

Never Such Innocence

2014 Poetry & Art Competition

WINNING ENTRIES





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From little acorns... two years ago myself and a coalition of the willing set out to find a means of commemorating the Centenary of the Great War, ensuring that our young people, nationally, were given the opportunity to play their part, engage and feel important during this centenary period.

This booklet presents the winning entries from our pilot poetry and art competition - our judges spent long hours deliberating, discussing, disagreeing, and finally deciding. I have been moved, frequently to tears, by the work the children have produced thus far. I hope that what you see here moves you. After the success of the pilot competition we hope to hold our competitions annually for every year of the centenary. Come 2018, we shall be collating a lasting legacy - a book containing all of the winning entries from the centenary, preserved for generations to come *...to mighty oaks*.

We receive no public subsidy and rely entirely on fundraising to ensure our reach across the UK. Details of how you can support us can be found on the final page of this booklet.

Thank you, Lady Lucy French.

Never Such Innocence would like to thank the following for kindly giving their time to judge the 2014 poetry and art competition:

Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Caroline de Peyrecave, Tim Betjeman, Charlie Barton, Peter Biggs, the Ambassador of Ireland HE Dr Daniel Mulhall, Stanley Johnson, Anna Trethewey and Androcles Scicluna.

We would also like to thank the following organisations for kindly donating prizes for our 2014 poetry and art competition:

The Combat Veteran Players, The Globe, The Poppy Factory, The National Memorial Arboretum, the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, the Royal Pavilion and Runner Bean Ltd.

Never Such Innocence would like to thank CH2MHILL and 13hundred Creative Partners for their support in producing this booklet



See map: Entries for the competition came from far and wide.

Never Such Innocence launched a pilot poetry and art competition for secondary schools in September 2014. Such was the enthusiasm, we spontaneously received poetry submissions from primary schools and created a separate category in order to recognise their work.

Entrants were encouraged to choose a topic related to the First World War and produce a piece of art or write a poem expressing their thoughts and feelings. To help get them started we produced a comprehensive 56-page stimulus pack. The pack includes contributions and expertise from our friends and partners, and Nurse Elsie and Sergeant Bert accompany readers as they learn about the War.



During the pilot competition our stimulus pack was directly received by 538 schools, downloaded from the TES website 463 times and viewed on the NSI website 545 times. We received 183 entries for the art competition and 376 entries for the poetry competition.

We aim to develop this competition further, adding to the stimulus pack year on year, incorporating personal stories and specific country by country resources. We want to get to the heart of the Great War for both primary and secondary schools, not only in England, but across the United Kingdom.

The spontaneous and enthusiastic response of primary schools to our competition means that we are now committed to refining and adapting the stimulus pack for younger children to make sure that it is age appropriate.

“The Never Such Innocence poetry and art competition had a huge impact on our pupils and they were extremely excited by the competition and found the resources really useful when making their work.”

Jack Chester, Teacher,
Brighton College

I agree, excellent writing and artwork to a very high standard!





AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

First place, Art: *Untitled*, by *Toby Mills*



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

First place, Poetry: *Frontline, Touchline – In Memory of Geoffrey Marriott* by *Sam Kaplin*

*Leather on willow,
Followed by the ripple of gentle applause.
Bullets and mortar
Pierced the sky with a terrible roar.*

*I think of you,
Geoffrey Marriott, Old Gower
When I wear my UCS blazer,
Pinned with a poppy flower.*

*You swapped your form and deme
For name and rank
Bat and ball,
For gun and tank.*

*As I stumble into the examination hall with trepidation,
You marched on the battlefield with determination.
My mouth dry, in need of refreshment
Your heart pounded as heavy as the bombardment.*

*The schoolboy on the touchline,
The soldier on the frontline.
As I cower away from a rugby brawl
You stood under fire, proud and tall.
Killed in action, yesteryear,
So we could live today,
Without fear.*



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Second place, Art: Forgive and Remember

by Lydia Calman-Grimsdale



“ I enjoyed reading and judging the entries in the Never Such Innocence Schools’ Poetry Competition The entries were impressive and I congratulate everyone involved on the high standards achieved. It was a pleasure to see how today’s young people respond to those terrible events of a century ago ”

