

# HEART OF CONFLICT



**AN EDUCATION PACK MARKING THE  
CENTENARY OF WORLD WAR ONE.**



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# INTRODUCTION

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These are previously untold stories of heroic actions by men who fought in World War One.

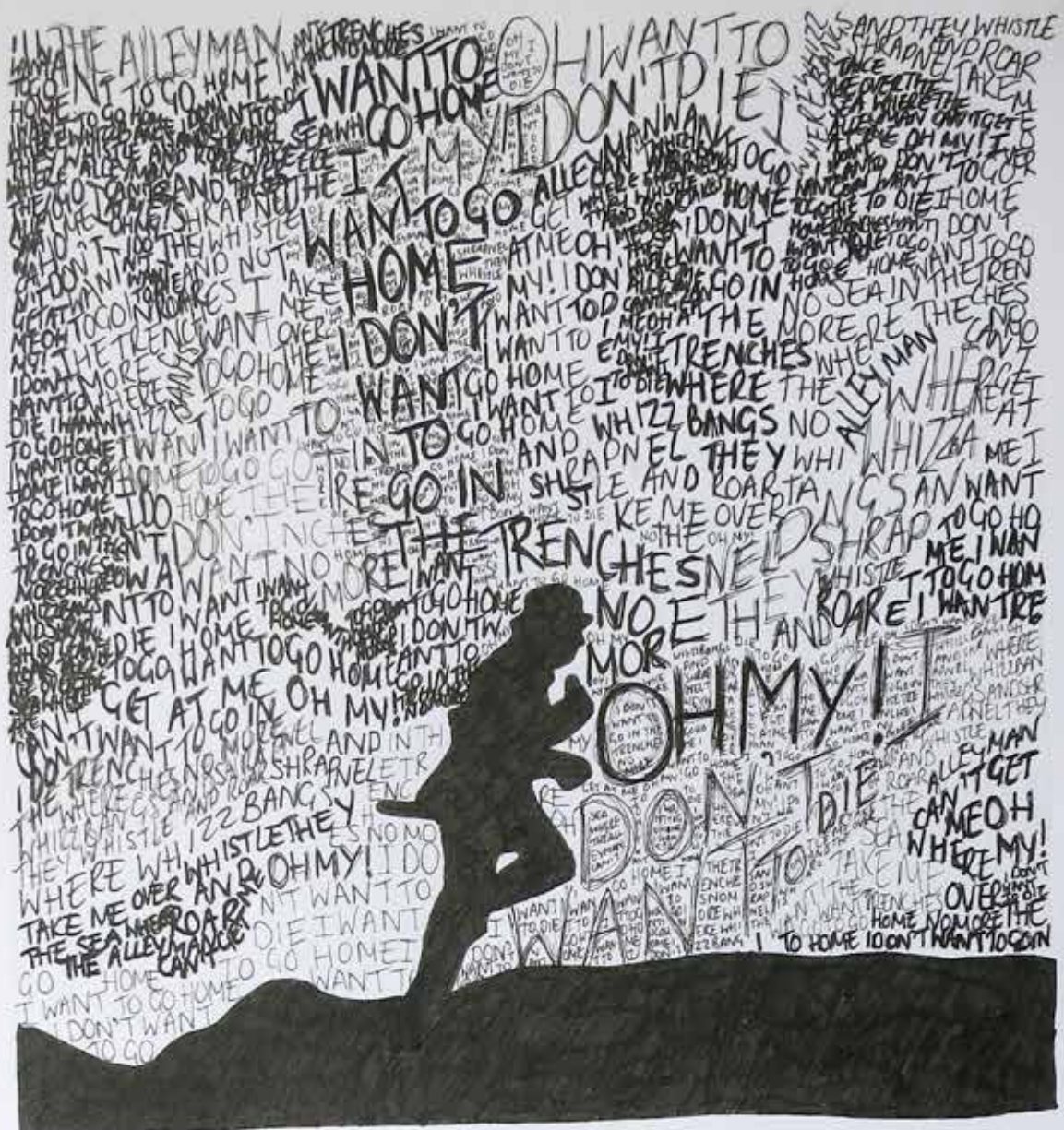
All had strong links with just one small corner of the South West – with Camborne and Redruth in west Cornwall.

We hope that reading them will encourage YOU to find such stories or to write something of your own – whether a letter, story or poem.

In the Pack are poems written by students from Redruth School, to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the war in September 1914.

If you would like your work included in Heart of Conflict, a Heritage Lottery funded project marking the centenary of World War One, please email it to **info@bridging-arts.org**. Visit **www.heartofconflict.org.uk** to find out more.

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I want to go home. I want to go home.  
I don't want to go in the trenches no more.  
Where whizzbangs and shrapnel they whistle and roar.  
Take me over the sea,  
Where the Alleyman can't get at me.  
Oh my! I don't want to die.  
I want to go home.

Moore  
21/5/14

# THE FACTS

WORLD WAR ONE  
STARTED IN  
SEPTEMBER 1914.

GERMANY  
DECLARED  
WAR ON  
FRANCE AND  
RUSSIA AND  
ATTACKED  
BELGIUM.

BRITAIN PLEDGED  
TO DEFEND  
BELGIUM, AND WENT  
TO WAR  
WITH GERMANY.

