing, and we shall be boozing
As back home to Blighty we hop.

It will all be over by Christmas
By Christmas the shelling will stop
And the Boche will be running, and we shall be gunning
And back home to Blighty we hop.

CHORUS SONG: HUM: we don't want to lose you.

VOICE: Come into the ranks and fight for your King and country!

VOICE: You are wanted at the Front!

VOICES Enlist today!

KITCHENER: Your Country Needs You!

CHORUS SONG: Oh, we don't want to lose you but we think you ought
to go.
For your King and your country both need you so.
We shall want you and miss you
But with all our might and main
We shall cheer you, thank you, bless you
When you come home again.

TROOPS SONG: Goodbye-ee, goodbye-ee,
Wipe the tear, baby dear, from your eye-ee,
Tho' it's hard to part I know,
I'll be tickled to death to go.
Don't cry-ee, don't sigh-ee,
there's a silver lining in the sky-ee,
Bonsoir, old thing, cheer-i-o, chin, chin,
Nah-poo, toodle-oo, Goodbye-ee.

HEADLINE: British Expeditionary Forces on the March! Territorials
called up! Read all about it!

CHORUS SONG: Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, smile, smile,
While you've a lucifer to light your fag,
Smile, boys, that's the style.

What's the use of worrying?
It never was worth while, so
Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, smile, smile.

CROWD WOMEN (Shouting) Bye! Keep safe! I love you! I'll write every day!

CHORUS SONG: Keep the Home-fires burning,
While your hearts are yearning,
Though your lads are far away
They dream of Home;
There's a silver lining
Through the dark cloud shining,
Turn the dark cloud inside out,
Till the boys come Home.

HEADLINES: Extra, extra December 1914: 78 women and children
killed during German Navy bombardment of
Scarborough.

WOMAN: [Men of Britain: will you stand for this? Enlist now!](#)

KITCHENER: [Rally round the Flag: we must have more men!](#)

WOMEN: [Women of Britain say go!](#)

ROWDY TROOPS: There's a long, long trench a-winding
Into the land of the mines
Where the sausages are falling
And those dud five-nines
There are long, long nights of watching
Not unprofanely expressed
Till the day that I'll be going down
That long, long trench to rest.

ROWDY TROOPS: Oh the Grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men
He marched 'em out of the frontline trench
And he marched them in again.

And when they were stood they had rum
And when they were sat they had bread
But when they put their heads 'bove the parapets
They were dead they were dead they were dead.

Swift change of mood. Sad humming.

CHORUS SONG: HUM: *Home*

SOLO SONG: Mid Pleasures and palaces though I may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek thro' the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home.

ALL Home! Sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like home.

HEADLINES: British Troops in the Battle of Mons! Read all about it:
Angels sighted above the battlefields.

VAD: In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

ALL: Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

CHORUS: HUM *Silent Night*

VOICES: London Illustrated: Peace in the Trenches on Christmas
Eve. Read all about it.

SOLDIERS: We promise not to shoot if you promise not to shoot.

SOLDIER It will all be over tomorrow. No more war.

CHORUS SONG: There's a long, long trail a-winding
Into the land of my dreams,
Where the nightingales are singing
And a white moon beams:
There's a long, long night of waiting
Until my dreams all come true;
Till the day when I'll be going down
That long, long trail with you.

VOICE spoken: In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

LOCAL HISTORY INSERT/ roll of honour

CHORUS SONG: They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We shall remember them

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.