

From: The Warminster and Westbury Journal dated 20th February 1920

THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

HANDSOME MEMORIAL TO THE FALLEN ERECTED AT SUTTON VENY

DEDICATION AND UNVEILING CEREMONY

The prime idea of sacrifice in its many variations is proved to be the gain of some benefit by the surrender of something of value, and the surrender was their own lives. This is what 15 sons of Sutton Veny did during the Great War, and on Sunday afternoon a beautiful Memorial was dedicated and unveiled in the village churchyard to perpetuate the memory of these worthy and gallant men whose sacrifice was the supreme one.

The memorial takes the form of a large monument built on a base of four steps on which rest a square with four panels and a high circular column, which is finished off with a cross. The whole of the monument is composed of the best Portland stone, and it reflects much credit on Mr Strong, of Portway, Warminster, who designed and erected it. The memorial stands close to the road and the panel opposite the road is inscribed to "The Glory of God and in honour of the men of this village who fell in the Great War 1914 – 1919" and on the other three panels are the names of the 15 men who died that their homeland may be liberated from the oppression of an envious foe.

The memorial cost £170 and of this sum the money is a portion of a fund which was raised by house-to-house collections in the village. The arrangements were carried out by a committee consisting of Col The Honourable W. Alexander, Mr William Barter, Mr Sydney Pond, the Rev F Varnon with Mr RW Pretor Pinney for an excellent chairman, and Mr A C Bull who provided an energetic and most successful secretary. This committee have the satisfaction of knowing that their work was crowned with glorious success and the Memorial with its infinite remembrance of heroism of the men whose names are inscribed thereon, is a sincere reciprocation for their labours and also to all who contributed and assisted in the promotion of the scheme.

Prior to the dedication and unveiling ceremony a special service was held in the church and every seat in the beautiful old village church was occupied, whilst many were unable to gain admission. As the congregation were assembling the organist (Mr Oliver Lines) impressively rendered "I know that my Redeemer Liveth", and "Oh Rest in the Lord", and after the service he played appropriately "Blessed are the Departed.":

The Rev A Sewell (Rector of Sutton Veny) conducted a portion of the service. He was assisted by the Rev F Varnon (Congregationalist) who read the lesson and the address was given by Rev Canon Jacob (Rural Dean.) Other clergy present were; the Rev J W R Brocklebank (Longbridge Deverill) and the Rev P Daimpry (Norton Bavant), who is an ex Chaplain to the Forces.

The service for the commemoration of the faithful departed from the book of Occasional Offices authorised for use in the diocese of Salisbury was gone through with slight variations appropriate for the occasion. The Rev Canon Jacob gave a most beautiful address he first quoted the 27th chapter of St Matthew verse 42 "He saved others, himself he cannot save." and said: -

During the last few years brethren we have had a good many days which will always be in graven on our memories. We think of 4 August 1914 we think of 11 November 1918 and you - some of you can think of other days when you receive that message which told you of the loss of one who was dear to you and this 15th day of February 1920 is another date which

you in this parish will always hold in remembrance, for you have come to dedicate a memorial to the Glory of God and to the memory of these of this parish who have given their lives for us in the Great War. Their beautiful and graceful memorial will presently be unveiled. The mortal bodies of those men rest elsewhere in France, Salonika, Mesopotamia, or some other place in the far-flung battle areas, or beneath the waves of the never resting ocean. Their bodies are there, but their souls have gone from this earth; but are still living to worship God in a way they never could worship him whilst within the limitations of this life. You cannot visit their earthly resting place to shed tears, but you will be able to offer flowers and pray for their souls. Here on this spot you will be able to come to honour those who made the greatest possible sacrifice. Here will comforting thoughts be given to ease sorrow stricken hearts. Here will the children of generations to come learn of their heroism and it will be remembered in the passing of one age to another. Here will be given to each generation these glorious ideals which they by their sacrifice have given to us. "He saved others, Himself he cannot save."

These words were spoken with sworn and hurled front cavalry, from beneath the Cross of Christ. How little did those who spoke those words know the depths of their meaning? It was God's will, a divine necessity was laid upon his, but He could not save Himself. He was contented to die a death of shame to redeem mankind, and you today reap the benefits of His sacrifice upon Cavalry. The glory of everlasting life was given to us by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who gave their lives for us in the Great War - they have died that we may secure happiness and freedom. They did not wish to die. It would have been against nature but they were willing to die and have died and that is all they possibly could do. We have come to pay homage to their memory and to express our gratitude to them for their sacrifice.

You will never forget your mothers, who bore, rear, toiled for them, and prayed for them. Pray for them still. Through their deaths they have shared a new glory, and never let us forget this splendid example, which have been given to us by these men who fought, suffered and died in the Great War for all of us. Remember those who lie all around here, whose dear ones are so far away some across the sea. There may not have died in battle but they died as a result of war. We cannot forget them today. The splendid qualities of Englishmen which were brought out in the War are just as necessary now in the time of peace as they were in the time of war. Live not for yourselves, but live for others. God forbid that we should be overcome by any waves of class selfishness or individual selfishness in our fair land.

The hymn "On the Resurrection morning" was most appropriately sung by the assembly and the choir gave a delightful rendering of a special anthem "I heard a Voice" (written and composed by the Rev A Sewell.) The solo parts were taken in a splendid manner by Masters E Tapper and J Sharegold whose sweet voices produced a wonderful effect.

The surpliced choir headed by the banner bearer and followed by the congregation then proceeded to the churchyard and after the Rev Canon Jacob had dedicated the handsome monument, Mrs G Cooper (who had lost two of her sons in the War) unveiled the Memorial, and placed a floral tribute on it.

The following floral tributes were placed on the memorial: - In loving memory of our dear Hector" from mother, Tom, Percy, Doris and Elsie; "in loving memory of Uncle Arthur, from Douglas, Winnie and Audrey"; "In loving remembrance of Sydney"; "To our darling boys George and Harold Cooper."

These two lives so young and fair,
Now have passed from earthly care;
God himself their soul will keep,
Giveth His beloved sleep.

From father, mother; "In loving memory of the dear brave." There were several floral tributes without inscriptions.