HUNDREDS OF  
THOUSANDS  
OF MEN FROM  
ALL OVER THE COUNTRY  
VOLUNTEERED TO JOIN  
THE “BRITISH  
EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.”

THEY WERE NOT  
PROFESSIONAL  
SOLDIERS.

THEY LEFT  
EVERYTHING  
TO FIGHT WHAT  
THEY CONSIDERED  
**EVIL**  
OPPRESSION

MANY DID  
NOT RETURN.  
ONLY ONE VILLAGE  
IN CORNWALL  
– HERODSFOOT  
– SAW ALL ITS  
MEN COME BACK.

IN OTHER VILLAGES  
AND TOWNS, THE WAR  
MEMORIALS DISPLAY  
LONG LISTS OF NAMES  
OF THE DEAD. MANY  
BROTHERS AND COUSINS  
DIED: THE WAR RIPPED THE  
HEART OUT OF FAMILIES  
AND COMMUNITIES.

WORLD WAR ONE  
ENDED IN  
NOV 1918.

BRITAIN WON –  
BUT AT A HUGE COST.

AN ESTIMATED  
TEN MILLION  
MEN HAD DIED  
ON BOTH SIDES  
AND THE ECONOMY  
LAY IN RUINS.

This Education  
Pack includes some  
of the untold stories  
of men who fought  
in the war

**THERE ARE MANY,  
MANY MORE TO  
BE UNCOVERED >>**

By: Sophie Orchard

# Worthless

Caught, Caught, Caught. A common sound, an innocent sound,  
but not when you fear the gas... Dear God not the gas.  
"Go on son!" My father's words. "It will be an adventure!" That liar...  
Breath in... out. Father... did you always lie? To me? To mother?

No! No I mustn't think of them. I am a soldier! A warrior!  
My country they need me... until I'm gone... forgotten and replaced  
by the same man lied to and trained to kill... they lie to us.  
They lie until we reach the battle field.

When death strikes two minutes later we're forgotten.... My life....  
Me... all worth nothing.

I am truly worthless.

I bring my gun to my head.

The liars they called me a hero, but really I'm worthless.

This was it.

One chance

One bullet

One final breath

Merit: A moving and intelligent piece of writing that is beautifully presented. Well done Sophie.

# OVER TO YOU

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**We also hope that this Education Pack will encourage you, your school and other young people to dig out the many, many untold stories in your community.**

**This is EASY.**

- **TALK** to older people about their family stories and memories of people who fought in the war and record what they say on your mobile phone. We can suggest questions to get the conversation started and help you edit these and put them up on the Heart of Conflict website.
  - **COMB** the local archives for stories in old newspapers about the War. We can put you in touch with the Cornwall Records Office in Truro, and the Cornish Studies Library in Redruth.
  - **APPEAL** for people's memories by writing to the Letters section of the local newspaper. We can help with names and addresses.
  - **SEARCH** the internet for the war time records of men and women from your area who fought in the War. We can give you a list of relevant sites to consult.
  - **WRITE** poems or stories. Examples written by students at Redruth School are threaded through this pack.
  - If you need any help or further information, please email **info@bridging-arts.org**
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Now read the extraordinary stories that young people in Camborne and Redruth discovered about unsung heroes, who came from their own neighbourhoods. YOU can unearth amazing tales like these...

## A Band of Brothers

Patriotic, we stood a band of brothers,  
Each loss cutting deeper than the last,  
Together we march on,  
Never fearing, Never knowing.

Only the good die young, or so they say,  
But they don't have to survive this hell,  
I watch as innocent, young bodies arrive,  
Their eyes dull and dead

I cry myself to sleep,  
Only to be awoken by night mares,  
Imagine the life I could have led,  
A perfect wife, A perfect house

You'll be home by Christmas  
Empty promises  
I left a man, I'll return a soldier  
If I return at all

Alicia MT 70 2014



■ Stories of extraordinary courage by ordinary Cornishmen...

# TUNNELLING BENEATH ENEMY LINES

## Cecil Calvert

Cecil Calvert was a student at Camborne School of Mines. Like many students there at the time, he came from a wealthy and privileged background. His family lived in London. His father was a famous explorer who made and lost a fortune prospecting and financing an expedition to map unexplored areas of Australia.

Cecil went to Harrow School in London, then the Royal School of Mines. He started at Camborne School of Mines in 1912, and studied there until he enlisted in September 1914, right at the start of the War.

Second Lieutenant Cecil Calvert unearths and rescues two men from a mine gallery which had fallen in, 6 September 1915.



He was only 20. He became a second lieutenant in the 3rd battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment in November 1914. Many young men from his family background were officers. In those days there was an 'officer class' which roughly matched social class.

It was some months before he arrived in France but by August 1915 he was in La Boisselle, in the north of the country, where the British Army was gathering forces for an attack.

Cecil Calvert's act of heroism became famous. This highly idealised drawing by an artist was published in 1919 in a book: 'Deeds to Thrill the Empire – True Stories of the Most Glorious Acts of Heroism of the Empire's Soldiers and Sailors during the Great War.

This book was published in a frenzy of patriotism.

The introduction said it was 'the epitaph of those who have laid down their lives in setting so bright an example, and it is a summons, from those who remain, to every fit man in the Empire to go and do likewise'.

