

## Voices from the war years

- 1 Your King and country needs you. Enlist now.  
Britons: Lord Kitchener Wants You. Join Your Country's Army! God save the King. *Posters*
- 2 The lamps are going out all over Europe, we shall not see them lit again in our life-time.  
*Sir Edward Grey, in August of 1914, about the impending outbreak of the First World War*
- 3 We were all delighted when war broke out. A lot of boys from the village were with me and although we were all sleeping in ditches at Harwich, wrapped in our greatcoats, we were bursting with happiness. We were all so patriotic then and had been taught to love England in a fierce kind of way. The village wasn't England; England was something better than the village.  
*Suffolk Farm worker Leonard Thompson*
- 4 We had been brought up to believe that Britain was the best country in the world and we wanted to defend her. The history taught us at school showed that we were better than other people (didn't we always win the last war?) and now all the news was that Germany was the aggressor and we wanted to show the Germans what we could do.  
*Private George Morgan, 16th Batt. West Yorkshire Regiment, 1914*
- 5 Against the vast majority of my countrymen... in the name of humanity and civilisation, I protest against our share in the destruction of Germany. A month ago Europe was a peaceful comity of nations: if an Englishman killed a German, he was hanged. Now, if an Englishman kills a German, or if a German kills an Englishman, he is a patriot who has deserved well of his country.  
*British philosopher Bertrand Russell*
- 6 The first things we saw were big wrecked Turkish guns, the second, a big marquee. It didn't make me think of the military but of the village fetes. I remember how we all rushed up to it, like boys getting to a circus, and then found it all laced up. We unlaced it and rushed in. It was full of corpses. Dead Englishmen, lines and lines of them, and with their eyes wide open.  
*Suffolk Farm worker Leonard Thompson*
- 7 Patriots always talk of dying for their country, and never of killing for their country.  
*British philosopher Bertrand Russell*
- 8 It's all a terrible tragedy. And yet, in its details, it's great fun. And - apart from the tragedy - I've never felt happier or better in my life than in those days in Belgium.  
*British officer Rupert Brooke in a letter to a friend, Christmas 1914*
- 9 Never had the machine-gunners such straightforward work to do nor done it so unceasingly. The men stood on the firestep, some even on the parapets, and fired exultantly into the mass of men advancing across the open grassland. As the entire field of fire was covered with the enemy's infantry the effect was devastating and they could be seen falling in hundreds.  
*German Regimental Diarist, after the Battle of Loos, September 1915 (in the Battle of Loos 8,246 British soldiers - out of nearly 10,000 - were killed or wounded in just three hours)*
- 10 We were very surprised to see them walking. We had never seen that before. The officers went in front. I noticed one of them walking calmly, carrying a walking stick. When we started firing we just had to load and reload. They went down in their hundreds. You didn't have to aim. We just fired into them.  
*German soldier in his diary, after the Battle of Loos, September 1915*

- 11** Lions led by donkeys. *Unknown German officer, describing British troops*
- 12** EVERYTHING HAS GONE WELL - Our troops have successfully carried out their missions, all counter-attacks have been repulsed and large numbers of prisoners taken.  
*The Times, reporting on 3 July 1916 on the disastrous Battle of the Somme*
- 13** If the women in the factories stopped work for twenty minutes, the Allies would lose the war.  
*French Field Marshal Joffre*
- 14** In the mind of all the English soldiers there is absolutely no hate for the Germans, but a kind of brotherly though slightly contemptuous kindness - as to men who are going through a bad time as well as ourselves.  
*British officer and poet Ivor Gurney, in a letter to Marion Scott, February 1917*
- 15** At eleven o'clock this morning came to an end the cruellest and most terrible War that has ever scourged mankind. I hope we may say that thus, this fateful morning, came to an end all wars.  
*David Lloyd George Speech in the House of Commons, (11 November 1918)*
- 16** This is a war to end all wars. *American President Woodrow Wilson*

## Read all about it!

### **GREAT BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY**

5 August 1914

Last night, having failed to receive notice from Germany assuring the neutrality of Belgium, Great Britain declared war on Germany.

### **DRINK LESS BEER, HELP THE WAR EFFORT**

9 August 1914

Yesterday Parliament passed the Defence of the Realm Act. Its powers are wide-ranging: buildings, land and horses are to be requisitioned, activities such as flying kites and lighting bonfires are banned and communications censored. To help the war effort, pub opening hours are restricted to 6 hours a day.

