

DULCE ET DECORUM EST(1)

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares(2) we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest(3) began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots(4)
Of tired, outstripped(5) Five-Nines(6) that dropped behind.
Gas!(7) Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets(8) just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime(9) . . .
Dim, through the misty panes(10) and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering,(11) choking, drowning.
If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud(12)
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest(13)
To children ardent(14) for some desperate glory,
The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est
Pro patria mori.(15)

Wilfred Owen

WASTE BY Woodbine Willie

Waste of muscle, waste of brain,
Waste of Patience, waste of pain,
Waste of manhood, waste of health,
Waste of Beauty, waste of wealth,
Waste of Blood, waste of tears,
Waste of youth's most precious years,
Waste of ways the Saints have trod,
Waste of God, waste of God,- WAR!

Geoffrey Antekell Studdert Kennedy, known as 'Woodbine Willie' - the soldiers friend

He was an Anglican priest and poet who won a Military Cross for bravery as a Padre In the trenches - under fire in one of the bloodiest battles he run in to no-mans land to help the wounded. The name 'Woodbine Willie' grew from his work on troop trains when he'd hand out Bibles and cigarettes. He was a chain smoker himself. He trained as an ordinand at Ripon Clergy College, which amalgamated with Ripon College, Cuddesdon in 1973

BINYON, Laurence

For the Fallen

WITH proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.
Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.
They went with songs to the battle, they were
young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds un-
counted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.
They shall grow not old, as we that 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 will remember them.
They mingle not with their laughing comrades
again;
They sit no more at familiar tables at home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are
known
As the stars are known to the Night;
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 dark-
ness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

RUPERT BROOKE

The Soldier

IF I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust conceal'd;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Wash'd by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

'E weren't so bad at a ragtime song,
But they don't 'ave ragtime there,
If 'e were to tip 'em aht Dixie Land
'E'd make them angels stare.
But 'e ain't gorn dahn to no 'ell fire,
'E 'ad a good 'eart, 'ad Jim.
'Is wife were as good as a lump o' gold,
And she thought the world of 'im.
There must be a place for the likes o' Jim,
What isn't religious blokes,
But is good to their pals in the trenches,
And dear to their own 'ome folks.
It must be the same great Gawd above
What 'as made this world dahn 'ere,
And it takes all sorts to make this world,
So there ain't no bloomin' fear
But what 'e'll fix up a job for Jim,
A job what'll suit 'is 'and,
Maybe 'e'll polish them golden 'arps
They use in the 'eavenly band.
Maybe there's some flowers and gardens there
What'll want a good 'andy man :

What's The Use Of A Cross To

'Im?

by Geoffrey Anketell Studdert
Kennedy (/geoffrey-anketell-
studdert-kennedy/)

Parson says I'm to make 'im a cross
To set up over his grave,
'E's buried there by the Moated Grange,
And I 'ad a damn close shave,
But 'e were taken and I were left,
And why it's a job to see,
For 'e 'ad a wife and some bonnie kids,
And me — well there's only me.
And what's the use of a cross to 'im?
When a feller comes to die.
It's a curious thing is death, ye know,
When we was back there at rest,
'E were singin' 'is song—and takin' 'is glass
And 'avin' 'is fun wiv the best.
'E weren't no booser though, mind ye that,
'E were sound of 'is wind and limb,
'E were 'ard as a nail—a fighting lad,
A daisy to sc'fap were Jim.
But 'e'll f'ly 'o more — 'e's gorn aht West
Wiv a g'at big 'ole in 'is back,
'E's pushin' up daisies by Moated Grange —
I minds me arskin' in Railway Inn
What 'e thought 'appened the dead,
'E took a candle and snuffed it aht,
' That's what I think,' he said,
But some'ow I carnt think that aht 'ere,
When a pal gets blowed out West,
I were sure when my poor old Mother died,
She'd gorn to a land o' rest,

WILFRID OWEN

Anthem for Doomed Youth

WHAT passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.

Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

I can just see Jim wiv an angel's spade
And a 'eavenly wat'ring can.

'E were a gard'ner in civil life,

'E loved 'is allotment land,

'E were allus potterin' round 'is bit,

My Gawd — but it did smell grand.

'E 'ad rhubarb, cabbage and radishes

Fit for a prize at the shows,

Pansies and daisies and mignonette

And that great big summer rose.

Many a Sunday I've sat wiv 'im,

And 'ad a good pull at my pipe—

My Gawd, them days! It's a bloody war —

Where 'ave I put my wipe?

Aye, there we'd sit and we'd chew the rag

And 'ark to the Church bells ring,

'Twere Sunday there — wiv the Spring in the air,

And Peace over, everything.

Blyme, I wants no 'eaven but that

In the land o' the Kingdom come,

A pal and a pipe and a garden there

Ugh! damn it, I've 'it my thumb.

