

JUST FOR A SCRAP OF PAPER

Commission Minutes,  
Feb 1923. Approved.

Gunner Thomas Henry Brindley  
Royal Field Artillery  
Died on 20 September 1917 Aged 20  
Buried in Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium

A VICTIM OF A CRUEL SYSTEM

Commission Minutes, Sep 1923.  
Refused. No reason recorded.

WHEN ALIVE THEY WOULD NOT  
TAKE YOUR PLACE  
THEY CANNOT HAVE IT NOW  
MY SON

Private Walter John Sayers  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 4 October 1917 Aged 34  
Buried in Aeroplane Cemetery, Belgium

These words were chosen by Walter's mother. Australian soldiers were all volunteers, and this inscription seems to try to make guilty those who didn't volunteer. The second line suggests her son now has a place in heaven which they would not have.

I'M ALL RIGHT MOTHER  
CHEERIO

Lieutenant Harold Rowland Hill  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 4 October 1917 Aged 22  
Buried in Buttes New British Cemetery, Belgium

These words were chosen from Harold's own letter to his mother – perhaps his last letter.

O THAT WE COULD  
HAVE CLASPED HIS HAND  
& SOOTHED HIS PARTING HOURS

Sergeant George Lowbridge  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 22 October 1917 aged 21  
Buried in Aeroplane Cemetery, Belgium

George's parents chose these words to express their sadness at not being there to comfort their son. He was killed by a shell. He had returned to fighting after spending six months hospitalised with a severe case of trench foot, which could have resulted in his feet being amputated. George's parents were not able to visit his grave.

AGAINST HIS WILL  
A MAN TO KILL

Commission Minutes, April 1924.  
It was rejected in case it offended  
others who visited.

THEIR GLORY SHALL BE NOT  
BLOTTED OUT

This inscription was  
suggested as an option if no  
other was provided.

LIFE'S WORK WELL DONE  
LIFE'S VICTORY WON  
NOW COMES REST

Corporal Percy Charles Buffin  
Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry  
Died on 24 August 1916 aged 24  
Buried in Delville Wood Cemetery, France

These words are inspired by a poem written in 1879 by Edward H. Parker for the funeral of a friend. A slightly different version ended up on the coffin of American President James Garfield. This made it popular all around the world.

THE WORLD WAS SWEETER  
FOR HIS LIFE  
AND LIFE LIVES –  
POORER BY A FRIEND

Lieutenant Alfred Victor Ratcliffe  
West Yorkshire Regiment  
Died on 1 July 1916 Aged 29  
Buried in Fricourt New Military Cemetery, France

These words were written by Alfred himself, in a poem for a friend who had died before the war.

STILL SERVING HIS KING

Lance Corporal Charles Edward Soper  
London Regiment, Royal Fusiliers  
Died on 1 July 1916 aged 19  
Buried in Gommecourt British Cemetery No.2, France

HEART AND SOUL OF A BOY  
SIMPLE AND CHEERY  
NEVER TO GROW OLD  
NEVER GROW WEARY.

Second Lieutenant Walter Henry Alexander Damiano  
Royal Dublin Fusiliers  
Died on 2 July 1916 aged 19  
Buried in Beauval Communal Cemetery, France.

The third and fourth lines are inspired by Laurence Binyon's poem, *For the Fallen*, which is often part of Remembrance services today.

Walter died of wounds he received on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

NO NO NO OH GOD  
NOT FOR NAUGHT

Second Lieutenant Harold Harding Linzell MC  
Border Regiment  
Died on 3 July 1916 Aged 21  
Buried in Danzig Alley British Cemetery, France

Harold was married, but it was his mother who chose these words.

DEAR HAPPY BOY

Second Lieutenant James Douglas Hodding  
Royal Fusiliers  
Died on 10 July aged 17  
Buried in Heilly Station Cemetery, France

James was too young to be on active service and too young to be at the front. His father has already served in the army for twenty years, but they signed up together when war broke out. His younger brother also volunteered, but had been sent home when it was found out how young he was.

TELL ENGLAND  
THAT WE WHO DIED  
SERVING HER  
REST HERE CONTENT

Captain Marcus Herbert Goodall  
York and Lancaster Regiment  
Died on 14 July 1916 aged 21  
Buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery, France

Marcus was described by Siegfried Sassoon in his *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*, disguised as Allgood. "Allgood never grumbled about the war, for he was a gentle soul, willing to take his share in it, though obviously unsuited to homicide."

DID HE DIE IN VAIN?

Private John Paul  
South African Infantry  
Died on 18 July 1916 Aged 36  
Buried in London Cemetery and Extension, France

John was initially 'missing', among the two thirds killed, wounded and missing from the South African Brigade after the action at Delville Wood. His body was not found until 1935, when he was identified partly by his knife and fork which he had engraved with his name.

His wife, who chose these words after he was found, may have had time to reflect on the war and its effects.

