

chicago carl sandburg analysis

Chicago, Carl Sandburg, and the City's Soul: A Deep Dive Analysis

Introduction:

Have you ever felt the raw energy of a city pulse through your veins? Carl Sandburg's epic poem, "Chicago," captures that visceral experience unlike any other. This isn't just a poem; it's a portrait, a character study of a city brimming with contradictions – a brawling, ambitious, and ultimately captivating metropolis. This in-depth analysis delves into Sandburg's masterful use of imagery, tone, and symbolism to paint a picture of Chicago that is both unflinching and deeply affectionate. We'll explore the poem's historical context, its lasting impact, and its continued relevance in understanding the spirit of cities today. Prepare to experience "Chicago" not just as a poem, but as a living, breathing entity.

I. The Grit and Glory: Imagery and Symbolism in Sandburg's "Chicago"

Sandburg doesn't shy away from Chicago's harsh realities. He embraces its "wicked" and "brutal" aspects, painting a picture of a city forged in the fires of industry and immigration. The imagery is visceral and bold: "Hog Butcher for the World," "Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat," "Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler." These powerful metaphors establish Chicago as a powerhouse, a city built on hard work and ambition, even at the cost of some moral ambiguity. However, Sandburg's portrayal is not solely negative. He juxtaposes this gritty reality with moments of beauty and resilience. The "laughing" and "singing" aspects highlight the city's vibrant, resilient spirit. The poem's symbolism extends beyond mere description; it's a celebration of the city's relentless energy and its people's indomitable spirit. The recurring images of strength and resilience, even in the face of adversity, serve as a testament to Chicago's enduring character.

II. A City of Contradictions: Exploring the Poem's Tone and Attitude

The poem's tone is complex and multifaceted. Sandburg doesn't shy away from the city's flaws, yet he approaches them with a profound affection. This creates a sense of ambivalence that reflects the city itself – a place of both immense beauty and undeniable ugliness. The poem's attitude is one of proud defiance. It's a counter-narrative to the criticism leveled against Chicago, a bold assertion of the city's inherent worth. Sandburg embraces the criticisms, even the harsh ones, turning them into badges of honor. This defiant tone speaks volumes about the resilience and self-belief that define the Chicago spirit. He acknowledges the negative aspects but ultimately celebrates the city's strength and potential. This duality in tone is what makes the poem so compelling and enduring.

III. Historical Context: Understanding Chicago in Sandburg's Time

To fully appreciate "Chicago," we must understand its historical context. Written in 1914, the poem reflects the rapid industrialization and massive immigration that transformed Chicago into a global powerhouse. This period saw unprecedented growth, but also significant social and economic inequalities. Sandburg, himself a child of immigrants, was deeply aware of these complexities. The poem serves as a reflection of this burgeoning metropolis, its struggles, and its triumphs. It's a

snapshot of a moment in time, yet it speaks to the timeless themes of urbanization, immigration, and the constant struggle for progress. Understanding this historical context enriches the reader's appreciation for the poem's nuanced portrayal of the city.

IV. Lasting Legacy and Continued Relevance:

"Chicago" is more than just a historical document; it's a timeless piece of American literature. Its impact extends far beyond its initial publication. The poem's powerful imagery and evocative language have resonated with generations of readers and have become synonymous with the city itself. The poem's enduring legacy lies in its ability to capture the essence of a city's spirit, a spirit that transcends time and place. Even today, "Chicago" serves as a powerful reminder of the city's resilience and enduring strength, making it as relevant today as it was a century ago. Its continued relevance stems from its ability to speak to universal themes of urban life and the human spirit's ability to endure and thrive even in the face of adversity.

V. Conclusion: A City's Portrait in Verse

Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" is not merely a poem; it's a powerful testament to the human spirit's ability to thrive amidst chaos and adversity. It's a portrait of a city in all its glory and its grime, a celebration of its contradictions and a testament to its enduring strength. Through vivid imagery, a complex tone, and a deep understanding of its historical context, Sandburg crafts a poem that continues to resonate with readers today. It's a poem that celebrates the grit, the glory, and the undeniable soul of Chicago.

