

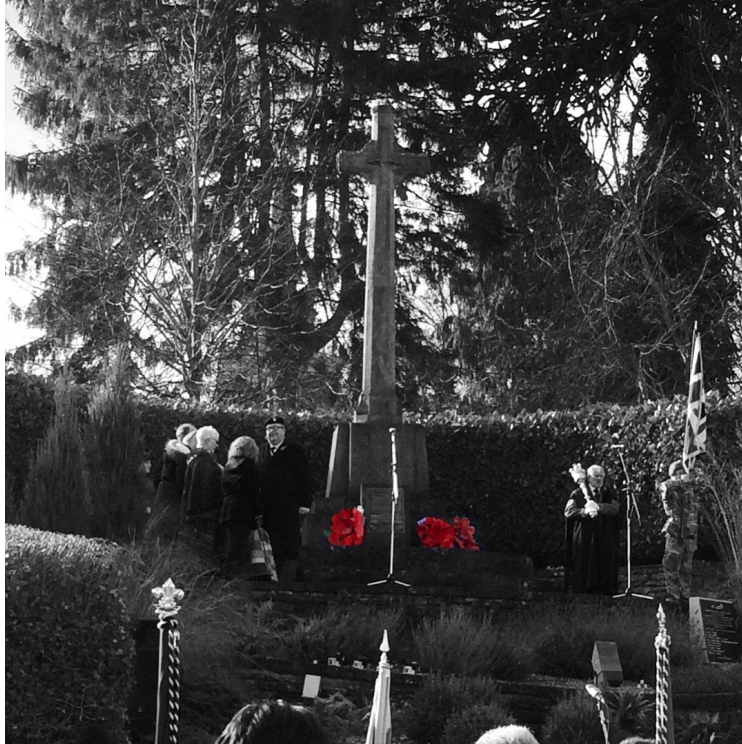
# Remembrance Sunday 2016; Lest We Forget Their Sacrifice

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 [sloah.com/2016/11/13/remembrance-sunday-2016](http://sloah.com/2016/11/13/remembrance-sunday-2016)

admin

November 13, 2016



Today, this Remembrance Sunday 2016, we marched in the local Remembrance Day parade. We wore our poppies with pride. Past the gathered crowd that lined the roads, we silently marched. The Rector lead us in hymn and prayer, as we bowed our heads. We witnessed the elderly veteran, who rose from his wheelchair with a steely determination to proudly stand, reciting John Maxwell Edmonds famous epitaph. We heard the Last Post ring true, followed by a heartfelt 2 minutes silence.

## Remembrance Sunday 2016; Poppy Wreaths

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After the Reveille roused us from our thoughts, local teenagers carefully read the Roll of Honour. Then, beginning with the veteran and ending with some of the youngest participants, various community representatives including local dignitaries, Air Cadets, Scouts, Guides, Police Cadets, and St John's Badgers all took turns to lay their wreaths at the War Memorial. Tokens of our eternal gratitude, and promises to never forget the human cost.

## Remembrance Sunday 2016; Gratitude

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After the parade, having watched so many young innocent faces march cheerfully and dutifully, including my own children, I felt my heart lighten. No matter how rough my day,

how hard my personal trials, my beautiful children are here, with me, in our peaceful country. I am grateful.

That heaven might heal the world, they gave Their earth-born dreams to deck the grave. With souls unpurged and steadfast breath They supped the sacrament of death. And for each one, far off, apart, Seven swords have rent a woman's heart. – Marjorie Pickthall

I am grateful to all those heroes. They deserved better. They were all some mother's child. Maybe they fought for their Monarch. Maybe they fought for their country. I think they fought for their families, whispering, "Thank God, please God, let them be safe at home." All the tomorrows, all the dreams... all the blood-red poppies left unseen. But, we see the poppies, every year. [We will remember them.](#)

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

# Remembrance Sunday 2017; Keeping Their Names Alive

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admin

November 13, 2017



Another year, another Remembrance Sunday parade. [Last year](#), an elderly veteran played an important role in the ceremony. This year, he wasn't there. Little things like that play on your mind, amidst the solemnity of the event. Remembrance Sunday 2017 wasn't quite the same, although it was as beautiful and moving as ever.

Still, we marched in our local Remembrance parade; it's one of the most important events in the local calendar. Indeed, perhaps the most important as all others pale in comparison. A lot of local children participate in the various organisations such as Scouts, Guides, St John's Ambulance and Police Cadets. The honour roll of war dead is read by the head boy and head girl of the local high schools. It gets slightly longer with passing years, as we listen to the lists from World War One and World War Two plus those who fought and died in more recent battles.

## Remembrance Sunday 2017; Thoughts

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There's a saying: "A man is not dead while his name is still spoken." To be honest, that's from one of my [favourite](#)\* Terry Pratchett novels. However, I feel there's a grain of truth in it. For so long as we listen to their names being read, each year, surely our act of remembrance pays tribute to their lives cut short? They gave their tomorrows so we could have our today. They paid the ultimate price, willingly, so that we could live in peace and

safety. We owe it to them to remember, each year, that they might live on in our community, in our gratitude and in our freedom.

For all the petty squabbles in everyday life, there's the knowledge that we have the luxury of such thought and action. My children have never known the horrors of war; it's something they find hard to comprehend. I asked them, today, why Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday are so important. They replied, "Because a thousand soldiers died to keep us safe." A thousand is well off the mark. I told them that if everywhere they looked, from where they were standing, there was a cross marking a grave, that still would not be enough to account for all our war dead. They upped their answer to a billion. That's almost accurate.

The scale of the war deaths is impossible to fully convey with mere words. World War One alone was one of the worst conflicts in our history. It's called the Great War for a reason; we had never before known such conflict on such a huge scale. When you include World War Two and subsequent battles, you run out of numbers and ways to describe them.

## **Remembrance Sunday 2017; Parade**

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The parade itself always feels overlong at the start and surprisingly short by the end. The chill of the November air pervades each participant and spectator. Yet, it is such a small thing to endure. About an hour, or slightly more, to devote to our brave heroes. Everywhere you turn, there's a sea of red poppies. People have them pinned to their lapels, tucked into shirts and clasped in their hands.

When the parade reaches the war memorial, the Rector arrives to lead the community in song and prayer. This year, for Remembrance Sunday 2017, we sang some verses of O God Our Help In Ages Past. It seemed very fitting for the occasion.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, Be Thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home. – Isaac Watts

This year, on Remembrance Sunday 2017, we again heard Laurence Binyon's Ode of Remembrance. It's an extract from Binyon's poem, For The Fallen. It's probably as famous and engraved on British hearts as the Lord's Prayer and the national anthem.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, We will remember them. – Laurence Binyon

The poignancy of the words never fails to tug at my heartstrings. We dutifully echoed the last phrase, at the conclusion of the Ode: "[We will remember them.](#)" It is a nigh-mandatory ritual and impossible to exclude from any act of remembrance.

## Remembrance Sunday 2017; Epitaph

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While the epitaph was missing from the act of remembrance this year, it's been on my mind all week. It's from the Kohima War Cemetery; it's inscribed on a war memorial in Kohima, India.

When you go home, tell them of us and say For their tomorrow, we gave our today. –  
John Maxwell Edmonds

Thank you to all those brave soldiers and other Armed Forces. Thank you to all the ancillary personnel too, who enabled our Forces to fight as best they could. Not forgetting all those who stayed at home, looking after the young and the old, keeping industries going and dutifully guarding their communities. Some debts can never be repaid. All we can do is keep their names alive. And remember them.