Ambassador of Ireland HE
Dr Daniel Mulhall, Poetry Judge

AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Second place, Poetry: The Fallen Ones

by Harrison English

*The fallen ones, they lie alone,
With nothing left, all on their own,
They have strived, and served their country.
But now no one remembers, now they lie solitary.*

*The young men, only in their teens,
Get trained and given orders and put in their regimes.
They’re sent alone, to fight the enemy.
But nothing they could do, no goal they could see.*

*Now they come home, cut and bruised.
Did they win? Did they lose?
No one knows, they still battle on,
All is darkness, no future seen, no light is shone.*

*So now the fallen ones lie alone,
War is fearful, and they can’t condone
The mindless slaughter, can’t be forgot,
And men have died, to bullets hot.*

*The fallen ones lie alone,
With nothing left, all on their own.*



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Third place, Art:

Disturbed Peace by *Melissa Brincat*



Third place: Dawn Chorus by *Annabel Bainbridge*

*A skylark swoops and swings her silver tail,
Below her, sheets of green silk water stir,
A golden ball of life asserts its glow,
And now as then, dawn chorus has begun.
The golden leaves fall softly, softly fall,
Reveal bare branches, winter yet to come,
The silver trunks lean in, whispered exchange,
A secret shared, and snatched, never again.
A moss encrusted, vine entwined, stone cross,
Exuberance of life we owe to them.*



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Runner up, Art:

The Personal Effects of William Taylor by *Scarlett Cameron*



“I was really impressed with the variety and depth within the work that came in for us to judge from all over the country. There were so many different mediums being used to convey what each student thought of WW1 and how it should be remembered. Some very talented artists out there who I hope will continue to embrace working with visual mediums”

Caroline de Peyrecave,
Art Judge



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Runner up, Poetry: Harold by Gregory Hartley

*His name is Harold.
He hangs on my brother's wall, a monochrome effigy of what once existed.
The crest emblazoned on his sporran,
Signifies to what he enlisted.*

*His kilt reaches knee length,
Part of the London Scottish, or Cockney Jocks
Their emblem a collusion of thistles and a saltire
Ready for anything, armed with a dirk tucked into their socks.*

*He is not my great-grandfather, nor even a relative
On the 30th June 1916, he made his best friend vow,
That if he fell the following day,
He would marry his betrothed and care for her forever and now.*

*On the 1st July 1916 from this regiment 223 men fell,
Numbers may not signify individuals that someone once called a chum,
Harold was one of these fallen,
And of his life, I can glean from the picture but a crumb.*

*Williams, Busby, Eckford, Freeman, Heath.
London Scottish lost many Harolds, not just number 4914
Remember the others this year when you lay a wreath.
My great-grandfather, remembered and held to what he swore
My birth made certain by the tragedy, which was the Great War.*



AGE CATEGORY: 14-16

Runner up, Art: Untitled by Lara Tritton



Runner up: What happens next? By Sean Thackwray

*What happens next
Will our lips meet again?
I long to feel you
But know in my heart this could be the end!
Are you listening my darling?
There is hate and selfishness,
But I'm only full of love and hope!*



AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

First place, Art: Gassed, by Amirzan Jeyakumar



First place, Art: The Body of War by Max Park

*Veins of trenches down the arm,
We trudge through barren lands.
The shrieking, piercing, harsh alarm,
Shot from innocent hands.*

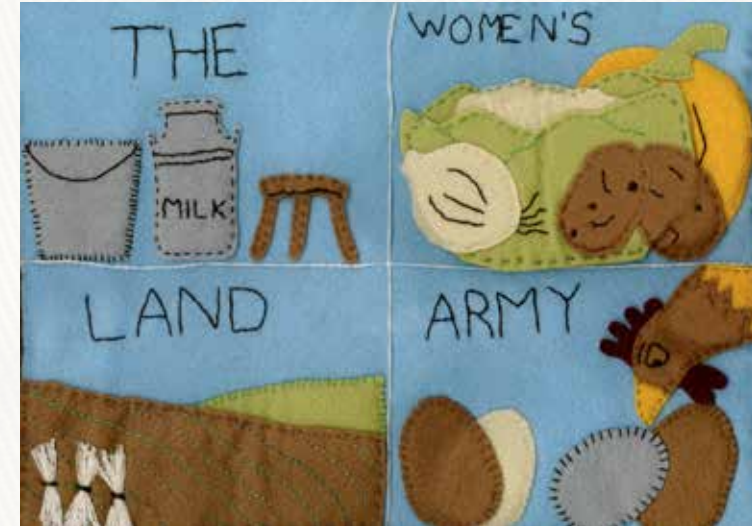
*Boys turned old in little years,
Together die in vain.
Broken eyes and shattered ears,
The unforgettable pain.*