Article Outline: Chicago Carl Sandburg Analysis

- I. Introduction: Hooking the reader and providing an overview of the analysis.
- II. Imagery and Symbolism: Analyzing Sandburg's use of powerful imagery and metaphors to portray Chicago.
- III. Tone and Attitude: Examining the poem's complex tone and Sandburg's attitude towards the city.
- IV. Historical Context: Placing the poem within the historical context of early 20th-century Chicago.
- V. Lasting Legacy and Relevance: Discussing the poem's enduring influence and continued relevance.
- VI. Conclusion: Summarizing the key findings and the enduring power of Sandburg's work.

(Detailed explanation of each point is provided above in the main article body.)

FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of Carl Sandburg's "Chicago"? The central theme is a celebration of the city's strength, resilience, and indomitable spirit, despite its flaws and imperfections.
1. What literary devices does Sandburg use in "Chicago"? He masterfully employs metaphors, personification, and vivid imagery to create a powerful and memorable portrait of the city.

1. How does Sandburg portray Chicago's negative aspects? He directly addresses the city's "wickedness" and "brutality," acknowledging its harsh realities without romanticizing them.
1. What is the significance of the poem's title? The title itself immediately connects the poem's content to the specific city, creating a powerful sense of place and identity.
1. How does the poem reflect the historical context of its time? It reflects the rapid industrialization, immigration, and social changes that shaped Chicago in the early 20th century.
1. What is the poem's lasting legacy? "Chicago" has become synonymous with the city itself, embodying its energy, resilience, and unique spirit.
1. How does Sandburg's personal background influence the poem? As a child of immigrants, Sandburg's personal experience informs his understanding and portrayal of the city's diverse population.
1. What makes "Chicago" a significant piece of American literature? Its powerful imagery, bold voice, and timeless themes have resonated with readers for over a century, establishing it as a classic.
1. How can we apply the lessons of "Chicago" to other cities today? The poem's themes of resilience, ambition, and the complex relationship between a city and its people are universally applicable.

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chicago carl sandburg analysis: *About "Chicago" by Carl Sandburg* Amos Wesonga, 2018-09-13 Essay from the year 2017 in the subject American Studies - Literature, Loyola University Chicago, language: English, abstract: The poem Chicago, by Carl Sandburg, is a description of the life and other attributes in the city of Chicago. The writer portrays the city as industrious, proud, hopeful and resilient in the face of many drawbacks. The piece shows an emotional connection between the city and its dwellers. Chicago is depicted in the poem as being a lead freight handler, tool maker and hog butcher city, boasting of robust contributions to the nation. However, the city has its vices such as prostitution, a broken judicial system, as well as the law enforcement system. The writer gives his hope and pride in the city and is passionate about it to a personal level. Chicago is indeed a troubled and proud town; hence, if considered, it can overshadow the bad that is perceived of it.

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lived in such a community in Chicago for three years, conducting interviews and participating in meetings with members of the local gang which has been central to the community since the 1950s. Ralph discovered that the experience of injury, whether physical or social, doesn't always crush dreams into oblivion; it can transform them into something productive: renegade dreams. The first part of this book moves from a critique of the way government officials, as opposed to grandmothers, have been handling the situation, to a study of the history of the historic Divine Knights gang, to a portrait of a duo of gang members who want to be recognized as authentic rappers (they call their musical style crack music) and the difficulties they face in exiting the gang. The second part is on physical disability, including being wheelchair bound, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among heroin users, and the experience of brutality at the hands of Chicago police officers. In a final chapter, *The Frame, Or How to Get Out of an Isolated Space*, Ralph offers a fresh perspective on how to understand urban violence. The upshot is a total portrait of the interlocking complexities, symbols, and vicissitudes of gang life in one of the most dangerous inner city neighborhoods in the US. We expect this study will enjoy considerable readership, among anthropologists, sociologists, and other scholars interested in disability, urban crime, and race.

