



The Parish of St Matthew
Darley Abbey



Five talks to commemorate the First World War

Tuesday afternoons, 2.30 pm, in the
Fellowship Room, St Matthew's DE22 1EF

Tuesday 29 May
The War poets, *Julie Barham*

Tuesday 12 June - Woodbine Willie and
First World War Chaplains, *Peter Barham*

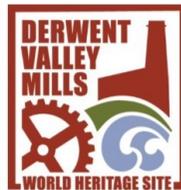
Tuesday 26 June - The sinking of the
Lusitania, and the Darley Abbey memorial

Tuesday 10 July
The Somme Battlefields, *Peter Taylor*

Tuesday 24 July - Belper & district in WW1
and the Darley Abbey Millworkers strike of
1917, *Adrian Farmer*

All welcome - donations please

This is part of Open Church
[https://stmatthewschurch
darleyabbey.wordpress.com/](https://stmatthewschurchdarleyabbey.wordpress.com/)



The Parish of
St Matthew,
Darley Abbey



The First World War Poets - Why are they important?

Julie E. Barham

Tuesday 29 May 2018

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.

Rupert Brooke - I strayed about the deck

I strayed about the deck, an hour, tonight
Under a cloudy moonless sky; and peeped
In at the windows, watched my friends at table,
Or playing cards, or standing in the doorway,
Or coming out into the darkness.
Still No one could see me.

I would have thought of them -
Heedless, within a week of battle - in pity,
Pride in their strength and in the weight and firmness
And link'd beauty of bodies, and pity that

The Cambridge Companion to The Poetry of the First World War, edited by Santanu Das - Cambridge, 2013.

The Red Sweet Wine of Youth, the brace and brief lives of the War Poets, Nicholas Murray - Little, Brown, 2011.

The Poetical Works of Rupert Brooke, edited by Geoffrey Keynes - Faber & Faber, 1974.

The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen, edited by C. Day Lewis - Chatto & Windus, 1983.

Forthcoming events

Please check the details at

<https://stmatthewschurchdarleyabbey.wordpress.com/>

Tuesday 2 October, 2 pm, Friends of St Matthew's,
Fellowship Room - Julie will talk about Vera Brittain.

Saturday 27 October, 12 noon to 5 pm, Darley Abbey Village
Hall - Darley Abbey Historical Group have an Historical
Exhibition with a WW1 theme.

Friday 2 November, 7.30 pm, St Matthew's Church - The
Choir present a concert with First World War Music.

Remembrance Sunday, 11 November - 10 am Remembrance
Service in church, then walk to the War Memorial for 11. At
6.15 pm the choir will sing Karl Jenkins "The Armed Man, a
Mass for Peace" in a Requiem Eucharist.

Friday 21 December, 7 pm, Darley Abbey Village Hall - Peter
reflects on "Commemorating the First World War" with
Darley Abbey Historical Group.

Useful resources

Julie's book blog is <https://northernreader.wordpress.com>

The Great War Poets - DVD Beckmann Visual Publishing - available for £10.99 from <http://www.beckmanndirect.com>

The 2007 TV programme "My Boy Jack", starring David Haig, Kim Cattrall and Daniel Radcliffe is available on Amazon Video.

Mark Blatchly is one of several composers who has set "For the fallen" to music - his version for boys' voices is available on itunes. Malcolm Archer has written one for full choir, which Derventio Choir will be singing in the autumn.

Books

First World War, poems from the Front, edited by Paul O'Prey, published by the Imperial War Museum in 2014, has a brief biography of each author and a good selection of poems.

First World War Poets, Alan Judd and David Crane, National Portrait Gallery, 2014 - excellent images, biographies and a smaller selection of poems.

The Penguin book of First World War Poetry, edited by Jon Silkin, 2nd edition, 1983 - this has been the standard work for many years, and copies are available very cheaply.

1914: Poetry remembers, edited by Carol Ann Duffy, Faber & Faber, 2013 - 21st century poets have each chosen a WW1 poem, and then written a response.