By this time, he had joined the Royal Engineers. Many miners from Cornwall – and mining students – were in the Royal Engineers as they had valuable tunnelling skills. The idea was to tunnel out under enemy trenches and plant mines. This was extremely dangerous. The tunnels were dark and often flooded. Tunnellers were working very close beneath the surface and could be heard by the enemy.

Cecil Calvert showed no fear in these conditions. A few days before his death, heavy bombing caused one of the secret underground tunnels to collapse, leaving two men trapped inside. Calvert went

“

THE POISONOUS FUMES CAUSED BY THE EXPLOSION OF A GERMAN MINE IN THE VICINITY HAD OVERTAKEN THE MAN IN A MINING GALLERY BEFORE HE COULD EFFECT HIS ESCAPE, AND, ALTHOUGH AN ATTEMPT AT RESCUE WAS FRAUGHT WITH TERRIBLE RISK, SECOND LIEUTENANT CALVERT, WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, WENT TO HIS ASSISTANCE.”

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Right: Trench warfare at La Boisselle where Cecil Calvert was posted. Men dug tunnels from these trenches out under enemy lines.



Below: Penponds War Memorial.

Like many students from the School of Mines, Cecil Calvert attended Penponds Church. His name is on the war memorial there.



Above right: Penponds Church October 2014.

The graveyard at Penponds Church in October 2014, 100 years on from the start of World War One.

immediately to their rescue. Because he was so close to enemy lines, he could not use a spade – someone would have heard. So he dug through the earth with his bare hands to make a large enough hole for the men to escape.

For this, he was recommended for the Distinguished Service Order, a very high honour.

He never received it, ironically because of another act of amazing courage

Eight days later, another soldier was trapped in a tunnel, overcome by gas from German shelling. Again, Calvert went to the rescue but this time was overcome by fumes. He was pulled out from the tunnel alive but never regained consciousness. He died, aged 21.

This was a famous exploit. A year after the war Calvert's act of heroism appeared in 'Deeds that Thrill the Empire', a book published to boost morale in a country shell shocked by a terrible war. It was filled with stories of war heroes, and millions learned of Calvert's actions.

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"A heavy bombardment by the enemy had caused one of the mining shafts to fill in, killing two men and burying to others in one of the galleries. Second lieutenant Calvert, who was in charge of this isolated post, at once went to the assistance of the important men, and as, owing to the close proximity of the enemy, the noise by the use of tools would have invited certain death, he worked for three hours under heavy fire, scraping away the earth with his hands until he had made a hole large enough to rescue them. For this brave deed the young officer was recommended for the Distinguished Service Order.

Unhappily, he never lived to receive this coveted decoration, as eight days later (September 14th) he lost his life in a most gallant attempt to rescue a man who had been overcome by gas. The poisonous fumes caused by the explosion of a German mine in the vicinity had overtaken the man in a mining gallery before he could effect his escape, and, although an attempt at rescue was fraught with terrible risk, Second Lieutenant Calvert, without a moment's hesitation, went to his assistance. Before, however, he could accomplish his task he was overcome by the gas, and although he was brought out of the shaft and treated at once by the medical officer on the spot, he was already too far-gone to rally the seizure, and died without regaining consciousness. His father received many letters of sympathy from brother officers, expressing the high estimation in which his son was held. His commanding officer wrote: 'I feel sure it will comfort you to know that he died as he had lived, a victim to his high souled sense of duty. The Army can ill afford to lose such men. Although he had only lately joined the 179th