*The quiet country does not know,
The soldiers story unspoken.
We now live the hell below,
The peaceful minds forever broken.*



AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

Second place, Art: The Women's Land Army, by Rebekah Heath



**Second place, Poetry: A Poem for Remembrance Day
by Olivia Rogers**

*Why are they selling poppies mummy?
Selling poppies in town today?
The poppies, child, are flowers of love
For the men who marched away.*

*By why have they chosen a poppy mummy?
Why not a beautiful rose?
Because my child, men fought and died
In the fields where the poppies grow?*

*But why are the poppies so red, mummy?
Why are the poppies so red?*



AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

*Red is the colour of blood my child
The blood that our soldiers shed.
The heart of the poppy is black, mummy
Why does it have to be black?
Black, my child, is the symbol of grief,
For the men who never came back.*

Third place, Art: Battlefield, by Jude Wedgwood



AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

Third place, Poetry: Empty footsteps by Tomas Ross-Wheeler

*The footprints grow as if they were there forever.
No sign of the course of these steps, just death.
The footsteps sorrow shows the longing for the owner,
But no one speaks the only words we hear are our brothers,*

*Brothers lost in war,
Brothers lost to the German guns,
Death calls out to us as our footstep trail ends.*

Runner up, Poetry: War Artist by Aidan Durkin

Mixing

*Burnt Umber
Sap Green
Payne's Grey*

Cadmium Red

*Dragging
Bristles
Across
The raised*

Tooth

*of the
Cotton duck*

Observing

Recording

*My Mission
My Masterpiece.*

AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

Runner up, Art: The Man With a Sword, by Roop Singh



Runner up, Art: The bloody gas attack, by Nolian Agimi



AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

Runner up, Poetry: Shellshock by Jonathan James Kajoba

*Fighting for King and Country; I volunteered to go
And now I'm at the Front line; facing the Evil Foe.
The Glory Days of Victory are soon to be our own.
God will help the weary! Send the message home!*

*With every step in battle; I'm close enough to see
The enemy around us; is human, just like me.
"Hey George!" cried my mate Jonny, before the sun went down.
I saw him last in No Man's Land, but no remains were found.*

*They carted me to hospital; with no voice to explain
The horror of that moment; the shock; the fear; the pain.
"Chin up old son!" they said to me
"Grow up and be a man. You've lived to fight another day!"*

*The captain of the Regiment, sends personal regards:
"We're sorry, Mother, for your loss,
It's written in the stars, your son died for his country,
The brave and noble George; he's now with God, our Lord."*

*So proud am I of my dear son; who bravely fought our cause
To save our noble country, From the Kaiser's snapping jaws.
I hope he is in heaven, And not beneath the earth
Lonely in a foreign field, Far from his place of birth.*

*Back in Army Quarters, two officers debate
about young private George, who met with his just fate.
"Damn coward!" Charles exploded. "He tried to run away!" But
Good old Edward caught him." They shot him at midday.*

AGE CATEGORY: 11-14

*So many un-named soldiers; So many unmarked graves.
Betrayed by their own country. Tied up and whipped like slaves.
Their only guilt was trauma, their short lives full of fear.*

*Now George is vindicated; the lies have been exposed.
His name is clear, the stain removed; His family is told.
A letter of apology; is all they have to hold.*

CATEGORY: PRIMARY / POETRY

First Place, Poetry: The Love of a Mother *by Melissa Kastrati*

*I miss my son.
He was the sun on my face.
But then he left without a trace.
He fights in the war,
He fights for peace.*