This gay machine of splendour 'ld soon be broken,
Thought little of, pashed, scattered ...

Only, always,
I could but see them - against the lamplight - pass
Like coloured shadows, thinner than filmy glass,
Slight bubbles, fainter than the wave's faint light,
That broke to phosphorus out in the night,
Perishing things and strange ghosts - soon to die
To other ghosts - this one, or that, or I.

Edmund Blunden - Thiepval Wood

The tired air groans as the heavies swing over, the river-hollows
boom;
The shell-fountains leap from the swamps, and with wildfire
and fume
The shoulder of the chalkdown convulses.
Then jabbering echoes stampede in the slatting wood,
Ember-black the gibbet trees like bones or thorns protrude
From the poisonous smoke - past all impulses.
To them these silvery dews can never again be dear,
Nor the blue javelin-flame of the thunderous noons strike fear.

Isaac Rosenberg - In the trenches

I snatched two poppies
From the parapet's edge,
Two bright red poppies
That winked on the ledge.

Behind my ear
I stuck one through,
One blood red poppy
I gave to you.

The sandbags narrowed
And screwed out our jest,
And tore the poppy
You had on your breast ...
Dawn - a shell - O! Christ
I am choked ... safe ... dust blind - I
See trench floor poppies
Strewn. Smashed, you lie.

Siegfried Sassoon - The General

'Good-morning; good-morning!' the General said
When we met him last week on our way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.
'He's a cheery old card,' grunted Harry to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.
But he did for them both by his plan of attack.

Wilfred 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 now for them; no prayers nor bells;

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is a 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 uncounted,
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 of 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 darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

not entering the story now
to die and die and die.
Dulce - No - Decorum - No - Pro patria mori.
You walk away.
You walk away; drop your gun (fixed bayonet)
like all your mates do too -
Harry, Tommy, Wilfred, Edward, Bert -
and light a cigarette.
There's coffee in the square,
warm French bread
and all those thousands dead
are shaking dried mud from their hair
and queuing up for home. Freshly alive,
a lad plays Tipperary to the crowd, released
from History; the glistening, healthy horses fit for heroes,
kings.
You lean against a wall,
your several million lives still possible
and crammed with love, work, children, talent, English beer,
good food.
You see the poet tuck away his pocket-book and smile.
If poetry could truly tell it backwards,
then it would.

Laurence Binyon - 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.

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 goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Vera Brittain - The German Ward

When the years of strife are over and my recollection fades
Of the wards wherein I worked the weeks away,
I shall still see, as a visions rising through the wartime shades,
The ward in France where German wounded lay.

I shall see the pallid faces and the half-suspicious eyes,
I shall hear the bitter groans and laboured breath,
And recall the loud complaining and the weary tedious cries,
And the sights and smells of blood and wounds and death.

I shall see the convoy cases, blanket-covered on the floor,
And watch the heavy stretcher-work begin,
And the gleam of knives and bottles through the open theatre
door,
And the operation patients carried in.

I shall see the Sister standing, with her form of youthful grace,
And the humour and the wisdom of her smile,
And the tale of three years' warfare on her thin expressive
face -
The weariness of many a toil-filled while.

I shall think of how I worked for her with nerve and heart
and mind,
And marvelled at her courage and her skill,
And how the dying enemy her tenderness would find
Beneath her scornful energy of will.

And I learnt that human mercy turns alike to friend or foe
When the darkest hour of all is creeping nigh,
And those who slew our dearest, when their lamps were
burning low,
Found help and pity ere they came to die.

So, though much will be forgotten when the sound of War's
alarms
And the days of death and strife have passed away,
I shall always see the vision of Love working amidst arms
In the ward wherein the wounded prisoners lay.