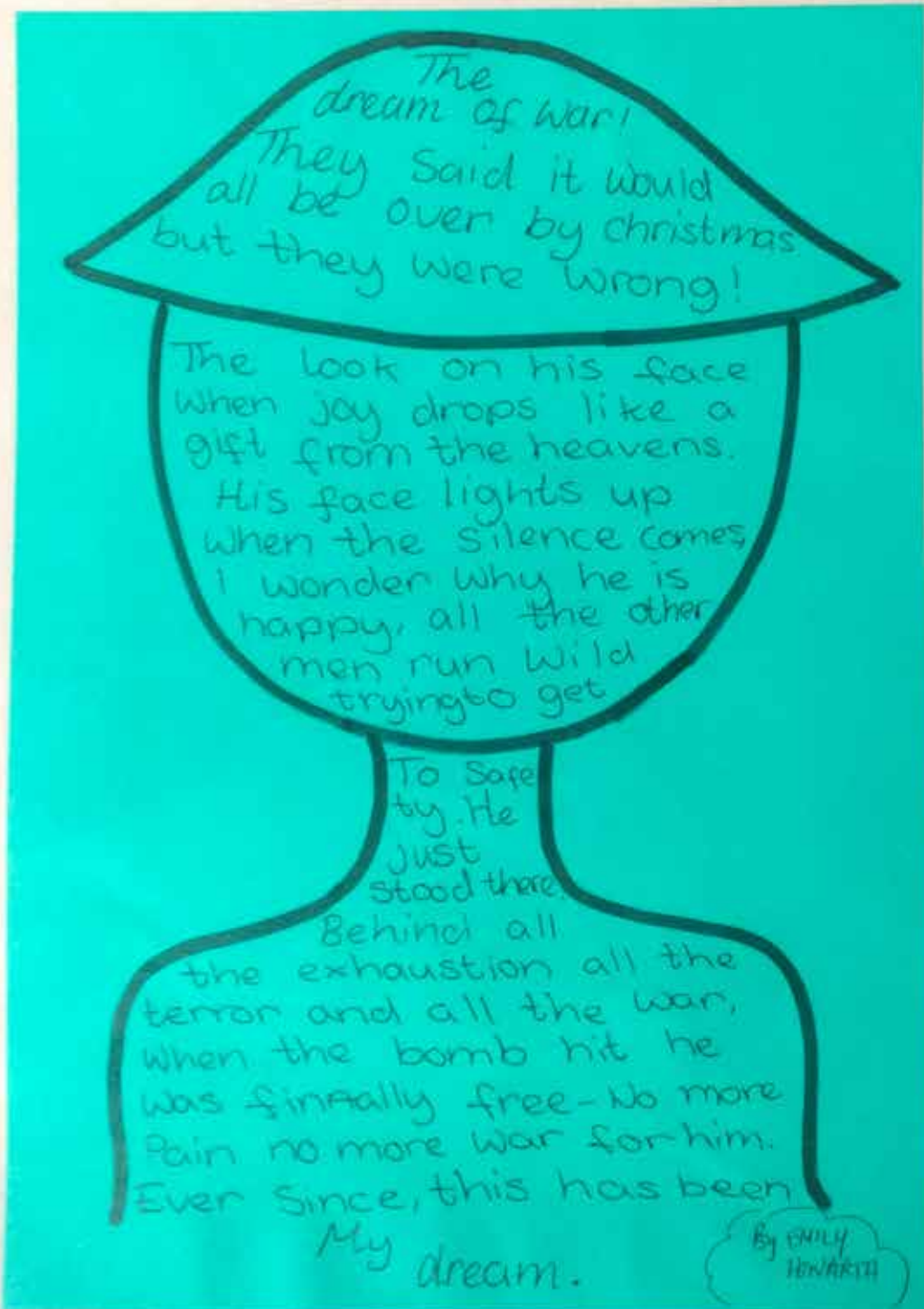
Tunnelling Company, he had already made his mark, and we shall deeply feel his loss.'

The Colonel commanding the Division, in a letter to Mr. Calvert (Cecil's father), makes a special reference to his son's 'most gallant work' in the rescue of his men, and adds: 'I had already taken action as regards recommending him for the award of the DSO in connection with his services on this occasion, and I deeply deplore the fact that he has not survived to receive it, if my recommendation had been accepted, as I feel sure it would have been.'

"I feel sure it will comfort you to know that he died as he had lived, a victim to his high souled sense of duty. The Army can ill afford to lose such men..."

'I cannot tell you,' wrote one of his brother officers, 'how we all mourn his loss, which has cast a gloom over all of us. During the short time he had been with this company he had already won the admiration of all his fellow officers, on account of his absolute fearlessness and coolness on all occasions. His death will be a severe loss to the Service and particularly to his friends. Since not only did his coolness in action inspire confidence in all, but his cheerfulness had also endeared him to all the officers of his unit.'

# The Dream of War!



By EMILY  
HOWARTH

■ Stories of extraordinary courage by ordinary Cornishmen...

# CORNISHMEN FROM OVERSEAS

Right: A Redruth Wesleyan Young Men's Bible Class outing just before the outbreak of World War One.



## Many men who signed up had a strong faith.

At Redruth Wesleyan Chapel, 150 members of the Young Men's Bible Class volunteered. Many wrote back to Harry Rich, a well-known figure in the town, who ran the class. They talk of life far from home and how they miss Cornwall.

“I am going on pretty well myself up-to-date and so far have escaped personal injury. I trust that the struggle will soon end and the democracy for which we fight will once and for all time triumph over Prussian tyranny and oppression.”

**Chester Trelease**  
February 1918

”

One of these men was Chester Trelease who had travelled many thousands of miles in his short life. He was born in Michigan in 1889 where his father was working as a miner.

By the age of eight he had returned with his family to Cornwall where he became a member of Redruth Wesleyan Chapel's Young Men's Bible Class.

The chapel at the time was at the heart of life in the town and hundreds of young men were in the Young Men's Bible Class.

Chester though left home.

In his late teens, he set off up to London to train as an apprentice compositor (setting type) in Harrow. By 1911, he was lodging with his first cousin, Thomas Charles Ellyatt.

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Right: **Chester Trelease is buried in Franvillers Cemetery, France, but is remembered on his gravestone with his mother at St Euny, Redruth.**

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Two years later, in 1913 he emigrated to Australia.

He ended up in a remote mining town Murrin Murrin, 549 miles east of Perth, and worked as a labourer. Perhaps he was drawn back to the mining life he knew with his father. Murrin Murrin is now a ghost town.

In 1916 Chester volunteered to fight with the Australian Imperial Forces and went to France.

At the Front he remembered his old friends at the Chapel and in February 1918 wrote a letter thanking the congregation for a Christmas gift of a wallet.

Four months later, he was dead.

He is buried at Franvillers, France, but is remembered with his mother Elizabeth (Bessie) on a gravestone at St Euny Church, Redruth.