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□"«□"«□"«**Chicago**□"«□"«□"« Gale, Cengage Learning, 2015-03-13 A Study Guide for Carl Sandburg's □"«□"«□"«Chicago, excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Poetry for Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Poetry for Students for all of your research needs.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The other Carl Sandburg Philip Yannella, 1996

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chicago carl sandburg analysis: *The New Chicago* John Koval, Larry Bennett, Michael Bennett, Fassil Demissie, Roberta Garner, Kiljoong Kim, 2006-09-15 For generations, visitors, journalists, and social scientists alike have asserted that Chicago is the quintessentially American city. Indeed, the introduction to *The New Chicago* reminds us that to know America, you must know Chicago. The contributors boldly announce the demise of the city of broad shoulders and the transformation of its physical, social, cultural, and economic institutions into a new Chicago. In this wide-ranging book, twenty scholars, journalists, and activists, relying on data from the 2000 census and many years of direct experience with the city, identify five converging forces in American urbanization which are reshaping this storied metropolis. The twenty-six essays included here analyze Chicago by way of globalization and its impact on the contemporary city; economic restructuring; the evolution of machine-style politics into managerial politics; physical transformations of the central city and its suburbs; and race relations in a multicultural era. In elaborating on the effects of these broad forces, contributors detail the role of eight significant racial, ethnic, and immigrant communities in shaping the character of the new Chicago and present ten case studies of innovative governmental, grassroots, and civic action. Multifaceted and authoritative, *The New Chicago* offers an important and unique portrait of an emergent and new Windy City.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Spoon River Anthology* Edgar Lee Masters, 2012-03-02 DIVAn American poetry classic, in which former citizens of a mythical midwestern town speak

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chicago carl sandburg analysis: Text Structures From Poetry, Grades 4-12 Gretchen Bernabei, Laura Van Prooyen, 2020-01-17 Poetry is a joyful art form, but how do you teach students to joyfully read, analyze, and write poems? In *Text Structures from Poetry, Grades 4-12*, award-winning educator Gretchen Bernabei teams up with noted poet Laura Van Prooyen to light the path. Centered around 50 classroom-proven lesson and poem pairs, the mentor texts represent a broad range of voices in contemporary poetry and the canon. These unique and engaging lessons show educators how to pop the hood on a poem to discover what makes it work, using text structures to unlock the engine of a poem. This method enables educators to engage students in reading and re-reading a poem closely, to identify how the parts of the poem relate to each other to create movement, and to leverage what they have learned to write their own evocative poems. Each of the 50 lessons includes a mentor poem that serves as an excellent model for young writers, a diagram that illustrates the text structure of the poem, and several inspiring examples of student poems written to emulate the mentor poem. Easy-to-use instructional resources enhance instructor and student understanding and include: Teaching notes for unlocking the text structure of a poem and the engine that makes it work. Tips for exploring rhyme scheme, meter, and fixed forms. Instructional sequences that vary the ways students can read and write poems and other prose forms. Ideas for revising and publishing student poems. A Meet the Contemporary Authors section that includes fascinating messages from the contemporary poets. Teach your students to learn about poetry using the magic of poems themselves and lead the way to a rewarding love of poetry for teachers and students alike.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: Poems Walt Whitman, 1921

chicago carl sandburg analysis: Abe Lincoln Grows Up Carl Sandburg, 1928 Adapted from the author's *Abraham Lincoln: the prairie years*, this narrative covers Lincoln's early life, up until he left home at age nineteen.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: Honey and Salt Carl Sandburg, 2015-02-10 A collection from the Pulitzer Prize-winning American poet with “a sharp lively wit and a tender approach to the human condition” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*). Though he was also renowned as a biographer of Abraham Lincoln, Carl Sandburg was first and foremost a poet—upon his death, President Lyndon B. Johnson said “Carl Sandburg was more than the voice of America, more than the poet of its strength and genius. He was America.” In this outstanding collection of seventy-seven poems, Sandburg eloquently celebrates the themes that engaged him as a poet for more than half a century of writing—life, love, and death. Strongly lyrical, these intensely honest poems testify to human courage, frailty, and tenderness and to the enduring wonders of nature. “A poetic genius whose creative power has in no way lessened with the passing years.” —Chicago Tribune