Jessie Pope - War girls

There's the girl who clips your ticket for the train,
And the girl who speeds the lift from floor to floor,
There's the girl who does a milk-round in the rain,
And the girl who calls for orders at your door.
Strong, sensible, and fit,
They're out to show their grit,
And tackle jobs with energy and knack.
No longer caged and penned up,
They're going to keep their end up
Till the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

Rudyard Kipling - My boy Jack

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"
Not this tide.
"When d'you think that he'll come back?"
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.
"Has any one else had word of him?"
Not this tide.
For what is sunk will hardly swim,
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.
"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"
None this tide,
Nor any tide,
Except he did not shame his kind -
Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

Then hold your head up all the more,
This tide,
And every tide;
Because he was the son you bore,
And gave to that wind blowing and that tide.

Carol Ann Duffy - The Last Post

If poetry could tell it backwards, true, begin
that moment shrapnel scythed you to the stinking mud ...
but you get up, amazed, watch bled bad blood
run upwards from the slime into its wounds;
see lines and lines of British boys rewind
back to their trenches, kiss the photographs from home -
mothers, sweethearts, sisters, younger brothers

But though kind Time may many joys renew,
There is one greatest joy I shall not know
Again, because my heart for loss of You
Was broken, long ago.

Jessie Pope - Who's for the game

Who's for the game, the biggest that's played,
The red crashing game of a fight?
Who'll grip and tackle the job unafraid?
And who thinks he'd rather sit tight?
Who'll toe the line for the signal to 'Go!'
Who'll give his country a hand?
Who wants a turn to himself in the show?
And who wants a seat in the stand?
Who knows it won't be a picnic - not much -
Yet eagerly shoulders a gun?
Who would much rather come back with a crutch
Than lie low and be out of the fun?
Come along, lads -
But you'll come on all right -
For there's only one course to pursue,
Your country is up to her neck in a fight,
And she's looking and calling for you.

There's the motor girl who drives a heavy van,
There's the butcher girl who brings your joint of meat,
There's the girl who calls 'All fares please!' like a man,
And the girl who whistles taxis up the street.
Beneath each uniform
Beats a heart that's soft and warm,
Though of canny mother-wit they show no lack;
But a solemn statement this is,
They've no time for love and kisses
Till the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

Madeline Ida Bedford - Munitions Wages

Earning high wages?
Yus, Five quid a week.
A woman, too, mind you,
I calls it dim sweet.

Ye'are asking some questions -
But bless yer, here goes:
I spends the whole racket
On good times and clothes.

Me saving? Elijah!
Yer do think I'm mad.
I'm acting the lady,
But - I ain't living bad.

I'm having life's good times.
See 'ere, it's like this:
The 'oof come o' danger,
A touch-and-go bizz.

We're all here today, mate,
Tomorrow - perhaps dead,
If Fate tumbles on us
And blows up our shed.

Afraid! Are yer kidding?
With money to spend!
Years back I wore tatters,
Now - silk stockings, mi friend!

I've bracelets and jewellery,
Rings envied by friends;
A sergeant to swank with,
And something to lend.

I drive out in taxis,
Do theatres in style.
And this is mi verdict -
It is jolly worth while.

Worth while, for tomorrow
If I'm blown to the sky,
I'll have repaid mi wages
In death - and pass by.

Vera Brittain - Lament for the Demobilised

'Four years,' some say consolingly. 'Oh well,
What's that? You're young. And then it must have been
A very fine experience for you!
And they forget
How others stayed behind and just got on -
Got on the better since we were away.

And we came home and found
They had achieved, and men revered their names,
But never mentioned ours;
And no-one talked heroics now, and we
Must just go back and start again once more.
'You threw four years into the melting-pot -
Did you indeed!' these others cry. 'Oh well,
The more fool you!'
And we're beginning to agree with them.

Vera Brittain - Perhaps

Perhaps some day the sun will shine again,
And I shall see that still the skies are blue,
And feel once more I do not live in vain,
Although bereft of You.

Perhaps the golden meadows at my feet
Will make the sunny hours of spring seem gay,
And I shall find the white May-blossoms sweet,
Though You have passed away.

Perhaps the summer woods will shimmer bright,
And crimson roses once again be fair,
And autumn harvest fields a rich delight,
Although You are not there.

Perhaps some day I shall not shrink in pain
To see the passing of the dying year,
And listen to Christmas songs again,
Although You cannot hear.