

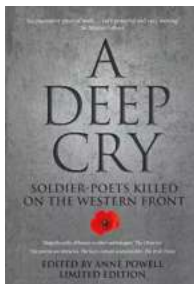
10 Soldier Poets Who Sacrificed Their Lives on the Western Front

War has always been a cruel and tragic affair, claiming countless lives and leaving long-lasting scars on the human spirit. The soldiers who fought in the trenches of the Western Front during World War I endured unimaginable horrors, witnessing the true nature of war in all its brutality. Among these brave men were talented poets, whose words continue to echo through history, providing glimpses of their experiences on the battlefield and the emotional toll it took on them.

In this article, we pay homage to 10 soldier poets who sacrificed their lives on the Western Front, their words immortalized in their poetry forever.

1. Wilfred Owen - "Dulce et Decorum Est"

Wilfred Owen is perhaps one of the most well-known soldier poets, and rightfully so. His poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" paints a harrowing picture of the gruesome reality of war. Owen's vivid descriptions of the gas attack he experienced firsthand make it impossible to ignore the true horror of battle. Tragically, Owen was killed just one week before the Armistice.



Deep Cry: Soldier-Poets Killed on the Western Front

by Anne Powell(Kindle Edition)

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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 gas-shells dropping softly 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

2. Rupert Brooke - "The Soldier"

Rupert Brooke was an English poet who expressed idealistic views about war through his poetry. "The Soldier," his most famous poem, embodies a sense of patriotism and sacrifice. However, the reality of war would soon shatter his idealism. Brooke died from an infected mosquito bite while serving in the Mediterranean.

1914 V: 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

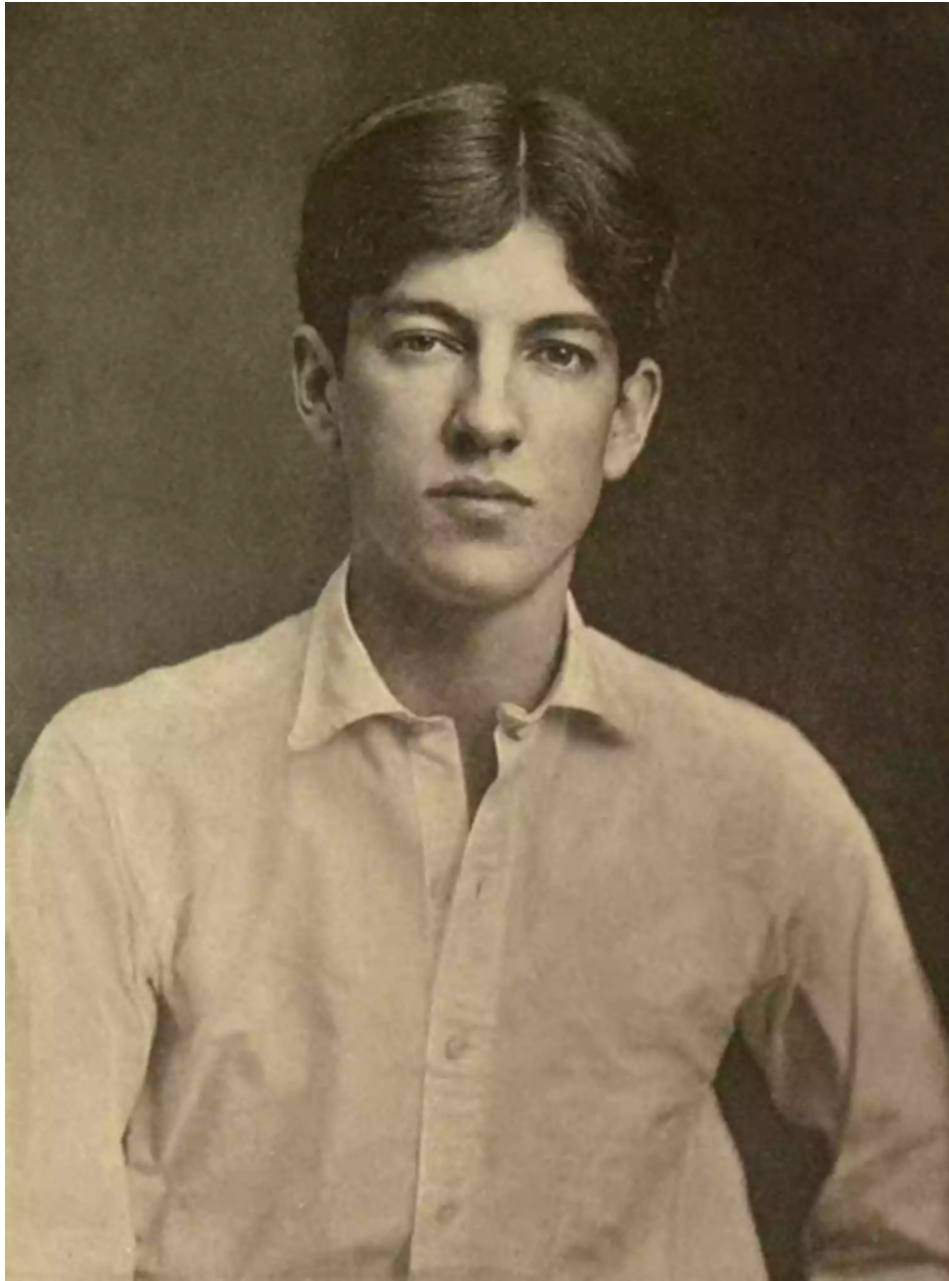
3. Isaac Rosenberg - "Dead Man's Dump"

