

17  
Armistice Day speech written for Bob Scott

for Nov. 11th., speech at London Ont.,

Dicko/ This is the " speech " I referred to. PLEASE return it with your next letter for I have no extra copy. Bob has since died so that's that. I imagine the year this was written would be round about 1944.

*Please don't lose it*

# Speech

When Mrs. Patillo approached me recently, and asked me if I would speak to you children to-day on the subject of Armistice Day, I knew that it would be a very difficult matter to even attempt. I also felt like running away. However, since then I have given considerable thought to this subject and now am able to tell you that I am still at a loss, and am, as a matter of fact in exactly the same position as when the matter was first mentioned.

To explain to you children, and to ask you to remember the events that happened so many years ago, is quite a problem. To try and tell you of the many very brave men and women who gave their lives in order that we may live is almost too much to expect from you children, seeing that your young lives are absolutely untouched with the events that led up to Armistice. To you, naturally, Armistice Day or Remembrance Day as it is now called, is a day when you do not have to come to school. Which is perfectly understandable, and most certainly nothing for you to be ashamed of, or to be even blamed for in any way. Rather are you to be congratulated, for by your own ~~hard~~ handiwork and thoughtfulness, have you made, and are selling these imitation poppies of paper, the proceeds from which go towards helping those poor unfortunate ~~war~~ ~~veterans~~ badly crippled war veterans, for whom many of the ordinary daily pleasures are no longer attainable on account of their ~~great~~ grievous wounds and disabilities. This is a most practical and loving manner in which to commemorate this Day. We old soldiers are proud of you, and on behalf of all old veterans--I thank you. To us older people though, particularly those of us who actually went through the trying days of 1914--1918, Nov. 11th will always be a day, set aside for Memory's Lane; a day to especially let our thoughts travel backwards to those fine wonderful comrades who failed to return, and to again re-live the happy--and the sad--days spent with them. This is essentially the real message of Remembrance, the underlying part of the whole Day---the remembering of all those brave young men and women who paid the price of our freedom to-day---with their lives. But for this Children, it is quite possible that none of us would be here to-day comfortable and happy to-day. But for the sacrifice of these gallant people we are remembering to-day we might be the unpaid slaves, the servants of arrogant dictators. This we must all remember. However Armistice Day brings lots and lots of other thoughts back to our minds. For instance, you will have noticed that I speak of Nov. 11th., as Armistice Day. Originally this was the name given to it to celebrate the signing of the treaty that was supposedly to end all wars. We all know that this is not so now. Some would be prophets had it all figured out that because ~~of~~ this treaty was signed on the 11th., day of the 11th., month, at the 11th hour that it was a straight omen for everlasting Peace.

To returned men Armistice Day means something more than the day on which the bugles sounded the "Cease Fire." At that the cease fire was not welcomed by all, and will always be remembered as the grand finale to years of warfare, and as we imagined then, for all warfare.

But, there is something deeper, something even more solemn than the bugle's sound, something that in all old soldiers' minds will always occupy the first place---the Sacred remembrance, remembrance of those Old Pals who did not hear the bugle sound; who had given their very All, who had made the Supreme Sacrifice in their King's and their Country's honour.

It is of those old friends of by-gone days that our minds and thoughts travel backwards through the intervening year as we gather together in commemoration of Armistice.

Those staunch and true, never-to-be-forgotten, Pals who once marched shoulder to shoulder with us as we trudged along over that last long weary mile. Who in lighter moments laughed, joked or sang with us, and who, though their voices are stilled for ever, and their bodies lie peacefully at Rest in Flanders Fields, still hold the foremost place in our hearts, still bring the tear to our eye, as we bow our heads in reverential silence to Their Memory.

As we look upon the terribly present terrible conflict, this world chaos, we are given to wonder if their Sacrifice was all in vain. All they died for seems to be set at naught, as once again lives, young virile lives, are being heaped upon the War God's Altar.

Viewed from the standpoint of the struggle of to-day, it was in vain, but we, as old soldiers cannot share that viewpoint.

To us their sacrifice was real and undying. We know that in their Passing they left us a heritage of Faith and Courage that will never be effaced, never forgotten---and more than that--They left for all the world to see, and profit by, an example of unselfishness and devotion to Christian Principles, which undoubtedly has left its seed firmly planted, and which will certainly flourish and blossom when the present dark clouds roll away.

Again the present war is definitely "linked" with the last one. It is in reality the finishing stroke to what was begun in 1914. The same enemy, with the same beastial desires. Therefore we maintain that their Sacrifice was not in vain. To Them goes the Glory to

have been the first to pay the all-exacting price, and their  
spirits--the Honours continue to lead the way.  
Gentlemen. They have not died in vain.  
However it is not only at Armistice that we remember our late Comrades  
Rarely a day passes without some remembrance slipping into our mind--  
a certain action, recollection of one we once knew and loved and snatched  
of an old song--word, or expression, and many other, seemingly in-  
consequential items are ever present, serving to keep our memories  
green, constantly reminding us of those by-gone pals; to whose memory  
we to-day pay tribute and honour, those by-gone pals who fought the  
Good Fight--AND WON  
In Flanders Fields etc--  
Those trenches and time, never-  
to-be-forgotten, Fala who once marched shoulder to shoulder with us  
as we trudged along over that last long weary mile. Who in light-  
er moments laughed, joked or sang with us, and who, though their voices  
are stilled for ever, and their bodies lie peacefully at rest in  
Flanders Fields, still hold the foremost place in our hearts, still  
bring the best to our eye, as we pass the graves in reverent silence  
to their memory.  
As we look upon the terribly present terrible conflict, this world  
chaos, we are given to wonder if their sacrifice was all in vain.  
All they died for seems to be set at naught, as once again lives, young  
vital lives, are being heaped upon the War God's Altar.  
Viewed from the standpoint of the struggle of to-day, it was in vain,  
but we, as old soldiers cannot share that viewpoint.  
We know that in their years--  
ing they left us a heritage of faith and courage that will never be  
effaced, never forgotten--and were that--They left for all the  
world to see, and profit by, an example of unselfishness and devotion  
to Christian Principles, which undoubtedly has left its seed  
firmly planted, and which will certainly flourish and blossom when the  
present dark clouds roll away.  
Again the present war is definitely "linked" with the last one. It  
is in reality the finishing stroke to what was begun in 1914. The  
same enemy, with the same bestial desires.  
Therefore we maintain  
that their sacrifice was not in vain. To them goes the Glory to



As I have just mentioned there are other memories to Armistice. Memories wherein we again tramp those long weary kilometers to the front line, dig trenches, fill everlasting sandbags, grouse, grumble, and even, in ~~our~~ feminisence, slip into water filled shell holes, and stand rigid as a star shell bursts overhead lighting up all the immediate countryside. Again we stand in the rain which never stopped--and slush through the mud which never dries up.

I would like to tell you something of the life of the everyday soldier.

If I may--

Days in the front line--and in support and behind the lines.

Trenches--how dug and why.

Dave roads.

No Man's Land.

Barbed wire entanglements and star shells

Listening Posts--and one of my experiences.

Belgian Farmyards,

Whizz-bang postcards.

The Unknown Soldier's grave

Working parties, Hard wood chips

Spies etc.,

This then Children is what Armistice Day, what Remembrance day means to all of us. A few hours of our busy daily lives set

aside in order that we may pay tribute, and honour in our memories those

we left behind us----Those who paid the PRICE.

God Save the Queen.