

A DEBT OF HONOUR



LEST WE FORGET ... THE SILENT REMEMBRANCE ... a 2 minute pause

The first minute is a time of thanksgiving for those who have survived.
The second minute is to remember the fallen.

Two minutes of silence is a tradition observed world-wide when fallen soldiers are remembered. Most people have observed it at some time or other but few know who initiated the idea and when it came into being.

Sir Percy FitzPatrick, the South African author of *Jock of the Bushveld*, is credited with this honour.

Nugent, Sir Percy's eldest son and a major in the Union Defence Force, was killed in France, on 14 December 1917. Understandably, Sir Percy was deeply affected by this sad loss.

When Sir Percy read that 11 November 1918 was to be recognised officially as Armistice Day in London, he thought it appropriate that on that day, every year, there should be a two minute pause throughout the Empire, to commemorate the Fallen. He had already experienced a silent pause in Cape Town, during a church service in 1916 following the publication of South Africa's first casualty list.

Mr Brydon and Sir Harry Hands, the mayor of Cape Town, initiated a daily noon-day pause to follow the firing of the gun on Signal Hill.

Taking into consideration that the guns of war finally fell silent at 11:00 on the 11th, of the 11th month, November, Sir Percy felt that the idea of observing the two minute silence at that time and on that date, would give the Act of Homage more of an impact.

To his great delight he read: *"The whole World Stands to Attention."* *"Cables from every part of the world showing how the King's message had been accepted and interpreted, where printed. From the Indian jungles to Alaska, on the trains, on the ships at sea in every part of the globe where a few British were gathered together, the Two Minute Pause was observed."*

In his own words Sir Percy stated:

"I was so stunned by the news that I could not leave the hotel. An hour or two afterwards I received a cable from Lord Long of Wexhall: "Thank you, Walter Long", only then did I know that my proposal had reached the King and had been accepted and that the Cabinet knew the source."

*Later Sir Percy received the following letter from Lord Stamfordham, the King's Private secretary:
Buckingham Palace
30 January 1920.*

*"Dear Sir Percy FitzPatrick,
The King, who learns that your shortly to leave for South Africa, desires me to assure you that he ever gratefully remembers that the idea of the two-minute pause on Armistice Day was due to your initiation, a suggestion which was readily adopted and carried out with heartfelt sympathy throughout the Empire."*

*Yours truly,
Stamfordham.*

The actual "Call" of King George V, as published in the Times on 07.11.1919, reads as follows:

*The Glorious Dead
King's Call to his people
Armistice Day Observance
Two Minutes' Pause from work.*

The King invites all his people to join him in a special celebration of the anniversary of the cessation of war as set forth in the following message:

*To all my people
Buckingham Palace.*

Tuesday next, November 11, is the first anniversary of the Armistice, which stayed the world-wide carnage of the four preceding years and marked the victory of Right and Freedom. I believe that my people in every part of the Empire fervently wish to perpetuate the memory of the Great Deliverance, and of those who laid down their lives to achieve it.

To afford an opportunity for the universal expression of this feeling it is my desire and hope that at the hour when the armistice came into force, the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, there may be, for the brief space of two minutes, a complete suspension of all normal activities. During that time, except in the rare cases where this may be impracticable, all work, all sound, and all locomotion should cease, so that, in perfect silence, the thoughts of everyone, may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the Glorious Dead.

No elaborate organisation appears to be necessary. At a given signal, which can easily be arranged to suit the circumstance of each locality, I believe that we shall all gladly interrupt our business and pleasure, whatever it may be, and unite in this simple service of Silent Remembrance.

George R 1

On 11 November 1919, the first Armistice Day Ceremony was observed. As Big Ben, the huge clock in the tower of the Houses of Parliament in London, struck 11:00 everyone observed the first "Two Minute's Silence".

Manchester Guardian.

Sir Percy personally attended the next Armistice Day Ceremony in London and was deeply moved by the solemnity of the two-minutes

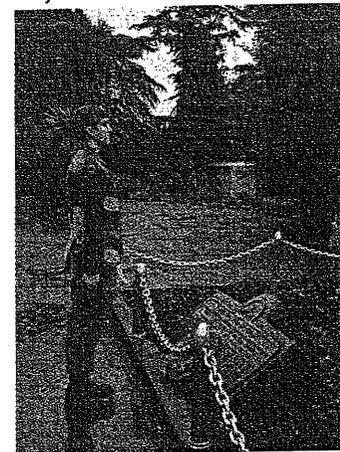
pause. He wrote:

"The result far outstrips anything that imagination pictured at the time. I could not help feeling that it is one of the greatest rewards that has ever come to anyone. To have been of that much service is a privilege which one can feel so deeply, as to be utterly content that no one should know to whom the thought was due.

I must acknowledge the feeling of being quite alone in that immense multitude, absolutely apart, isolated, as the only person in the world who was conscious at the moment that in a measure THIS WAS HIS WORK."



The two minute mid-day pause in Cape Town 14 December 1918. Cape Town was the first city in the world to observe the dedicated stillness of a reverent two minute pause. To date, the noon-day gun booms from Signal Hill, Cape Town, as a daily reminder.



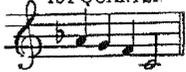
A two minute pause being observed in front of the name of Maj Nugent FitzPatrick at the Zoo Gardens, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Printed as a token of gratitude to her fallen
by the South African National Army.
Copyright 1997

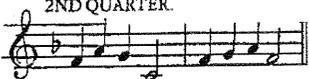
J.C. Abrahams. Tannie Mossie

THE WESTMINSTER CHIMES.

1ST QUARTER



2ND QUARTER



3RD QUARTER.



HOUR



IX

All through this hour Lord, be my guide And by Thy power



No foot shall slide

The chime was taken from the fifth bar of Handel's aria from the *Messiah*: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."



Major Nugent FitzPatrick, Sir Percy's eldest son and heir who was killed by a stray shell at Beaumont, France, while serving with the South African Heavy Artillery in World War I. He died on December 14, 1917.

A DEBT OF HONOUR

Two Minute Pause of Remembrance
11:00 on 11th November

The hour bell in the clock tower at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London, is also known as Big Ben. There are also four quarter bells and together they ring out the world famous tune called the Westminster Chime. The tune was written by Handel. It was first heard in 1859 but since 11:00 on 11th November 1919 this same world famous tune has been associated with the two minute pause of Remembrance for all fallen soldiers. This time and date were chosen because punctually at 11:00 on the 11th of the 11th month, November, 1918; fighting stopped, thus bringing an end to the hostilities of the First World War. The death of Major Percy Nugent George FitzPatrick, a South African soldier was the inspiration behind the request for the annual two minute pause at 11:00 on 11th November, for all fallen soldiers. Sir Percy FitzPatrick, his father, submitted the suggestion to King George V who accepted and implemented the idea.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

IN FLANDERS FIELDS the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields:

JOHN MCCRAE
(A Canadian Soldier)

REPLY TO "IN FLANDERS FIELDS"

OH! SLEEP in peace where poppies grow;
The torch your falling hands let go
Was caught by us, again held high,
A beacon light in Flanders sky
That dims the stars to those below,
You are our dead, you held the foe,
And ere the poppies cease to blow,
We'll prove our faith in you who lie
In Flanders Fields.

JOHN MITCHELL

11:00 on the 11th November
A two minute pause of
Remembrance
as a Debt of Honour



"I am the Unknown Soldier
And maybe I died in vain,
But if I were alive and my country called,
I'd do it all over again."

BILLY ROSE
(An American Soldier)



BIG BEN LONDON AT 11:00