Above: **The granite memorial with names of the dead.**

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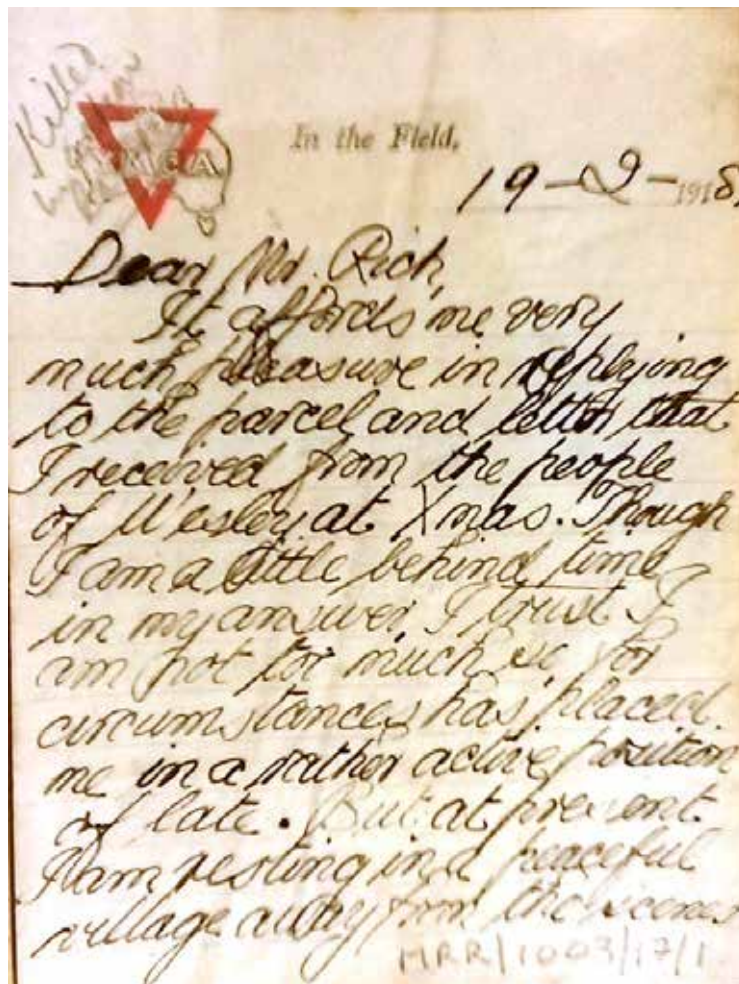
**This memorial outside Redruth Wesleyan Chapel was unveiled in 1920.**

**Harry Rich, who ran the Young Men's Bible Class, was present, the local paper reported.**

**"In unveiling the memorial, Mr Rich remarked that his Bible Class sent 150 of its members to the war, and of the 28 names on the memorial, 20 were members of his class.**

**In these days when everyone was in a hurry to get wealthy and when some did not hesitate to take advantage of others in doing so, he hoped the memorial, situated in such a conspicuous position, would stand as an incentive for them to pause a while and look at the lives of those whose names were recorded there, and try if they could not but weave into their own lives some of that unselfishness and service that characterised these men."**

Right: Chester Trelease lived only a couple of months after writing this letter. 'Killed in action' is written in pencil across the top left hand corner.



**In the Field**  
19th February  
1918

Dear Mr Rich

It affords me very much pleasure in replying to the parcel and letter that I received from the people of Wesley at Xmas. Though I am a little behind time in my answer I trust I am not too much so for circumstances has placed me in a rather active position of late.

But at present I am resting in a peaceful village away from the scenes of war and I have an opportunity. I thought it best to reply to you because I do not personally know either of the gentlemen who jointly sent the letter but I know you will make it known to them as I reply to 'One and All'. It was a very acceptable gift I can assure you and I shall always treasure the pocket wallet as a memento from the people of Wesley, Redruth of the Great European War.

I am going on pretty well myself up-to-date and so far have escaped personal injury. I trust that the struggle will soon end and the democracy for which we fight will once and for all time triumph over Prussian tyranny and oppression.

I have heard nothing of the whereabouts of either H Webber or G Berryman, both as you no doubt aware being members of the Australian Imperial Forces on Active Service. I trust they are both well. A friend of mine has just gone to England on leave named Trezillian, Australian born of Cornish parents. Having told me he might be paying a visit to Cornwall I have him your address if chose to call on you. Trusting you are well and hoping to hear from you at any time, I remain

Your old scholar

T C Trelease

# RUGBY AT THE FRONT

Right: Fred Negus (front row, second right) handed this photo of a rugby team down to his family. The players are wearing Royal Ambulance Corps badges: the date on the ball is 1914-18. This photo could have been taken to mark the end of the war.

Photo courtesy Chris Negus



In 1914, soon after the start of the War, Camborne Rugby Club sent out a ball to France to the Cornish section of the Royal Army Field Ambulance, many of whom were from Dolcoath mine.

These men stayed close to the Front where fighting took place. Their job was to collect the wounded from the battlefield. This was extremely dangerous. They risked their lives daily.

“ THIS MATCH WAS PLAYED ON WHIT MONDAY, AND INSTEAD OF HAVING THE PRIVILEGE OF LISTENING TO THE BANDS IN CAMBORNE, WE HAD THE MUSIC OF THE GUNS.”

