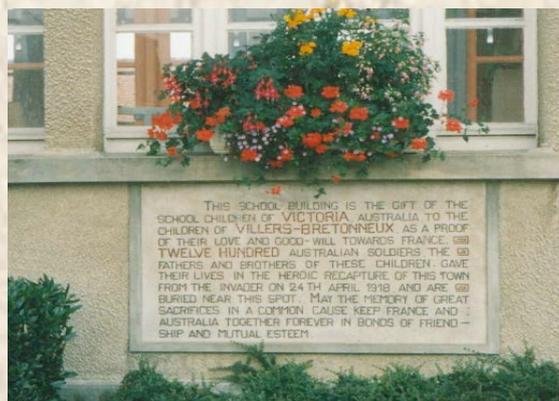


FOOD FOR THOUGHT

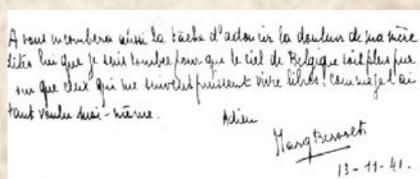
Notice on the wall of the primary school a Villers-Bretonneux (Somme), France

This school building is the gift of the school children of VICTORIA, Australia, to the children of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX as a proof of their love and good-will towards France. 1.200 Australian soldiers, the fathers and brothers of these children, gave their lives in the heroic recapture of this town from the invader on 24 th April, 1918, and are buried near this spot. May the memory of great sacrifices in a common cause keep France and Australia together forever in bonds of friendship and mutual esteem.



Moral testament of Marguerite Bervoets, Belgian Resistance fighter, executed by decapitation in Wolfenbüttel on 7 August, 1944

“I have perished for testifying that one can love life madly and simultaneously agree to a necessary death ... Tell her (my mother) that I have fallen for the Belgian skies shall become purer, for those that follow me could live freely as I have wished it so much myself... It is for persons like you that my death is completely dedicated, for people who can relive and build-up again. And I think about your children who will be free tomorrow...”



A vous m'embrasse ainsi le cœur d'adieu en la douleur de ma mère.
Savoir bien que je suis tombée pour que le ciel de Belgique soit plus bleu
car que bien que les épreuves fussent vives et dures! Mais n'ajoute
rien à votre deuil - hélas.
Adieu
Marguerite
13-11-41.



Fernand Strubbe, Belgian Résistance fighter, lieutenant of the Intelligence and Action Services.

... They were all ordinary people like the ones we meet every day. Circumstances gave them suddenly the opportunity to realise something out of the ordinary. On that moment, every one had to make up his mind for oneself. Then you had to decide if it was serious according to the values that were presented to you and which you had made yours....

When you read, next to a name: “shot” or “beheaded” or “hanged” or “died in a concentration camp”, think then of the mother, the father, the brothers and sisters, the wife

or the husband, the children. Many of the people arrested were never seen any more. Some companions who came back could mention where they had seen the one or the other for the last time.

Every day for the rest of their life, the next of kin have thought about that dear person, asking themselves what his or her suffering had been and what had happened to him or her. The next of kin are, more than others, aware of meaning of moral suffering, hope and despair.

They also know better what the other ones go through. Because there is a abyss between those who suffer and those who have never suffered. Just as there is an unbridgeable distance between those who have engaged themselves one day and people who always remained on the side.

Extract from the book : "Geheime Oorlog 1940-1945 – De Inlichtings- en Actiediensten in België", pages 8 et 9, published by Uitgeverij Lannoo nv, Tielt (Belgium) whom we thank for their kind permission to reproduce this text.

***Hymn sung by all the inmates of the prison when Danish Resistants
were taken away to execution in 1940-1945.
It is still sung today at any commemoration of the Fallen.***

Altid freydig når du går
Veien Gud tør kende
selv om du til målet når,
først ved verdens ende.

Aldrig raed før mørkrets magt
stjernerne vil lyse.
med et fadervor i pagt
skal du aldrig gyse

Fanerne sænkes.

Kæmp før allt, vad du har kær,
dø, om så det gælde,
da er livet ej så svært,
døden ikke heller.

Always serene when you tread
The road known by God,
Even if you only reach the goal
At the end of the world.

Never frightened by the dark powers
Of the night; the stars are shining.
With the Lord's Prayer
You will never recede.

Lowering of the flags.

Fight for everything you cherish,
Die if necessary,
Then life is not so difficult
And neither is Death.

Extract from the speech by André Malraux on the occasion of the reception of the ashes of Jean Moulin at the Panthéon in Paris

... Enter here, Jean Moulin, with your terrible procession. With those who died in the cellars without having talked, as you yourself; and even, which maybe is even worse, having talked; with all the striped and shaven inmates of the concentration camps, with the last stumbling body of the horrible lines of Night and Mist, finally tumbling down under the butts of the guns; with the 8.000 French women who never returned from the prisons, with the last woman fallen in Ravensbrück because she had sheltered one of ours. Enter, with the multitude born from the shadow and disappeared with it – our brethren in the order of the Night ...