Isaac Rosenberg, a working-class British poet, didn't shy away from portraying the harsh realities of war. His poem "Dead Man's Dump" reflects the chaotic aftermath of battle and the dehumanizing effects of war. Tragically, Rosenberg was killed just days before the Armistice, never to witness the end of the conflict he so powerfully wrote about.



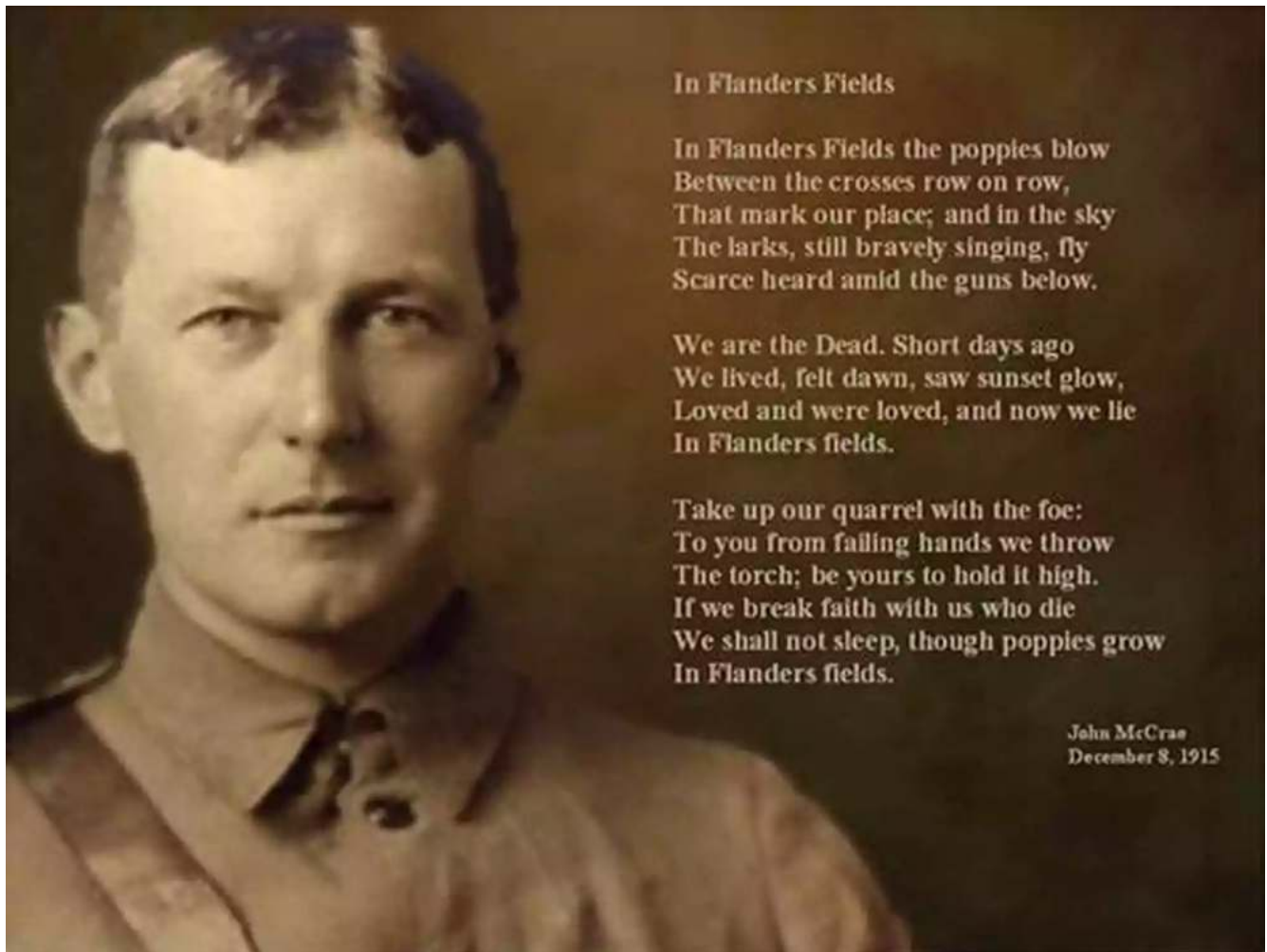
4. Alan Seeger - "Rendezvous"

Alan Seeger, an American poet who volunteered to fight alongside the French Army, found himself at the tragic center of the Battle of the Somme. His poem "Rendezvous" captures the fatalistic acceptance of the inevitable outcome of war. Seeger was fatally wounded in battle but continued to fight until his final breath.



