

POETRY: COMPARISON & CONTRAST

Walt Whitman (1819–1892). Leaves of Grass. 1900.

Cavalry Crossing a Ford

A line in long array, where they wind betwixt green islands;
They take a serpentine course—their arms flash in the sun—Hark to the musical clank;
Behold the silvery river—in it the splashing horses, loitering, stop to drink;
Behold the brown-faced men—each group, each person, a picture—the negligent rest on the
saddles;
5 Some emerge on the opposite bank—others are just entering the ford—while,
Scarlet, and blue, and snowy white,
The guidon flags flutter gaily in the wind.

Herman Melville

The Night March

With banners furled and clarions mute,
An army passes in the night;
And beaming spears and helms salute
The dark with bright.
5 In silence deep the legions stream,
With open ranks, in order true;
Over boundless plains they stream and gleam
No chief in view!
Afar, in twinkling distance lost,
10 (So legends tell) he lonely wends
And back through all that shining host
His mandate sends.