

# Paul Warncke, *German Women* (1915)

## Abstract

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Paul Warncke was editor-in-chief of the satirical magazine *Kladderadatsch* in 1914; on August 8, 1914, he declared that his magazine would refrain from any political satire and actively work for German victory. During the war, he published numerous poems in *Kladderadatsch* and published a collection of these poems in 1915.

This mournful poem appeared in an issue of the weekly magazine *Wachtfeuer: deutsche Kunstblätter zum Krieg* published by the Berlin Association of Visual Artists. In 1915, the magazine published an issue titled “*Unseren deutschen Frauen*” [To Our German Women] with a portrait of Empress Auguste Viktoria on the cover, which consisted of articles and images describing the sacrifices and contributions of German women on the home front. Warncke’s poem grapples with the grief of women whose male relatives have been killed in the war. Sisters, newlywed brides, wives, and mothers have lost their brothers, husbands, and sons in the war and suffer in deep, profound sorrow. The poem recognizes the suffering of women and emphasizes that not only the fallen men, but also the women who mourn them without ever complaining, should be honored as heroes.

## Source

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### German women.

They walk in black dresses,  
Their faces veiled;  
They walk in deep sorrow  
But they do not complain.

I see lonely sisters,  
Whose hearts are breaking;  
Yesterday they were still full of happiness  
But they do not complain.

I see lovely brides,  
Whose path was full of light;  
Today they walk in darkness,  
But they do not complain.

Many women mourn their husbands  
The weight of hardship weighs heavily;  
Mothers walk like shadows,  
But they do not complain.

They have given birth to heroes  
In faithful love and duty;  
They have lost heroes  
But they do not complain.

They have felt sorrow,  
Their silent eyes speak;

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They go and heal wounds,  
But they do not complain.

Silent glory shall proclaim  
This little song, loud and simple:  
When you speak of German heroes  
Do not forget the women!

Paul Warncke

Source: *Wachtfeuer: Künstlerblätter zum Krieg*, No. 58 (1915), p. 2. Available online at:  
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