After they received the ball from Camborne, they organised three matches between Cornish and Devon soldiers. They were led by Captain William Blackwood, a well-known Camborne doctor who is still remembered by older people in the town. The Cornish soldiers beat Devon but death hung over these matches. Fighting raged close by. One of the best Cornish forwards, Thomas Penhorwood, had been killed in the trenches after the second match in the series.



In 2014, the descendants of at least three of the men who played still lived in Camborne.

Right: **Captain Blackwood** was a well-known doctor in Camborne, who survived the War.

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Below: **Ernie Fletcher** (Right), who wrote home about the rugby matches on the Front, with his grandson **Gerald**.

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- Betty Fletcher , the widow of Gerald Fletcher – grandson of Ernie Fletcher, who wrote back to the Cornishman about the matches
- Chris Negus, grandson of Fred Negus who returned to work at Holman's
- Derek Head, grandson of Fred Head who was a lifelong supporter of Camborne Rugby Club and Camborne Cricket Club on his return.



### 'Football at the Front: The Cornwall and Devon Teams'

Writing to his home at Camborne,  
Pte. E. Fletcher, R.A.M.C.,  
25th Field Ambulance, says:

Through the kindness of Camborne Football Club, who were good enough to send us a Rugby ball, we, the 25th Field Ambulance, have been able to arrange a series of matches between the Cornish lads and the Devon lads. The first match proved a victory for the Devons by 2 tries to nil. A week

later we shifted down the line near La Bassee and played a return match, which proved a win for the Cornish lads by two tries to a dropped goal. Capt. W. Blackwood, of Camborne, kicked off in each match. After having a few days in the trenches we arranged the final, which ended in a victory for the Cornishmen by a try to nil. The Cornish lads well deserved their win, as in the last match they were handicapped by Brown, their back, having to retire within the first fifteen minutes. This match was played on Whit-Monday, and instead of having the privilege of listening to the bands in Camborne, we had the music of the guns. One of the best Cornish forwards, Penhorwood of Newquay, late police constable of Bodmin, was killed after the second game during our stay in the trenches. The teams for the final match were:-

Cornwall Back, R. Brown: three-quarters, W. Bosanko, R. Chinn, J. Soloman, R. Treeby; half-backs, E. Fletcher and Paltridge; forwards, L. Pentecost, A.J.Williams, F. Head, E. Bray, W. Trimm, F. Negus, A. Young and Dunstan.

Devon Back, F. Lovell; three-quarters, G. Lovell, Sergt. Pike, E. Curtis, F. Williams; half-backs, W. Elliott and C. Evans; forwards, Mullins, Reed, Sergt. Cross, Downing, Walters, Whitford, Pepperell and Sergt. Patey.

Linesmen, W. Brookes and E. Rule. Referee, Sergt. J. Phillips (Camborne).

Right: A bugle brought back by Fred Negus from the war. For the last nine months of the conflict he was a prisoner in Germany, returning to Camborne in January 1919.

Courtesy Chris Negus



## Fred Negus

Fred Negus, who lived on Dolcoath Road, Camborne, played in at least one of these matches. His grandson, Chris, lived in Beacon in 2014, 100 years on from the War.

“On two occasions when the Germans were shelling a village, he went right through to attended to wounded men and to assist in carrying them to the dressing station, as it was not safe to use a wagon.”

**Captain William Blackwood, R.A.M.C.**, writing from France about Private Fred Negus. Cornishman, Monday 19th April 1915.

”

He had this photo of rugby players from the war passed down to him by his grandfather.

Newspaper reports from the time reveal that later in that year, 1915, Fred Negus was recommended by Captain Blackwood for his bravery.

Time after time, he went back into a village being shelled by the Germans to collect the wounded.

In 1918, he was awarded a certificate for Gallant Conduct ‘showing great bravery and courage under shell fire’.

He ended up as a prisoner of war in Germany, returning to Camborne in January 1919.

# missing

Depression, nightmares, death,  
this doesn't sound like dulce et  
decorum est pro patria mori.

Maybe there is light at the end of  
my tunnel,  
But it might be the light of gun fire.

Seeing your friends die isn't sweet,  
But missing someone is what really stabs  
you, you know: family, friends and most  
importantly your girl.

Merit: WWT! Beautiful  
presentation and  
writing! - Andrea

Just inches away from.....

Bang, Blood, nightmares

Darkness, Death,

missing,



Andrea



# A LIFELONG INSPIRATION

Above: **Camborne cricketers in action.**

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Right: **Derek Head and Chris Negus, the grandsons of two men who played in the three rugby matches at the Front, together at the Heart of Conflict exhibition marking the centenary of the War.**

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Above: **Derek Head retiring as Camborne Cricket Club Chairman in autumn 2014, a hundred years after his grandfather set off to war. He is being presented with a photograph of the ground from 1925 by Chair of the Cricket Development Committee Malcolm Pooley and the first team's youngest ever captain, Liam Weeks.**

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Fred Head was another of the men who played in the rugby matches on the Front described earlier in this pack. He returned to Camborne after the War ended. His grandson, Derek Head, still lived in the town in 2014 and remembered his grandfather well.