Chrysalis

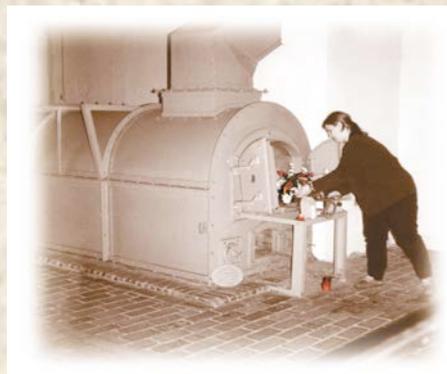
I shall never be the same any more.
A black and white film passes and passes again before my eyes.
Ravensbrück, where life has ceased to exist, where the air has the taste of ashes; the ashes of our grandmothers, mothers and children who disappeared by the thousands.

I shall never be the same any more.
With you, I went down into the abyss of suffering. I went hand in hand with immeasurable horror and dishumanisation and its atrocities; I saw the yellow faces, the dead souls.

No, I shall never be the same any more.
You have given me back joy and hope in the capable to sacrifice one's life for an idéal.
You have transformed my life, my well-being - my most precious gifts.

I owe my freedom to you.

To live.



Written by Françoise Desmaré, 17 years of age, after her visit to the concentration camp Ravensbrück in 1999, accompanied by Belgian ladies former political prisoners there.

With the gracious permission of the Centre technique et pédagogique de l'Enseignement de la Communauté Française. Route de Bavay 70, B-7080 Frameries. Tel : +32-65-66 73 22. Fax +32-65-66 14 21. E-mail : ctp.frameries@restode.cfwb.be

Extract from the letter from a French soldier to his wife

The evening before yesterday, in the blue ink of the night, I was walking on earth the Road of the Cross of Beyond. It was the ghastly scattering of the cemetery without cover, without crosses, abandoned by men, the disseminated layers of uncountable corpses, without burial, the naked charnel-house in the crawling of maggots and in the shell-holes, the shells falling down continuously. More than a thousand contorted corpses, hacked into pieces, catted the one on the other...

I was trailing through the night towards the front-lines, with my burden of pieces on my back; I was nearly fainting away: that taste, that smell in my mouth, in my nostrils; the enemy and Frenchmen sympathising in a last grin, in the embrace of violated nudities, intermingled, on that plain of haunted folly, in that abyss crossed by clamors and squalls.

The German and the Frenchman rotting the one into the other, without having the slicest chance ever to be buried by fraternal or pious hands.

To go and collect them results only in adding one's own corpse in that ever open pit, because war is insatiable... Every night, we walk along that petrified hell where the specters are fluttering, our heart turned upside down, holding our nose, shriveling our lips. But the worse is that we eat after coming back, past midnight, the only meal in a whole day with the taste of corpses still in our mouth; we eat blindly in the darkness...

Ah! It does not flow easily and the food is cold, congealed, not very tempting. Early in the morning, waking up with a start, there was the anguishing clearing for action, the alarm-bell, the alert ...

Your Maurice

From "Paroles de Poilus", by kind permission of Editions Tallandier in Paris (1998).

Account of deed for the awarding of the Victoria Cross and Bar to Captain Noel Godfrey Chavasse, Royal Army Medical Corps:

On 9 August 1946, at Guillemont, France, Captain Chavasse attended to the wounded all day under heavy fire, frequently in view of the enemy, and during the night he continued searching for wounded in front of the enemy's lines. Next day, under heavy shell fire he and a stretcher bearer carried an urgent case 500 yards to safety, being wounded himself during the journey. The same night, with 20 volunteers, he rescued three wounded men from a shell-hole 36 yards from enemy trenches, buried the bodies of two officers and collected many identity discs. Altogether he saved the lives of some 20 wounded men.

BAR: During the period 31 July to 2 August 1917, at Wieltje, Belgium, Captain Chavasse, although severely wounded early in the action while carrying a wounded officer to the dressing station, refused to leave his post

and in addition to his normal duties, went out repeatedly under heavy fire to attend the wounded. During this time, although practically without food, worn with fatigue and faint from his wound, he helped to carry in badly wounded men, being instrumental in saving many who would otherwise have died under the bad weather conditions.

Captain Chavasse subsequently died of his wounds.

Captain Chavasse, Royal Army Medical Corps, VC & Bar, is buried in Brandhoek New cemetery, a few kilometers from Ieper (Ypres), Belgium.

Helen Thomas, on her husband's last night before leaving for France.

"I sit and stare stupidly at his luggage by the wall. He takes out his prismatic compass and explains it to me, but I cannot see, and when a tear drops on to it he just shuts it up and puts it away.

Then he takes a book out of his pocket. You see, your Shakespeare's Sonnets is already where it will always be. Shall I read you some?

He reads one or two to me. His face is grey and his mouth trembles, but his voice is quiet and steady. And soon I slip to the floor and sit between his knees, and while he reads his hand falls over my shoulder and I hold it with mine.