### **YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU! RECRUITMENT MEETING AT ST ANDREW'S HALL IN NORWICH**

1 September 1914

Yesterday's public meeting at St Andrew's Hall drew thousands of men, every one of them wanting the King's shilling. So many have joined Kitchener's Army that they have had to parade in caps and bowler hats due to the shortage of uniforms.

### **WE'RE DOING OUR BIT: LOCAL HOSPITALS READY TO RECEIVE OUR HEROES**

The Government is requisitioning buildings and private houses for the war effort. Thorpe St Andrew lunatic asylum will now serve as The Norfolk War Hospital. Brundall House and Woodbastwick Hall have been taken over as Auxiliary War Hospitals. Stables at Beighton House coaching inn have been converted into a horse hospital.

### **GERMAN SHIPS BOMBARD YARMOUTH**

4 November 1914

Yesterday Great Yarmouth and Gorleston became the first places in Britain to be attacked in the war. German warships bombard the coastline but their shells land harmlessly on the beach. However, a British submarine is struck by a German mine and is sunk.

### **ZEPPELIN AIR SHIPS BOMB NORFOLK**

20 January 1915

Yesterday Norfolk suffered the First Air Raid in Britain. Two German Zeppelins flew across large areas of Norfolk, dropping incendiaries and explosive bombs. Two people were killed at Great Yarmouth and two at King's Lynn, with another 16 injured. Thankfully not all the devices exploded or the damage and loss of life would have been much worse.

**LUSITANIA SUNK, NEARLY  
1,200 SOULS LOST**

8 May 1915

British ocean liner the RMS Lusitania, ferrying people and goods across between the United States and Great Britain, was torpedoed by a German U-boat and sunk. Of the 1,959 people on board, 1,198 died, including 128 Americans.

**WHAT HAPPENED TO THE  
SANDRINGHAM PALS?**

13 August 1915

Yesterday, while carrying out an attack up on a hillside near Suvla Bay in Turkey the whole of the Sandringham Pals regiment disappeared. One minute the men were charging bravely against the Turkish enemy, the next they simply vanished. There were no known survivors, no bodies were found and not a single prisoner of war.

**HORROR OF LOCAL NURSE  
EXECUTED IN BELGIUM**

13 October 1915

While working in Belgium, local nurse Edith Cavell from Swardesdon helped over 200 allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium. A German military court found her and 33 of her Belgian and French colleagues guilty of assisting men to the enemy. Yesterday they were all shot by a German firing squad.

**FISHING BOAT SINKS GERMAN  
SUBMARINE OFF YARMOUTH**

16 August 1915

Yesterday a German U-boat submarine was sunk off the coast of Great Yarmouth by a fishing smack armed with hidden weapons, all the German crew were killed.

**OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT  
ENOUGH**

March 1916

With so many casualties, Kitchener's army of one million volunteers are not enough. In March 1916 the Government orders all single, fit men aged 18 to 41 to be conscripted. In May 1916 married men are also included, then in 1918 the age limit is raised to 51.

**GERMAN NAVY BOMBARD OUR  
COASTLINE – THREE DEAD**

26 April 1916

Yesterday, at 4.10 in the morning the German Navy bombarded Lowestoft, destroying 200 houses and two defensive gun batteries, killing 3 people and injuring 12. Their ships then went on to Great Yarmouth, but fog meant that they only fired a few shells before retreating after coming under fire from British vessels.

**HATS OFF TO OUR WOMEN  
WORKERS**

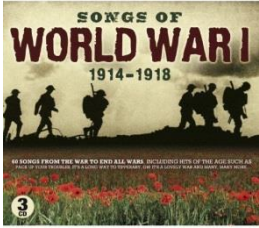
With our men away at war, Britain's women have been recruited to fill our offices, factories and farms. Local industries are busy producing army boots, munitions, aircraft and not to mention the famous Caley's Marching Chocolate.

**A LEGACY OF THE WAR –  
SPANISH FLU, OUR DEADLY  
HIDDEN ENEMY**

1918

Soldiers in the trenches start to fall ill with flu in the Spring of 1918, though numbers dying of it then are nothing compared to the deaths in battle. Spain, with no censorship, reports on the illness, and it becomes known as 'Spanish Flu'. At the end the war, troops returning home and mass celebrations unwittingly spread the virus across the globe. Then in 1919 the virus disappeared as quickly as it emerged. But by then up to 1 billion people (half the world's population) had been infected. It is estimated that Spanish Flu killed up to 100 million people, 10 times the number of First World War military casualties.