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Third City Larry Bennett, 2012-08-01 Our traditional image of Chicago—as a gritty metropolis carved into ethnically defined enclaves where the game of machine politics overshadows its ends—is such a powerful shaper of the city’s identity that many of its closest observers fail to notice that a new Chicago has emerged over the past two decades. Larry Bennett here tackles some of our more commonly held ideas about the Windy City—inherited from such icons as Theodore Dreiser, Carl Sandburg, Daniel Burnham, Robert Park, Sara Paretsky, and

Mike Royko—with the goal of better understanding Chicago as it is now: the third city. Bennett calls contemporary Chicago the third city to distinguish it from its two predecessors: the first city, a sprawling industrial center whose historical arc ran from the Civil War to the Great Depression; and the second city, the Rustbelt exemplar of the period from around 1950 to 1990. The third city features a dramatically revitalized urban core, a shifting population mix that includes new immigrant streams, and a growing number of middle-class professionals working in new economy sectors. It is also a city utterly transformed by the top-to-bottom reconstruction of public housing developments and the ambitious provision of public works like Millennium Park. It is, according to Bennett, a work in progress spearheaded by Richard M. Daley, a self-consciously innovative mayor whose strategy of neighborhood revitalization and urban renewal is a prototype of city governance for the twenty-first century. The Third City ultimately contends that to understand Chicago under Daley's charge is to understand what metropolitan life across North America may well look like in the coming decades.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Highwayman Alfred Noyes, 2013-12-12 The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor, And the highwayman came riding- Riding-riding- The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door. In Alfred Noyes's thrilling poem, charged with drama and tension, we ride with the highwayman and recoil from the terrible fate that befalls him and his sweetheart Bess, the landlord's daughter. The vivid imagery of the writing is matched by Charles Keeping's haunting illustrations which won him the Kate Greenaway Medal. This new edition features rescanned artwork to capture the breath-taking detail of Keeping's illustrations and a striking new cover.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: Eros, Magic, & the Murder of Professor Culianu Ted Anton, 1996 Anton (writing, DePaul U.) synthesizes the research he has done since the beginning on the still-unsolved May 1991 murder of Chicago Divinity School professor Ioan Culianu, a protege of pioneering mythologist Mircea Eliade. Culianu had been taunting the communist government of his native Romania, and Anton suggests the murder was political. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

chicago carl sandburg analysis: Always the Young Strangers Carl Sandburg, 2015-10-20 The Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and historian recalls his midwestern boyhood in this classic memoir. Born in a tiny cottage in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1878, Carl Sandburg grew with America. As a boy he left school at the age of thirteen to embark on a life of work—driving a milk wagon and serving as a hotel porter, a bricklayer, and a farm laborer before eventually finding his place in the world of literature. In *Always the Young Strangers*, Sandburg delivers a nostalgic view of small-town life around the turn of the twentieth century and an invaluable perspective on American history.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Shark Edwin John Pratt, Glen Downey, Jeremy Bennison, 2009

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Hill We Climb Amanda Gorman, 2021-03-30 The instant #1 New York Times bestseller and #1 USA Today bestseller Amanda Gorman's electrifying and historic poem "The Hill We Climb," read at President Joe Biden's inauguration, is now available as a collectible gift edition. "Stunning." —CNN "Dynamic." —NPR "Deeply rousing and uplifting." —Vogue On January 20, 2021, Amanda Gorman became the sixth and youngest poet to deliver a poetry reading at a presidential inauguration. Taking the stage after the 46th president of the United States, Joe Biden, Gorman captivated the nation and brought hope to viewers around the globe with her call for unity and healing. Her poem "The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country" can now be cherished in this special gift edition, perfect for any reader looking for some inspiration. Including an enduring foreword by Oprah Winfrey, this remarkable keepsake celebrates the promise of America and affirms the power of poetry.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: City of the Century Donald L. Miller, 2014-04-09 "A wonderfully readable account of Chicago's early history" and the inspiration behind PBS's *American Experience* (Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*). Depicting its turbulent beginnings to its current status as one of the world's most dynamic cities, *City of the Century* tells the story of Chicago—and the story of America, writ small. From its many natural disasters, including the Great

