

How we should commemorate the Great War

Sir, I am very pleased to see that there will be a commemoration of the centenary of "the war to end all wars" (letter Oct 11, and report Oct 12). However, the story of how the conflict came to be is as important as the remembrance of the war itself, if not more so.



Yes, our society should see how the consequences of the war shaped our nations, our societies, our economies and our politics. But the lessons of what caused the war to be conducted are just as relevant today as they were a century ago. Please let us bring into focus all that is needed to prevent future conflicts as well as the importance of marking the loss of so many innocent lives.

DAVID WOOD

Malvern Wells, Worcestershire

Sir, Originally, after the First World War, the wearing of poppies and the observances at the Cenotaph¹⁾ evolved as signs of the grief felt by almost every family in the land and were a public statement of determination that the recent horrific conflict should be the war to end all wars. Today, for many people, wearing a poppy has become a symbol of patriotic pride and of "standing shoulder to shoulder" with the fighting services. This is a subtle, but significant change in the symbolism.

The most appropriate way to mark the centenary of the First World War would be to review our traditional pattern of Remembrance observance and amend any aspects which might, however inadvertently, glorify, sanctify or sanitise the use of armed force. The best way to honour all those who have died in the conflicts of the past 100 years is to ensure that their descendants are not called upon to make the same sacrifice.

TED HARRISON

Hawkinge, Kent

Sir, What we should reflect on first are the origins of that war. Three imperial families were locked into personal commitments after a political murder, at a time when expressions of nationalism had reached some very aggressive levels among many peoples of Europe, including the British.

RICHARD HILL BROWN

Portsmouth

Sir, While I applaud the call for more education about the Great War for the generations who know little about it, may I also suggest that those involved in such education should read Siegfried Sassoon's two war memoirs, to throw some light on the perplexing issues of the psyches of the millions of young men who fought and existed bravely, and preferred to forget.

ROBERT PERKINS

Warwick

Sir, My grandfather was killed at Passchendaele in 1917. Until this summer my family knew little about his role in the war or who he really was. We then began a rewarding journey of research using all online and other resources available, and the result has been quite remarkable. We now feel we know him better, and have learnt so much about the sacrifice which he and others made; and we are planning a pilgrimage to his grave in Belgium.

May I commend this experience as a truly fulfilling way for families who lost a loved one in the Great War to mark the centenary in a personal way.

BERNARD KINGSTON

Biddenden, Kent

Sir, The best tribute to the millions whose lives were lost or damaged as a result of that war would be the conclusion by the nations of Europe of a firm and stable settlement of their relationships. The opportunity is there. The time is ripe.

JAMES R. FELLS

Petersfield, Hants

The Times, 2012

noot 1 The Cenotaph is a war memorial in London.

Tekst 6 How we should commemorate the Great War

- Hieronder staan zes uitspraken.
- 3p 28 Noteer het nummer van elke uitspraak, gevolgd door “wel” als de uitspraak toegeschreven kan worden aan één of meerdere brieftschrijvers of “niet” wanneer de betreffende uitspraak niet overeenstemt met de opvattingen van ten minste één brieftschrijver.
- 1 Commemorations should focus on the underlying issues that led to the outbreak of war.
 - 2 Looking into family history could be a meaningful way to commemorate the Great War.
 - 3 Our commemoration of World War One is in danger of becoming a thing of the past.
 - 4 The big challenge for countries is to resolve their conflicts and build peace.
 - 5 We must re-awaken the peace movement, ensuring that politicians bring home the troops currently waging war.
 - 6 Young people should be taught more than just facts about the First World War.

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.