Like many others, Fred Head never ever talked about what he had done, or what he had seen in the war.

Derek Head remembers that the only time the War was ever mentioned was on Remembrance Sunday which was a very solemn day. Usually the family gathered for tea which was a 'laugh a minute'.

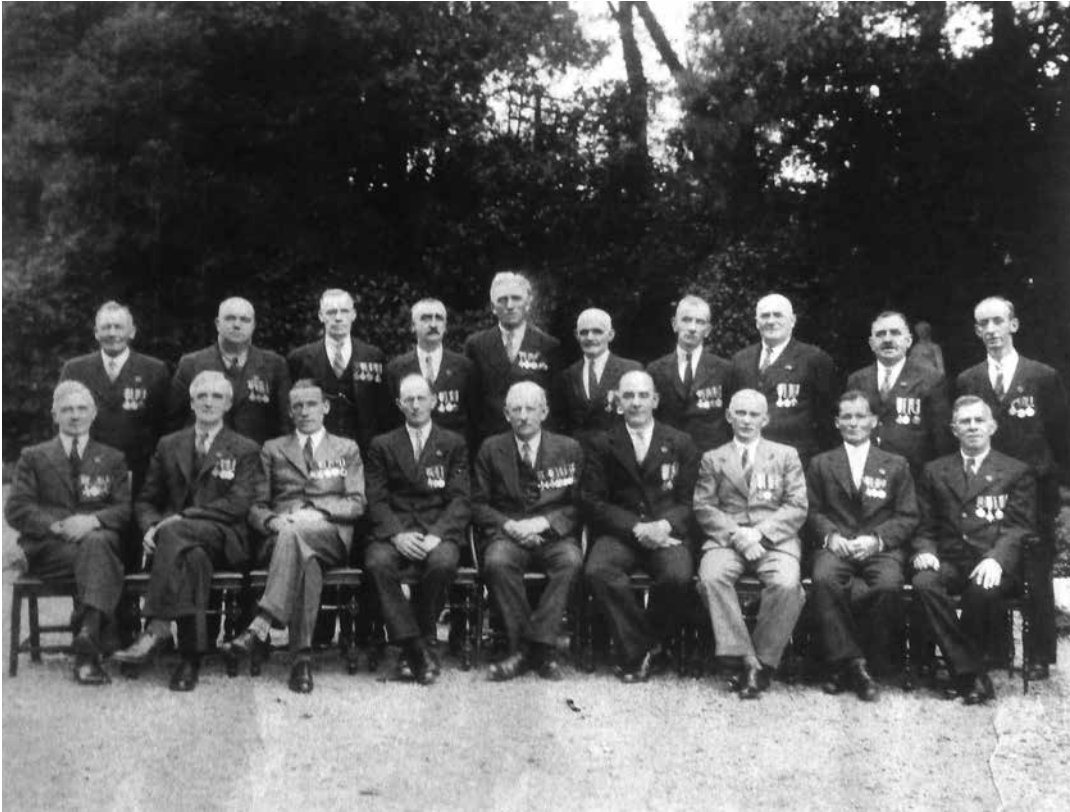
But on Remembrance Sunday Fred sat quietly with his medals having led the 'Old Contemptibles' in the parade. The 'Old Contemptibles' were soldiers who signed up at the start of the War.

Fred Head was a man who inspired by example. Derek, a keen rugby player, referee and lifelong support of Camborne Cricket Club, contributes many of his achievements in sport and in life to his grandfather.

“

MY GRANDFATHER NEVER TALKED ABOUT THE WAR. HOWEVER HE WAS PROUD TO SERVE HIS COUNTRY AND CLUB....”

Derek Head, Camborne



**THE OLD CONTEMPTIBLES**

Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany, who was famously dismissive of the British army, allegedly issued an order on 19 August 1914 to “exterminate ... the treacherous English and walk over General French’s contemptible little army”. Hence, in later years, the survivors of the regular army dubbed themselves “The Old Contemptibles”

Above: The Old Contemptibles

Fred Head, Fred Negus and Ernie Fletcher were members of this group of soldiers who survived the War. They are all wearing their medals.

Standing: B.C. Viner, J Elliott, H. Clatworthy, W.E. James, J. Buckingham, J.A. Lawrence, T. Jago, T. James, E.Fletcher, F.Negus.

Sitting: J. Mitchell, F.W. Jarman, J.B. Gilbert, L.R. Pentecost, W. Blackwood, W. Trimm, F. Head, G. Wallace, F.J. Henwood.

“The Camborne Cricket Club motto is ‘For the Love of the Game’ . My grandfather F.W. Head gave me my love of both games, rugby and cricket, for it was he who took me to both from the age of four because my father was often away playing in Camborne Town Band.

The Camborne Rugby Supports Club was founded in 1948. Grandad was the first president and remained in office for several years.

In the War, my grandfather joined the medical corps with Dr Blackwood who lived in what is now the Tregenna Care Home at the top of Tregenna Lane. When it ceased to be the good doctor’s house, it became a hotel and Cherry (Derek’s wife) and I had our wedding reception there in 1982. We might end up there in 2022!!

It was easy to meet up with Grandad to go to rugby because he lived at 1, Manor Road.... In fact, my grandparents were the first tenants of the new Council estate adjacent to the Rugby ground.

