

Lewis writes

August 4th 1914 Britain declares a state of war after Austria —Hungary rail to comply to an ultimatum given to them to stand down.

This came just after Lloyd George stated 23rd July that British relations with Germany were “very much better than they were a few years ago.’ The suggestion of war appeared to be far from the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s mind yet it came and it produced one of the most brutal periods in history.

Endless slaughter through strategic warfare in trenches seemingly defied any notion of the value of human life, replacing humans as numbers or pawns in a political deadly game of chess. We hear of the number of fatalities and occasionally we fail to take into account that each number in the final tally chart of battle represents a human life. Each one of those numbers had family and friends back home that cared for them, fellow countrymen and enemies alike.

Every year we set aside time to remember the fallen in a now time honoured traditional setting. Let not this tradition lose its human purpose; or reflect on the sacrifices given. It is not an occasion to glorify war; it is an occasion to think on its horrors so that such an occurrence never transpires again. Tragically, the lessons learnt from war are often disregarded. All we need to do is watch the TV or read a newspaper and we are greeted with the tragedies afflicting the world through war. It can create immunity to the human aspect of these events seeing them every day and being taken in by the politics that lies behind these conflicts, yet, we should not allow ourselves to be desensitised to the heartrending presumption of the inconsequential aspect of human lives in these cases.

They are not just stories for us to follow, but lives for us to grieve over,

Remembering the Great War means we honour the brave who gave their lives that we might live. Remembering the strength and courage they showed staring into the face of death believing they were fighting for a greater cause. We remember their lives’ to be greater than the outcome or goal of war and commemorate their humanity. We reflect on learning from mistakes of the past and pray that we may always “walk in all the ways of virtue and abide therein; then whether our praise is of men or not, it will be of God