

## **Remember Them**

Armistice Day in November is when Britain formally remembers the fallen of the two World Wars. Well for 2005 I have chosen two poems, the first of which, by implication refers to those wars. For my second poem I have chosen one that remembers those who fell fighting the 'Small Wars' in which Britain has been involved in almost continuously ever since 1945  
DIH

## **Lest We Ever Forget**

Why do you still march old man, with medals on your chest?  
Why do you still grieve old man, for those friends you laid to rest?  
Why do your eyes gleam old man, when you hear those bugles blow?  
Tell me why you cry old man, about those days so long ago.

I'll tell you why I march young man, with medals on my chest  
I'll tell you why I grieve young man, for those I laid to rest,  
Through misty fields of gossamer silk come visions of distant times,  
When boys of tender age lost lives, and all their mothers pined;  
We buried them in a blanket shroud, their young flesh scorched and blackened,  
A communal grave newly gouged in blood stained gorse and bracken,  
And you ask me why I march young man, I march to remind you all,  
That but for those apple-blossom youths, you'd never have known freedom at all.

*Author: Unknown*

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The author of the second poem wrote it specifically with the Malaya and Borneo Emergency in mind. However it equally applies to those who gave their lives in any number of the end of empire and post-colonial wars.

## **Sleep Well You Bonnie Lads** *Dedicated to those left behind*

Sleep well you Bonnie lads, wherever you may be.  
Buried in a foreign land or in the deep blue sea.  
Sleep well you Bonnie Lads, you stayed forever young;

You died so others lived their lives, free from bomb and gun.  
You left the shores of your lands, young lads still in your teens  
You hadn't started living life; you hadn't filled your dreams.  
Britons, Commonwealth, Gurkhas, Police, you all served side by side;  
Foreign ground marked with your blood where you fought and died.

In far off jungles green you fought for Country, King and Queen,  
And for a Foreign people you hadn't known or seen.  
We ask now was it worth it? Of course it was you see,  
You helped to right a wrong and set a people free.

So in this Holy House of God, we Honour you with pride.  
"Sleep in peace; God rest your souls", this prayer goes out world wide.  
And when the Day of Judgement comes, meet us with a smile.  
We'll take your hands, fall in line, and go the final mile

So look up to the Plaque and hold your Standards high;  
They represent you and me, and those who had to die.

"Sleep well you Bonnie Lads"

*Author: Patrick Baldwin*