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Grandad never mentioned this famous match (es)... in fact, like so many who survived the slaughter of both World Wars.... They were never mentioned. The only occasion it mattered was Remembrance Sunday, a very solemn occasion in my childhood. I can still picture my Grandad, bowler hatted, medals sparkling... leading the Old Contemptible contingent (dwindling year by year) in the parade and laying the wreath at the memorial. We always went to my grandparents for tea on Sunday.... On Remembrance Sunday all he ever said was 'Hello'... and he just sat in his armchair contemplating the world. Normally, Sunday tea was a laugh a minute.

Every week of every year in my life I am eternally grateful to my Grandad for giving me the love of both games. A passion which has consumed every Saturday of my life. Everything I have achieved on the field of play and in service on Committees has been 'silently' dedicated to his name.

The love he endeared in me for cricket I repaid when I returned to Cornwall in 1980 and became Hon. Secretary of C.C.C. Eventually I became Chairman and then President. The Club decided in 2012 to honour its senior officers. I gave the Presidents' Board in memory of F.W. Head.

...Fred Head, who gave back service to our great game of rugby and cricket which I have tried to serve to the best of my ability to honour his name."

**Derek Head**

“

**EVERY WEEK OF EVERY YEAR IN MY LIFE I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO MY GRANDAD FOR GIVING ME THE LOVE OF BOTH GAMES. A PASSION WHICH HAS CONSUMED EVERY SATURDAY OF MY LIFE”**

**Derek Head**

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**STUDENTS AT REDRUTH SCHOOL MARKED THE CENTENARY OF THE START OF THE WAR BY CREATING A ROOM WHERE THEY DISPLAYED OBJECTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, AND EVEN RECONSTRUCTED A TRENCH.**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR POEMS >>**

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## **Tommy Agar-Robartes**

by Shannon Rowe

Tommy Agar-Robartes, a charming, successful man  
The eldest of five brothers, who went to No Man's Land.  
But why was this his fate?  
He was the son of Lord and Lady Robartes, of the Lanhydrock Estate.  
Due to his political status, he was not required to fight  
But he was not one to stay back when his fellow Cornishmen died.

First stationed here in England,  
Where he joined the Coldstream Guards  
Was the Second Lieutenant of the Royal Bucks Hussars  
But he left for France in February 1915  
The hero that he was,  
Recommended first for the Victoria Cross  
After rescuing a wounded comrade  
Under heavy fire, was shot by a sniper  
At the Battle of Loos in September 1915.  
He was shot in action, rescuing a local friend  
And died later of his injuries.  
His bedroom at Lanhydrock now lies cold and empty  
The toy spider he had remains in the bath  
His face, immortalised in Truro Cathedral  
Where he represents his fellow comrades  
Who died in the 'War to end all wars'.  
He was one of many Cornishmen to die in World War One.

The War needs remembering, it has to be done,  
So its importance can be shared  
With generations to come.



## **The Unknown Soldier** by Lucy Moore

I can see my reflection in the dead man's eyes  
Staring up, lifelessly, face fixed in surprise  
Of a thousand dead soldiers, he is but one more  
Is this all our generation is destined for?

I don't know his name and I don't know his rank  
So he'll rest in a grave with a cross that's blank,  
Among rows of young men who will meet the same fate,  
Their identities lost amongst terror and hate.

He will never again see the land he defended,  
His folks won't be told that his life has been ended,  
But those who are left will continue the fight  
For our nameless companions and their miserable plight.

## **Life at War** by Jack Pellowe

Do you know how it feels  
To help your friend to die?  
To see them choke in thick, green gas,  
As your life goes by?

It would be over by  
Christmas they said,  
But that was just a lie.  
Just like the one where they said we'd be home one day.  
But really we're going to die.

Every day I hear the sound of death,  
I'm doing it for my country! I cry!  
I try to believe I will survive this hell,  
For my children to have a life.

'Hate the enemy!' they say,  
Like they have no soul,  
Expecting us to kill fellow men.  
For what others have done wrong.

One day, I will go over the top.  
Not being able to see what's ahead.  
Not just in No Man's Land, but in life as well,  
My mind just full of dread.

So, until the end of this dreadful war,

No, forever in fact,  
Remember all those people,  
Who for your tomorrow  
Gave their today.

## I Went Off To Fight For Our Country

By Maya Sher

I went off to fight for our country,  
And fight 'til Christmas day  
But now Christmas is closer still.  
All I can do is pray.

Wonder what my family is doing at home,  
Will they be having a turkey dinner?  
My mother, father, eating a succulent meal,  
And all the while, I'm getting thinner.

I went off to fight for our freedom,  
And live under no one's order.  
No officer bossing me, then shooting my friends,  
And the blood splattering the borders.

My friend was scared of fighting,  
And he wouldn't leave the trench,  
The Officer found him and shot him dead,  
He said we wouldn't win without the French.

I went off to fight for children,  
So the fathers would come back, hardly scarred,  
Wives, children, sisters, aunts,  
They wouldn't know this war was hard.

When I have children,  
I want them to have a good life,  
But if I want to live the dream,  
I must survive the bayonets with knives.



**YOU CAN  
DO IT TOO!**



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# YOU CAN DO IT TOO!

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Designed by David Cross

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