WELL PLAYED! LAD

Rifleman Samuel Gunn  
King's Royal Rifle Corps  
Died on 27 July 1916 Aged 20  
Buried in Dive Copse British Cemetery, France

These words seem to be inspired by Henry Newbolt's poem *Vitai Lampada*, which is set in the Sudanese War of 1885. Chosen by his mother, it is more likely she meant that soldiers and sportsmen share some personal qualities, rather than suggesting war was a game. Perhaps Samuel had enjoyed playing sport before the war.

A MOTHER'S LOVE LIES HERE

Private Wiliam Ogston Craib  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 6 August 1916 Aged 28  
Buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery, France

William was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, but moved to Australia in 1912. When war broke out, he joined up in Austraila.

OUR LAD  
RUDDY OF HAIR  
AND STRONG OF LIMB

Private Lewis Norman Shepherd  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 8 August 1916 Aged 23  
Buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery, France

IN DREAMS WE SEE YOU  
ON THE BATTLE PLAIN  
WOUNDED, CALLING IN VAIN

Private Lyell Pocock  
Australian Infantry  
Died on 15 August 1916 Aged 17  
Buried in Becourt Military Cemetery, France

Lyell was only sixteen and 5 months old when he enlisted in September 1915.

HERE LIES A FATHER'S HOPE  
A MOTHER'S PRIDE  
AND A WIFE'S DEPENDENCE

Private John Prentice  
Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)  
Died on 23 August 1916 Aged 27  
Buried in Becourt Military Cemetery, France

These words were chosen by John's father. War widows did receive a pension. By the time the cemetery was finished in 1933, Mrs Prentice has remarried.

AU REVOIR LLEW

Private Llewellyn Brick  
Duke of Wellington's Regiment  
Died on 3 September 1916 Aged 23  
Buried in Mill Road Cemetery, France

Llewellyn's father had originally come from Wales, but had raised his son in Yorkshire. He chose the French words, which translated, mean "goodbye, until we meet again".

THE PURPOSES OF LIFE  
MISUNDERSTOOD

Private Charles Doyle  
Royal Army Medical Corps  
Died on 24 September 1916 aged 22  
Buried in Guards' Cemetery, France

These words were chosen by Charles' mother. She lost her husband in the war (who had officially been too old to serve) five months before she lost her son.

FELLOWSHIP IS HEAVEN  
AND THE LACK OF FELLOWSHIP  
IS HELL

Brigadier General Philip Howell CMG  
General Staff  
Died on 7 October 1916 aged 37  
Buried in Varennes Military Cemetery, France

These words come from a book written by William Morris, who thought that society should be founded on respect and support for each other. Philip had written to his wife that if "all Germany could be united in one man and he and I could ... talk things out, we could settle the war, I feel, in less than one hour."

HE GAVE UP ALL  
EVEN LIFE ITSELF  
FOR THE IDEALS  
OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE

Second Lieutenant Arnold William Rash  
Suffolk Regiment  
Died on 31 July 1917 aged 25  
Buried in Buffs Road Cemetery

His mother chose these words.

COULD I BUT KNEEL  
BESIDE THE GRAVE OF HIM  
WE LOVED SO DEAR  
HIS MOTHER

Bombadier William J Swetman  
Royal Field Artillery  
Died on 2 August 1917 Aged 23  
Buried in Belgian Battery Corner Cemetery, Belgium

Mrs Swetman was not able to afford to visit her son's grave in Belgium. This was a problem for many families, and some charitable organisations did organise group trips to reduce costs, or provide them free of charge to those who needed it.

THE ELEMENTS BE KIND TO THEE  
AND MAKE THY SPIRITS  
ALL OF COMFORT

Lieutenant Arnold Grayson Bloomer  
Lincolnshire Regiment  
Died on 3 August 1917 Aged 31  
Buried in Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, Belgium

This quote comes from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

"OUR NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN  
CAPTAIN AND LEADER"  
COMPANY MESSAGE

Captain John Llewellyn Thomas Jones  
London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)  
Died on 16 August 1917 Aged 22  
Buried in Hooze Crater Cemetery, Belgium

Chosen by his father, these words were written by a soldier who had served with John.

HE DID HIS BIT

Private Robert Thompson  
Yorkshire Regiment  
Died on 9 September 1917 Aged 22  
Buried in Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium

A JEW WHO GAVE HIS LIFE  
FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD

Private Abraham Nathan  
Devonshire Regiment  
Died on 26 October 1917 Aged 24  
Buried in Hooge Crater Cemetery, Belgium

Abraham was a Londoner from Shoreditch, which had a large Jewish population. There was anti-Semitism in the part of London he lived in at the time.

THEN THOUGHT I  
TO UNDERSTAND THIS  
BUT IT WAS TOO HARD FOR ME

Private Thomas Little  
South Wales Borderers  
Died on 10 November 1917 aged 21  
Buried in Passchendaele New British Cemetery, Belgium

Thomas's father chose these words, quoted from Psalms 73:15 in the Book of Common Prayer. Is it a comment on the loss of his son, and his feelings about that, or a comment on the war which caused his son's death? Thomas's body was missing until 25 March 1920.