Fire of 1871 and several cholera epidemics, to its winner-take-all politics, dynamic business empires, breathtaking architecture, its diverse cultures, and its multitude of writers, journalists, and artists, Chicago's story is violent, inspiring, passionate, and fascinating from the first page to the last. The winner of the prestigious Great Lakes Book Award, given to the year's most outstanding books highlighting the American heartland, *City of the Century* has received consistent rave reviews since its publication in 1996, and was made into a six-hour film airing on PBS's American Experience series. Written with energetic prose and exacting detail, it brings Chicago's history to vivid life. "With *City of the Century*, Miller has written what will be judged as the great Chicago history." —John Barron, *Chicago Sun-Times* "Brims with life, with people, surprise, and with stories." —David McCullough, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *John Adams* and *Truman* "An invaluable companion in my journey through Old Chicago." —Erik Larson, *New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Devil in the White City*

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Ice Palace* Edna Ferber, 2014-03-04 Originally published in 1958, *Ice Palace* is Pulitzer Prize winner Edna Ferber's classic and mighty novel about the taming of a great northern wilderness—Alaska. Czar Kennedy came to Alaska for money and power, Thor Storm for a dream. This is the story of their struggle, over a long half-century, for the future of Alaska and the destiny of their beautiful, rebellious granddaughter, Christine, a courageous woman who must make a choice that will shape the destiny of a new generation. Above all, it is the glowing and eloquent tale of Alaska itself—the last, great American frontier.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *A People's History of Chicago* Kevin Coval, 2017-03-28 Named Best Chicago Poet by The Chicago Reader, Kevin Coval channels Howard Zinn to celebrate the Windy City's hidden history.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Hearts and Hands* Luis Rodriguez, 2011-01-04 *Hearts and Hands* deals with many of the difficult issues addressed in Luis Rodríguez's memoir of gang life, *Always Running*, but with a focus on healing through community building. Empowered by his experiences as a peacemaker with gangs in Los Angeles and Chicago, Rodríguez offers a unique book of change. He makes concrete suggestions, shows how we can create nonviolent opportunities for youth today, and redirects kids into productive and satisfying lives. And he warns that we sacrifice community values for material gain when we incarcerate or marginalize people already on the edge of society. His interest in dissolving gang influence on black and latino kids is personal as well as societal; his son, to whom he dedicates *Hearts and Hands*, is currently serving a prison sentence for gang-related activity. With anecdotes, interviews, and time-tested guidelines, *Hearts and Hands* makes a powerful argument for building and supporting community life.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Good Morning, America* Carl Sandburg, 1928

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *The Ordeal of the Jungle* David Bates, 2019-07-08 Between 1910 and 1920, the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) inaugurated a massive organizing drive in the city's meatpacking and steel industries. Although the CFL sought legitimately progressive goals, worked earnestly to organize an interracial union, and made major inroads among both black and white workers, their efforts resulted in a bitter defeat. David Bates provides a clear picture of how even the most progressive of intentions can be ground to a halt. By organizing workers into neighborhood locals, which connected workplace struggles to ethnic and religious identities, the CFL facilitated a surge in the organization's membership, particularly among African American workers, and afforded the federation the opportunity to aggressively confront employers. The CFL's innovative structure, however, was ultimately its demise. Linking union locals to neighborhoods proved to be a form of de facto segregation. Over time union structures, rank-and-file conflicts, and employer resistance combined to turn the union's hopeful calls for solidarity into animosity and estrangement. Tensions were exacerbated by violent shop floor confrontations and exploded in the bloody 1919 Chicago Race Riot. By the early 1920s, the CFL had collapsed. *The Ordeal of the Jungle* explores the choices of a variety of people while showing a complex, overarching interplay of black and white workers and their employers. In addition to analyzing union structures and on-the-ground relations between workers, Bates synthesizes and challenges previous scholarship on interracial