"Shall I undress you by this lovely fire and carry you upstairs in my khaki overcoat?" So he undoes my things, and I slip out of them; then he takes the pins out of my hair, and we laugh at ourselves for behaving as we often do, like young lovers ... "I hide my face on his knee, and all my tears so long kept back come convulsively.

I cannot stop crying. My body is torn with terrible sobs. I am engulfed in this despair like a drowning man by the sea.

My mind is incapable of thought ... "So we lay, all night, sometimes talking of our love and all that had been, and of the children, and what had been amiss and what right. We knew the best was that there had never been untruth between us.

We knew all of other, and it was right. So talking and crying and loving in each other's arms we fell asleep as the cold reflected light of the snow crept through the frost covered windows."

Helen Thomas's husband was killed in 1916. This letter is on display in the showcase "British Recruitment" room 2 of the HISTORIAL DE LA GRANDE GUERRE in Péronne, Somme, France (by kind permission of the HISTORIAL).

***Jeroen Brouwers, Dutch internee
in a Japanese concentration camp in Indonesia.***

The one who shuts his eyes for the past,
Is blind for the present and for the coming times.
Intolerance and prejudice pave the way for sudden persecution.
Because of a different color of skin,
Because one is left-handed, because one can read,
And even because of a reason which remains untold.



***Last verse of the poem “The best ones” by Nordahl Grieg,
Norwegian author, dramatist and journalist, written in September 1942.***

De öket det livet de gikk fra,
De spøker I nye menn.
Pa deres grav skal skrives:
De beste blir alltid igjen.

They enriched the life they left,
They who will be reborn.
On their grave one will write:
The best ones always rise again.

Nordahl Grieg died on 2 December, 1943, in a bomber plane shot down during an air raid over Berlin.

Professor Torgny Segerstedt, editor-in-chief of the Swedish daily « Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning » during WWII

De fria fåglarna plöja sin väg genom rymden.
Många av dem nå kanske ej sitt fjärran mål.
Stor sak I det : de dör fria.

The free birds plough their way through space.
Many might never reach their goal.
Is that so important : they die free.

51th Scottish Division Memorial, Beaumont Hamel (Somme), France

Là A'BHLAIR 'S MATH NA CàIRDEAN

In battle, it is good to have friends ...



Iona War Memorial, Scotland

BITHIDH AN AINM BUAN CU SUTHAIN SIOR

In memory of those young loved lamented here
who died in their country's service



Book of Revelations, 21, 4

The Lord will be with them;
He will wipe every tear from their eyes
and death shall not exist any more.

SUMMARY

of the delivery of worn textile material originatings from the camps
of Lublin and Auschwitz following the order of the General Direction Economy

Ministry of Economic Affairs from the Reich

Men, old garment, without underwear	97.000 garment
Women, old garment, without underwear	76.000 garment
Women, silk underwear	89.000 garment
Total	34 wagons

Rags	2.700.000 kg	400 wagons
Bed springs	270.000 kg	130 wagons
Women's hair	3.000 kg	1 wagon
Old material	19.000 kg	5 wagons
Total	2.992.000 kg	536 wagons

Total **570 wagons**

Average of German Population

<u>Men's wear</u>		<u>Children's wear</u>	
Coats	99.000 pieces	Coats	15.000 pieces
Skirts	57.000 pieces	Boys' skirts	11.000 pieces
Jackets	27.000 pieces	Boys' shorts	5.000 pieces
Shorts	62.000 pieces	Shirts	3.000 pieces
Caleçons	38.000 pieces	Scarves	4.000 pieces
Shirts	132.000 pieces	Sweaters	1.000 pieces
Sweaters	9.000 pieces	Knickers	1.000 pieces
Scarves	2.000 pieces	Girls wear	9.000 pieces
Pijamas	6.000 pieces	Girls' shirts	5.000 pieces
Collars	10.000 pieces	Aprons	2.000 pieces
Gloves	2.000 pairs	Shorts	5.000 pieces
Stockings	10.000 pairs	Stockings	10.000 pairs
Shoes	31.000 pairs	Shoes	22.000 pairs
<u>Women's wear</u>		<u>Sheets etc.</u>	
Coats	155.000 pieces	Duvet covers	37.000 pieces
Garment	119.000 pieces	Bed sheets	46.000 pieces
Jackets	26.000 pieces	Pillows	75.000 pieces
Skirts	30.000 pieces	Dishtowels	27.000 pieces
Shirts	125.000 pieces	Handkerchiefs	135.000 pieces
Blouses	30.000 pieces	Towels	100.000 pieces
Sweaters	60.000 pieces	Table-cloths	11.000 pieces
Knickers	49.000 pieces	Napkins	8.000 pieces
Shorts	60.000 pieces	Woolen towels	6.000 pieces
Pijamas	27.000 pieces	Ties	25.000 pieces
Aprons	36.000 pieces	Rubber shoes and boots	24.000 pairs
Bras	25.000 pieces	Berets	9.000 pièces
Underwear	22.000 pieces		
Foulards	85.000 pieces		
Shoes	111.000 pairs		

Together **211 wagons**