A FRIEND OF CHILDREN  
HE DIED THAT THE CHILDREN  
OF TO-DAY  
MAY HAVE PEACE TOMORROW

Second Lieutenant Henry Davies  
Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry  
Died on 12 November 1916  
Buried in Redan Ridge Cemetery No.1, France

Before the war, Henry was a teacher at Slough Grammar School. He loved children and teaching - when he was 14 he was a pupil teacher at his school in Hull, where he grew up. His brother, a school teacher in Hull, chose these words.

"THE FRENCH ARE  
A GRAND NATION  
WORTH FIGHTING FOR"  
VIDE ALF'S LETTER 22.3.16

Private Alfred Goodlad  
York and Lancaster Regiment  
Died on 1 July 1916  
Buried in Railway Hollow Cemetery, France

Alfred's inscription uses his own words, from a letter he wrote to his parents, William and Jane Goodlad, in March 1916. Alfred had not long been in France when he wrote it, having only arrived that month from Egypt.



SLEEP ON DEAR ONE  
BESIDE THE BOYS  
WHOSE LIVES  
WERE GIVEN FOR US

Staff Nurse Edith Agnes Baker  
South African Military Nursing Service  
Died on 6 November 1918  
Buried in Abbeville Communal Cemetery  
Extension, France

Edith's inscription was chosen by her parents who were living in Natal, South Africa, when in contact with the War Graves Commission after the war.

AND THE SEA GAVE UP THE DEAD  
THAT WERE IN IT  
R.I.P.

Able Seaman George Walter Ashbee  
Royal Navy  
Died 1 January 1915  
Buried in Janval Cemetery, France

This inscription quotes the Bible; Revelation chapter 20 verse 13. Mrs Rose Ashbee of Bromley, Kent, sent it in for her son, George Ashbee, who was killed in action aboard HMS Formidable. His ship was torpedoed with the loss of more than 540 hands of a crew of 780. His body was recovered from the sea at Dieppe.

SON, WHAT EPITAPH MORE FIT  
IN THE GREAT WAR  
YOU NOBLY DID YOUR BIT

Private Allan Fitzgerald Cox  
British West Indies Regiment  
Died on 5 October 1918  
Buried in Taranto Town Cemetery Extension, Italy

Private Cox came from Melrose, St. Paul's, Grenada, British West Indies. He died of pneumonia while serving in Italy. His mother sent in the inscription.

DULCE ET DECORUM EST  
PRO PATRIA MORI  
SIC ITUR AD ASTRA

Second Lieutenant Albert Harcourt Giovanetti  
Royal Flying Corps  
Died on 3 February 1918  
Buried in Ismailia War Cemetery, Egypt

Albert was born in Melbourne, Australia. By the time his parents requested this inscription, they were living in Pretoria, South Africa. The first two lines of the inscription come from a poem by an ancient Roman poet, Horace. They are often translated 'It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country.' The last line is also Latin, but not Horace; 'Thus one goes to the stars.'

OUR SAILOR BOY  
IN A DISTANT LAND  
GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY  
SADLY MISSED. R.I.P.

Able Seaman Horace Hollobone  
Royal Navy  
Died on 7 November 1918  
Buried in Mikra British Cemetery, Greece

Horace died ashore, in 49th Military General Hospital, Salonika. His ship, HMS St. George, was a depot ship moored in Salonika harbour. He died aged 20 from dysentery and malaria, a very long way from his mother in Eastbourne, Sussex.

GOD TOOK HIM  
TO BLOOM IN HIS GARDEN.

Private Willie Elijah Tshabana  
South African Native Labour Corps  
Died on 21 February 1917  
Buried in East Dean (SS. Simon and Jude) Churchyard,  
United Kingdom.

Willie drowned in the SS Mendi when she was struck by another ship in fog in the English Channel. He was one of over 600 men of the SANLC to die in the dark, early hours of that day. His wife and his parents lived in the Pinetown district of Natal, South Africa.

BELOVED DAUGHTER & SISTER  
WHO ANSWERED THE CALL OF  
COUNTRY AND HONOR  
REMEMBERED WITH LOVE

Nursing Sister Victoria Belle Hennan  
Canadian Army Medical Corps  
Died on 23 October 1918  
Buried in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, United Kingdom

A hospital matron in Manitoba before the war, Victoria, 31, was working at 9th Canadian General Hospital in Shorncliffe when she died of pneumonia. Her brother, serving in France, arrived just in time for her funeral, described as 'beautiful', with many flower arrangements 'a touching tribute to the regard and affection in which she was held.'

AR YR ARGLWYDD Y GWAEDD  
AIS YN FY NGHIFYNGDER  
AC EFE A'M GWRANDAWODD I

Able Seaman William Henry Jones  
Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve  
Died on 10 November 1918  
Buried in Buenos Aires (Chacarita) British Cemetery,  
Argentina

William served on board SS Royston Grange which worked the route between Britain and Argentina. He was survived by his mother of 13 Tydfil Terrace, Troedyrhiw, Wales. This translates as 'At the lord he shouts I went in my disquiet and he listened to me'.