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## Recruiting Citizens for Soldiers in Seventeenth-Century English Ballads

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This article revisits the “heroic and glamorous language” of recruitment and retention in seventeenth century England. It examines the market, medium and message of many hundreds of “military” ballads that were disseminated from London at times of war. These show that military volunteerism among the lower sorts was less surprising and more sophisticated than previously imagined, which suggests the need to reconsider the question of military professionalism among ordinary

Furthermore, the common use of the love song as a vehicle for military messages, reveals how regular soldiering by “lower sorts” in this transitional period for army development. This new “profession” not only marked a direct break with the “estates” which put fighters at the top and workers at the bottom of society, it was negotiating its place within the social formation in early modern England.

**Affiliations:** 1: Victoria and Albert Museum



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