

CALAIS

MEMORIAL TO GREEN JACKETS

Close where the steamer's deck, the Green Jackets honour their dead, riflemen who fell holding Calais so that the British Army might escape through Dunkirk; and the man who won the victory their sacrifice made possible pays his tribute. Through four long days four thousand men - a thousand of them French - held the road open. Today France adds her homage as the King's brother comes to unveil the simple cross of stone; and assisting at the dedication is a padre who was with the riflemen till silence at last fell on Calais and their sacrifice was made.

Honour the King's Royal Rifles; the Rifle Brigade; the Queen Victoria Rifles and those who stood with them, a handful who withstood an armoured multitude. Here, with the dead of two great wars, lie the riflemen who fell within sight of their homeland. In the great company of the dead all are equal and loving eyes must search, pausing in thought for the lonely ones whom none can claim.

The little ceremony ends as a great soldier watches - Wilson of Libya, who knows well how much Britain asks of her men. Hold firm, she asked, and they stood. And while there was need, there was 'always to be seen just a little strip of green on the left of the thin red line.'