There I've finished 'is bit of a cross,

It's a rough-looking awkward thing,'

But it's all I can do with this wood, old lad -

Just 'ark 'ow them Church bells ring.

I can 'ear 'em soundin' across the sea

From the land where 'is garden grows,

I can see the green ov them cabbages

And smell the smell ov that rose.

Gawd knows as I ain't no prayin' man,

But I just puts up this prayer:

If ye're stuck for a job what'll suit old Jim,

Lord, give 'im a garden to go

And then when it comes my turn to go,

Just put me along of im.

I know as I ain't fit for 'eaven

But gimme a job wiv Jim

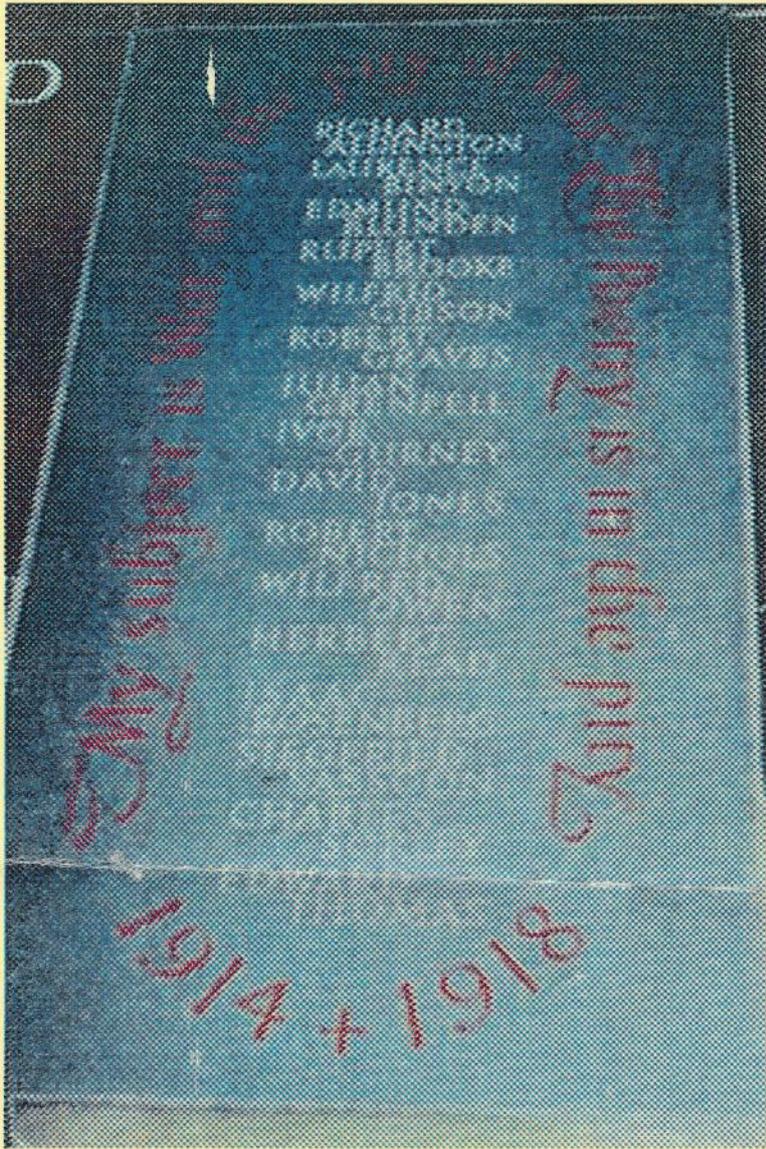
In a garden just outside the gates,

Where the 'eavenly roses smells

And blokes what ain't quite fit for 'eaven,

Can 'ark to the 'eavenly bells

- Songs. Kit bag
Tipperary
Children Read Alphabet
Child Blows Whistle
Christmas in the trenches
Church Bells Stegfried Sassan
Relatives Speak.
Wreath Laying by Children
child ^{adult} child candle
popples



RICHARD ALDRINGTON
LAURENCE BRYAN
EDWIN HINKEN
RUFUS HOOKER
WILFRED GIBSON
ROBERT CRAVEN
JULIAN STEINFELL
IVOR GURNEY
DAVID JONES
ROBERT JONES
WILFRED JONES
HERBERT JONES
CLARE JONES

The Friends of the
The Friends of the
The Friends of the
The Friends of the

1914 + 1918

Aftermath

Into Battle'

The naked earth is warm with spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the loving breeze;
And life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees a newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And Joy of Battle only takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind-

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Aftermath

Have you forgotten yet?...
For the world's events have rumbled on since those gagged days,
Like traffic checked while at the crossing of city-ways:
And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with thoughts that flow
Like clouds in the lit heaven of life; and you're a man reprieved to go,
Taking your peaceful share of Time, with joy to spare.
But the past is just the same--and War's a bloody game...
Have you forgotten yet?...
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz--
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?