# Songs



## **Songs of World War 1, Various Artists**

Played before, during the interval and after the performance

[http://www.amazon.co.uk/Songs-Of-World-War-1/dp/tracks/B00HSRNA6E/ref=dp\\_tracks\\_all\\_1#disc\\_1](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Songs-Of-World-War-1/dp/tracks/B00HSRNA6E/ref=dp_tracks_all_1#disc_1)

## **I'll make a man of you (film version)**

<http://www.ww1photos.com/IMakeAManOfYouFilm.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x308MIPPUyA>

## **Pack up your Troubles**

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/audio/packupyourtroubles.htm>

## **Till We Meet Again**

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/audio/tillwemeetagain.htm>

## **Keep The Home Fires Burning**

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/audio/keepthehomefiresburning.htm>

## Poems

### Died of Wounds

His wet white face and miserable eyes  
Brought nurses to him more than groans and sighs:  
But hoarse and low and rapid rose and fell  
His troubled voice: he did the business well.

The ward grew dark; but he was still complaining  
And calling out for 'Dickie'. 'Curse the Wood!  
'It's time to go. O Christ, and what's the good?  
'We'll never take it, and it's always raining.'

I wondered where he'd been; then heard him shout,  
'They snipe like hell! O Dickie, don't go out...  
I fell asleep ... Next morning he was dead;  
And some Slight Wound lay smiling on the bed.

*Siegfried Sassoon*

### 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 concealed;  
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,  
Washed 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.

*Rupert Brooke*

## Dulce et Decorum Est

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest 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  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...  
Dim, through the misty panes 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, 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  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,---  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

*Wilfred Owen*

<http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/firstWWarpoets.html>

<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/poems/>

## Letters from a Lost Generation – Roland Leighton and Vera Brittain

Published by Virago, 2008

<http://pw20c.mcmaster.ca/case-study/violets-trenches-selections-letters-roland-leighton-and-vera-brittain>

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/leighton>

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/brittain/>



## Drama

### **My Boy Jack by David Haig**

Nick Hern Books, 2007

<http://www.nickhernbooks.co.uk/Book/702/My-Boy-Jack.html>

### **The Old Lady Shows her medals by J M Barrie**

First published in his collection Echoes of the War in 1918

JM Barrie is probably best remembered as the creator of Peter Pan

<http://www.samuelfrench.com/p/1002/old-lady-shows-her-medals-the>

<http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnline/42522/>

### **Blackadder Goes Forth by Richard Curtis and Ben Elton**

**Captain Cook**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/blackadder/episodes/four/four\\_captain.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/blackadder/episodes/four/four_captain.shtml)

**Major Star**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00819cc>

# The men of Blofield, Hemblington and North Burlingham who gave their tomorrow for our today

<http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Norfolk/>

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Philip S Barber              | <b>24</b> Frederick Howard          |
| <b>2</b> Geoffrey Ravenscroft Barratt | <b>25</b> James W Jaggs             |
| <b>3</b> Reginald E Blyth             | <b>26</b> Bernard Henry Limpus      |
| <b>4</b> Martin Robert Bond           | <b>27</b> Ernest Arthur Ling        |
| <b>5</b> William Brown                | <b>28</b> Ernest L Lynes            |
| <b>6</b> James Browne                 | <b>29</b> Charles J Marler          |
| <b>7</b> George William Burdett       | <b>30</b> Benjamin Marshall         |
| <b>8</b> James Robert Clare           | <b>31</b> Alexander Mattocks        |
| <b>9</b> William Cushion              | <b>32</b> Albert B Newstead         |
| <b>10</b> James Cutler                | <b>33</b> Benjamin Newstead         |
| <b>11</b> Alec Richard East           | <b>34</b> Percy Herbert Norton      |
| <b>12</b> William Arthur Evans        | <b>35</b> Reginald Parker           |
| <b>13</b> Thomas B Farman             | <b>36</b> Robert James Payne        |
| <b>14</b> George Feek                 | <b>37</b> Albert Nelson Rose        |
| <b>15</b> Walter F Foulger            | <b>38</b> Samuel James Shreeve      |
| <b>16</b> Harry Gostling              | <b>39</b> Alfred J Simmons          |
| <b>17</b> William R Gowen             | <b>40</b> Charles Simmons           |
| <b>18</b> William George Green        | <b>41</b> Arthur John Smith         |
| <b>19</b> Reginald Gunns              | <b>42</b> Frederick William Symonds |
| <b>20</b> Percy H Hall                | <b>43</b> Russell John Symonds      |
| <b>21</b> William Hanton              | <b>44</b> William Edward Turner     |
| <b>22</b> Ernest Horner               | <b>45</b> Arthur James Ward         |
| <b>23</b> Herbert George Houghton     | <b>46</b> Herbert Charles Waterton  |