

## Remembrance Words

When I went on the RBL Pilgrimage to the 70th Anniversary at Monte Cassino after all the sad visits to the war graves and the huge commemoration at the Cassino Memorial we ended on the last night with a concert. In our party was a retired trained in Italy opera singer and family accompanying their veteran father - she was smashing and wonderfully eccentric - she organised our concert - she had us all performing and singing it was great - the highlight of the evening was when a group of veterans sang 'We are the 'D Day Dodgers' it is sung to the tune of 'Lily Marlene' and introduced us to the soldiers version of 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary'. I have attached these for your perusal and if you go on to youtube there are some great renditions of the the 'D Day Dodgers'. On the actual day the irony was that a grandson of Lady Nancy Astor was present as he was Under-Secretary of State at the Minister of Defence

When we attended the big official do, a very formal military do with all the dignitaries from Europe and the Commonwealth and military bands and which of course we were all medalled up and booted and suited and being members of the RBL who are the lead in these sorts of thing our group had a prime position. Our 'opera singer' was dressed to kill with a stunning fairly large hat - naturally our National Anthem was played - this was her moment - she took off and for a fraction of a moment a pause was noticed in the singing around us - it was wonderful. We were stood close to Prince Harry who of course was standing to attention and could see him trying out of the corner of his eye to locate her. Afterwards we were taken by coach to the official reception garden party affair where the band played as we ate and drank and Prince Harry now out of uniform mingled - a pause by the band and our girl was away - she struck up with 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' and everyone joined in. I must say he was great and completely at ease - on the official programme he was of course listed as Prince Henry by the time he left us He was being called Harry Boy by the Londoners in our group and he was quite happy with it - surprising what veterans can get away with.

Ashes and Diamonds  
Foe and friend  
We were all equal in the end

All gave some  
Some gave all

Went the day well  
We died and never knew  
But, well or ill  
Freedom we died for you  
Went the day well

Every bullet has its billet  
Some bullets more than one  
For you kill a mother  
When you kill a mothers son

Re: Vimy Ridge

You come from England  
Is she England still?  
Yes,  
Thanks to you that died upon this hill

Re: Battle of Jutland

Proud we went down and there content to lie  
neath English sea, if not neath English sky.

Village War Memorial

Ye that live on mid English pastures green  
remember us and think what might have been.

Kohima Epitaph

When you go home tell them of us and say  
for their tomorrow we gave our today.

Epitaphs on War Graves

Here lies  
a father's hope, a mother's pride and a wife's dependence

Oh for the touch of a vanished hand  
and the sound of a voice that is still.

To dearly loved to be forgotten

Now heaven is by the young invaded.

It's a Long Way to Tipperary with the added verse:

That's the wrong way to tickle Mary,  
That's the wrong way to kiss.  
Don't you know that over here, lad  
They like it best like this.  
Hoo-ray pour les français,  
Farewell Angleterre.  
We didn't know how to tickle Mary,  
But we learnt how over there.

## We're the D-Day Dodgers out in Italy

Note: An apocryphal story --- that of Lady Astor accusing the British forces in Italy of being "D-Day Dodgers" --- was widely circulated. This song was a non-apocryphal response.

We're the D-Day Dodgers, way off in Italy  
Always on the vino, always on the spree;  
Eighth Army scroungers and their tanks,  
We live in Rome, among the Yanks.  
We are the D-Day Dodgers, way out in Italy;(2X)

We landed in Salerno, a holiday with pay,  
The Jerries brought the bands out to greet us on the way.  
Showed us the sights and gave us tea,  
We all sang songs, the beer was free  
To welcome D-Day Dodgers to sunny Italy.

Naples and Casino were taken in our stride,  
We didn't go to fight there, we went just for the ride.  
Anzio and Sangro were just names,  
We only went to look for dames  
The artful D-Day Dodgers, way out in Italy.

Dear Lady Astor, you think you're mighty hot,  
Standing on the platform, talking tommyrot.  
You're England's sweetheart and her pride  
We think your mouth's too bleeding wide.  
We are the D-Day Dodgers, in sunny Italy.

Look around the mountains, in the mud and rain,  
You'll find the scattered crosses, some that have no name.  
Heartbreak and toil and suffering gone,  
The boys beneath them slumber on.  
They are the D-Day Dodgers who stay in Italy..