*I lay here,
I cry every night,
Who will stop the fight,
My son's in danger,
I can't say he's safe and hug him,
My faith has faded, over the last 3 anxious years
But he is still in my heart,
I pray every morning,
I pray that he's safe.
I hope he'll come back,*

CATEGORY: PRIMARY / POETRY

*I hope he's thinking about me,
Don't forget me, son,
Stay strong for me
Come back home soon,
I believe in you,
You'll come back strong,
I can't live without you.*

Second place, Poetry: Death *by Victoria Gedgaudaitė*

*Marching slowly towards their distant rest,
Knowing that they all did their best,
Limping, trudging, lamely like drunks,
Cursing, coughing, stumbling asleep,
Drunk with fatigue,
Death.*

*Memories of tragedies invade their minds,
Remembering the ones they left behind,
Thanking the gods they're still alive,
Huffing, puffing, plodding along,
Memorising the experience;
Haunting flares and guns,
Death.*

*Singing to lift their spirits,
Until five-nines go off,
Quick boys! Gas masks on,
Screaming in agony, crying in pain,
As memories slowly fade away,
Families will be discontented when they receive the call,
Death.*



CATEGORY: PRIMARY / POETRY

Third place, Poetry: The Ruined Souls by Lydia Fisher

*The rotting skeleton of the deserted,
ruined buildings lie on a desolate patch of rubble.
Inside is a horror, a tragic horror.
Dead bodies stacked up like books on shelves.
Flesh-eating rats flourishing off their rapidly fading souls.
Flies buzzing constantly around the bodies,
settling on wounds and infecting them.
Maggots wriggle their way into the gruesome wounds,
covering themselves in blood.
I can hear them, the deathly screams,
echoing through my mind,
as the shell screams towards them,
stealing their lives.
I can see a few stray dogs and foxes wandering the streets.
No one knows how they survived the shelling.*

“ I am excited about the competition and [if] someone is lucky and wins I will be happy for them... Hopefully it is one of my friends. Thank you for having a competition ”

Year 7 Entrant,
Kings High Warwick

Never Such Innocence is an ambitious initiative.

We are committed to educating the nation's children during the Centenary of the Great War and creating a lasting legacy to remember those who fought and fell a century ago.

You can help us achieve our goals by contributing anything from £50 to as much as £27,000 in support of the following:

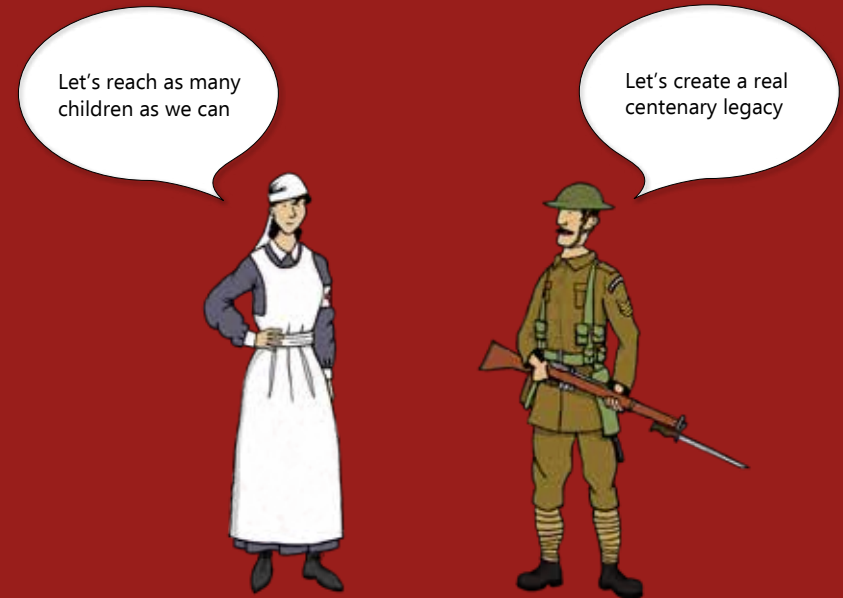
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To support, sponsor or get involved with Never Such Innocence please contact Lucy Kentish on lk@neversuchinnocence.com



Contact Us
0207 759 1198
enquiries@neversuchinnocence.com

Never Such Innocence
40 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BU

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