organizing to explain the failure of progressive unionism in Chicago.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Reader's Guide to Literature in English* Mark Hawkins-Dady, 2012-12-06 Reader's Guide Literature in English provides expert guidance to, and critical analysis of, the vast number of books available within the subject of English literature, from Anglo-Saxon times to the current American, British and Commonwealth scene. It is designed to help students, teachers and librarians choose the most appropriate books for research and study.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Negro in Chicago Chicago Commission on Race Relations, 1922

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *American Journal* Robert Hayden, 1982

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Having and Being Had* Eula Biss, 2020-09-01 A NEW YORK TIMES EDITORS' CHOICE NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY TIME , NPR, INSTYLE, AND GOOD HOUSEKEEPING "A sensational new book [that] tries to figure out whether it's possible to live an ethical life in a capitalist society. . . . The results are enthralling." —Associated Press A timely and arresting new look at affluence by the New York Times bestselling author, "one of the leading lights of the modern American essay." —Financial Times "My adult life can be divided into two distinct parts," Eula Biss writes, "the time before I owned a washing machine and the time after." Having just purchased her first home, the poet and essayist now embarks on a provocative exploration of the value system she has bought into. Through a series of engaging exchanges—in libraries and laundromats, over barstools and backyard fences—she examines our assumptions about class and property and the ways we internalize the demands of capitalism. Described by the New York Times as a writer who "advances from all sides, like a chess player," Biss offers an uncommonly immersive and deeply revealing new portrait of work and luxury, of accumulation and consumption, of the value of time and how we spend it. Ranging from IKEA to Beyoncé to Pokemon, Biss asks, of both herself and her class, "In what have we invested?"

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Robert Frost* Jeffrey Meyers, 1996 Robert Frost is certainly the most widely read and most loved of American poets. After his death in 1963, Frost's authorized biographer wrote a three-volume work which deeply distorted the personality of the poet. Meyers has returned to the sources and survivors to give readers a radically new interpretation of Frost's life. Those who thought they knew Frost's life and work will be surprised by the impressive and sympathetic figure they meet in these pages. of photos.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: The Red Wheelbarrow and Other Poems William Carlos Williams, 2018 Here is a perfect little gift: the most beloved poems by the most essential American poet of the last century

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *The Life That I Have* Leo Marks, 1999 This poignant, haunting poem, originally written for the author's fiancée Ruth who died in a plane crash in 1943, was given to the SOE agent Violette Szabo as her code poem, before she was dropped into occupied France in 1944. It afterwards became famous through the film of her life, *Carve Her Name With Pride*, starring Virginia McKenna, and has been a source of inspiration ever since to those who have lost a loved one or are themselves facing death. Only in 1998, with the publication of Leo Marks' remarkable book about his works with SOE, *Between Silk and Cyanide*, did it become known that he was the author of this and many other poems used by SOE agents during World War II. Now one of the best loved poems in the English language, *The Life That I Have* is presented as a special illustrated gift book, with pencil drawings by the artist Elena Gausson Marks, the author's wife. Her pencil sketch of Violette Szabo, based on a photograph, is also included.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Abraham Lincoln* Carl Sandburg, 1939 These volumes complete the biography of Lincoln which the author began in *The prairie years*. It covers the years from 1861 until Lincoln's death. Contains many illustrations including cuts of cartoons, letters and documents.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Now in November* Josephine Winslow Johnson, 1934 A long drought brings hardship to the Haldemarnes as they struggle to wrest a living from their small farm.

chicago carl sandburg analysis: *Twentieth-Century War Poetry* Philippa Lyon, 2005 Publisher

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