5. John McCrae - "In Flanders Fields"

John McCrae, a physician and soldier, wrote "In Flanders Fields" after serving as a field surgeon during the Second Battle of Ypres. The poem became a symbol of remembrance for fallen soldiers and an inspiration for the adoption of the poppy as a memorial symbol. McCrae died of pneumonia while on active duty.



6. Edward Thomas - "Rain"

Edward Thomas, an English poet and critic, struggled with his decision to join the army but eventually enlisted. His poem "Rain" reflects the gloomy and desolate atmosphere of the trenches. Tragically, Thomas was killed in

action during the Battle of Arras, leaving behind profound literary works that have continued to captivate readers to this day.



7. Siegfried Sassoon - "The General"

Siegfried Sassoon, known for his powerful anti-war sentiments, witnessed the horrors of the Western Front firsthand. His poem "The General" criticizes the high-ranking officers who sent soldiers to their deaths without

understanding the true nature of war. Although he survived the war, Sassoon's haunting words continue to stand as a testament to the futility and devastation brought about by conflict.



8. Ivor Gurney - "To His Love"

Ivor Gurney, a composer and poet, explored themes of love and loss in his work. His poem "To His Love" mourns the loss of a fellow soldier and vividly

portrays the impact of war on personal relationships. Gurney survived the war physically, but his mental health deteriorated, and he spent the rest of his life in psychiatric hospitals.



9. Charles Hamilton Sorley - "All the Hills and Vales Along"

Charles Hamilton Sorley, a Scottish poet, had his promising literary career cut short by the outbreak of war. His poem "All the Hills and Vales Along" reflects his disillusionment with the romanticized notions of warfare.

Tragically, Sorley was killed in action during the Battle of Loos in 1915, leaving behind a legacy of poignant verses.



CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY.
CAPTAIN, SUFFOLK REGT.

10. Julian Grenfell - "Into Battle"

Julian Grenfell, an English poet and soldier, was known for his enthusiasm for war and the glory of battle. His poem "Into Battle" conveys the excitement and anticipation of going to war. However, Grenfell's optimistic perspective was shattered when he was mortally wounded during the Battle of the Somme.

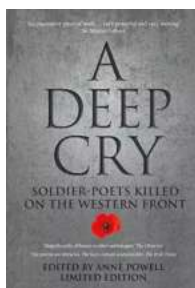
The naked earth is warm with spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the loving breeze;
And life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

And with the trees a newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship-
The Dog-star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,

These soldier poets not only experienced the horrors of war firsthand but also had the courage to express their emotions through their poetry. Their words immortalize the sacrifices and suffering of those who fought and never returned from the Western Front. As we remember them, let their poetry serve as a reminder of the true impact of war on the human soul.



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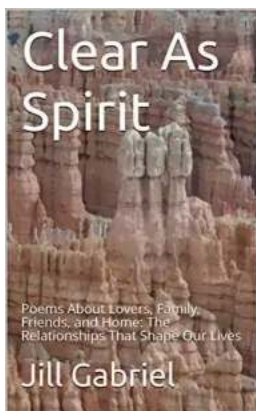
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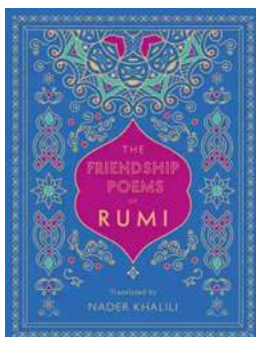


As a contribution to the commemorations for the centenary of World War I, this is a limited edition of just 500 copies of Anne Powell's unique anthology. Why unique? Firstly, these are not simply the works of well-known names such as Wilfred Owen (though they are represented); these are poems painstakingly collected from a multitude of sources, and the relative obscurity of some of the voices make the message all the more moving. Secondly, all these soldiers died, and their deaths are described in chronological order, which in itself provides a revealing gradual change in the poetry from early naïve patriotism to despair about the human race and the bitterness of "Dulce et Decorum Est." Anne Powell also provides extracts from these men's diaries, enough, again, to inform the WWI historian.



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