Do you remember the rats; and the stench
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench--
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?
Do you ever stop and ask, 'Is it all going to happen again?'

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack--
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook you then
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your men?
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads--those ashen-grey
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

Have you forgotten yet?...
Look up, and swear by the green of the spring that you'll never forget.

Siegfried Sassoon

Before Action"

By all the glories of the day

And the cool evening's benison

By that last sunset touch that lay

Upon the hills when day was done,

By beauty lavishly outpoured

And blessings carelessly received,

By all the days that I have lived

Make me a soldier, O Lord.

By all of all man's hopes and fears

And all the wonders poets sing,

The laughter of unclouded years,

And every sad and lovely thing;

By the romantic ages stored

With high endeavour that was his,

By all his mad catastrophes

Make me a man, O Lord.

I, that on my familiar hill
Saw with uncomprehending eyes
A hundred of thy sunsets spill
Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword
Must say good-bye to all of this; -
By all delights that I shall miss,
Help me to die, O Lord
W. N. Hodgson

A.P. Herbert poem:

The General inspecting the trenches
Exclaimed with a horrified shout
'I refuse to command a division
Which leaves its excreta about.'

But nobody took any notice
No one was prepared to refute,
That the presence of shit was congenial
Compared to the presence of Shute.

And certain responsible critics
Made haste to reply to his words
Observing that his staff advisors
Consisted entirely of turds.

For shit may be shot at odd corners
And paper supplied there to suit,
But a shit would be shot without mourners
If somebody shot that shit Shute.

The Sentry

We'd found an old Boche dug-out, and he knew,
And gave us hell, for shell on frantic shell
Hammered on top, but never quite burst through.
Rain, guttering down in waterfalls of slime
Kept slush waist high, that rising hour by hour,
Choked up the steps too thick with clay to climb.
What murk of air remained stank old, and sour
With fumes of whizz-bangs, and the smell of men
Who'd lived there years, and left their curse in the den,
If not their corpses. . . .

There we herded from the blast
Of whizz-bangs, but one found our door at last.
Buffeting eyes and breath, snuffing the candles.
And thud! flump! thud! down the steep steps came thumping
And splashing in the flood, deluging muck --
The sentry's body; then his rifle, handles
Of old Boche bombs, and mud in ruck on ruck.
We dredged him up, for killed, until he whined
"O sir, my eyes -- I'm blind -- I'm blind, I'm blind!"
Coaxing, I held a flame against his lids
And said if he could see the least blurred light
He was not blind; in time he'd get all right.
"I can't," he sobbed. Eyeballs, huge-bulged like squids
Watch my dreams still, but I forgot him there
In posting next for duty, and sending a scout
To beg a stretcher somewhere, and floundering about
To other posts under the shrieking air.

Those other wretches, how they bled and spewed,
And one who would have drowned himself for good, --
I try not to remember these things now.
Let dread hark back for one word only: how
Half-listening to that sentry's moans and jumps,
And the wild chattering of his broken teeth,
Renewed most horribly whenever crumps
Pummelled the roof and slogged the air beneath --
Through the dense din, I say, we heard him shout
"I see your lights!" But ours had long died out.

Wilfred Owen

Absolution

The anguish of the earth absolves our eyes
Till beauty shines in all that we can see.
War is our scourge; yet war has made us wise,
And, fighting for our freedom, we are free.

Horror of wounds and anger at the foe,
And loss of things desired; all these must pass.
We are the happy legion, for we know
Time's but a golden wind that shakes the grass.

There was an hour when we were loth to part
From life we longed to share no less than others.
Now, having claimed this heritage of heart,
What need we more, my comrades and my brothers?

Siegfried Sassoon

Siegfried Sassoon: Suicide in the Trenches

I knew a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.

In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumps and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain.
No one spoke of him again.

You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

Alan Seeger. 1888–1916

I HAVE a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death 5
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still. 10
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep 15
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear...
But I've a rendezvous with Death 20
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.



To C. H. V.

WHAT shall I bring to you, wife of mine?
When I come back from the war?
A ribbon your dear brown hair to twine?
A shawl from a Berlin store?
Say, should I choose you some Prussian hack
When the Uhlans we overwhelm?
Shall I bring you a Potsdam goblet back
And the crest from a prince's helm?

Little you'd care what I laid at your feet.
Ribbon or crest or shawl--
What if I bring you nothing, sweet,
Nor maybe come home at all?
Ah, but you'll know, Brave Heart, you'll know
Two things I'll have kept to send:
Mine honour for which you bade me go
And my love--my love to the end.

Robert Ernest Vernède