

A black bird, possibly a crow or raven, is shown in mid-flight, wings spread wide, against a background of a hazy, mountainous landscape under a cloudy sky. The bird is positioned on the right side of the frame, flying towards the left.

5:47

Fruzsina Pittner
Iain Donald







Hmmm...

I do have
a story I wanted
to tell you.


Hah! Knew it!



It actually happened
very close to where
I grew up




Although
I was only a wee
boy back then



So, what kind of
story is this?

A true one



Some of it is true,
anyway.

5:47

Art by Fruzsina Pittner
Produced by Dr. Iain Donald

WHEN THE
WAR CAME,
THEY ALL
VOLUNTEERED
TO JOIN UP



We'll be home
by Christmas,
they say!


NONE OF THEM
WANTED TO
MISS IT

I DON'T THINK
ANY OF THEM
THOUGHT THAT
THEY'D NO
COME BACK





THE MEMORIAL
WAS TO
REMEMBER
THEM




Come on
now, Ma.

THEY'D
DONE
THEIR
GRIEVING
BY THEN

NOT EVERYBODY
WAS HAPPY ABOUT
IT THOUGH.



Have you
heard folk
complaining?



They want that
deserter's name
included.

Who is it again?



Ach what
was his name...
Paul?

Peter!

Oh yes,
of course.

What a
shame.

That's not right.



You can't
have that!

WHAT WOULD
THE WORLD
BECOME



IF COWARDS



AND DESERTERS





Move it,
Peter!



Comin', comin'.

WERE TO BE
CELEBRATED



I'm comin'



Ah, mmmm


You're right,
of course.

Of course
none of those on the
committee have actually
been in there.




Heck, most who
had, didnae want to
remember.



A hand with a green sleeve holds a glass of milk. The background consists of vertical blue and white stripes. A speech bubble is positioned to the left of the hand.

Not everyone
was willing to forget,
though.

Two birds are shown in flight against a sky filled with soft, white clouds. A large, grey speech bubble is centered in the image, overlapping the birds and the sky.

Especially not
those two.

Louie!

Louie,
have you
heard?



Johnny?
What is it?



They don't
want to put his
name on!

What?!

I'm tellin'
you!



They say he's
not fit to be
remembered



That he's
a traitor,
a disgrace!





No! Peter?

He shouldn't have
even been there!



Oi, Peter!
Move it!

REMEMBER
THE BIRDS?



Comin',
I'm comin'



Look, look!



What should we
do with them?

Smash them!


Eat them?

A close-up illustration of a hand with a red string tied around the wrist, reaching out towards a nest containing three light blue bird eggs. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape.

P.. Peter?

No, stop it!
Leave them!

Birds, birds are
special!

A large-scale illustration showing a massive flock of small birds flying in a coordinated pattern across a vast, cloudy sky. In the bottom foreground, the backs of several people's heads are visible as they watch the birds.

Watch them
swooping and swirling
as one

Like they all know
what's happening
to each other




They are
the ones who
aren't fit!

Johnny, we
can't just let
this happen.

No.



WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING.



And so
they did.

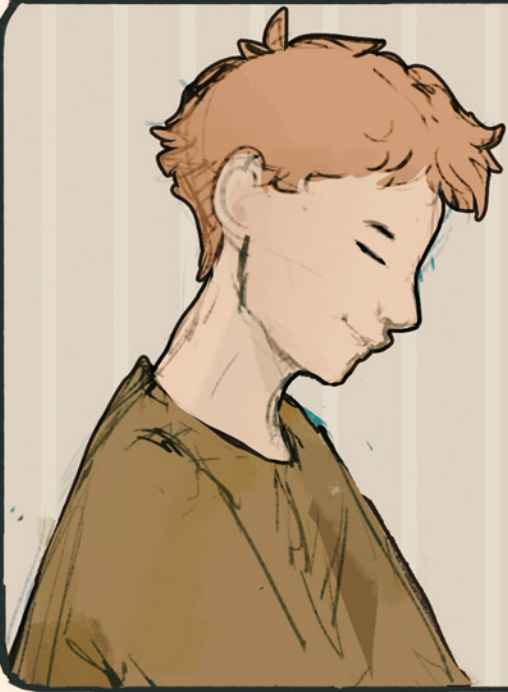


IT'S SAID
THAT THEY
STOLE
EXPLOSIVES
FROM A
NEARBY
QUARRY

AND
THREATENED
TO BLOW
UP THE
MEMORIAL
INTO THE
TAY



IF
SOMETHING
WASN'T
DONE
IN THE
MATTER.




I bet the
committee didn't
like that very much.




Folk didn't care,
not by then.

THEY GATHERED
THE WHOLE TOWN
AT BLYTH HALL



What a shameful thing...

FOR THE PUBLIC TO
DECIDE THEMSELVES




That poor lad doesn't
deserve this!


Aye!

What really
happened over
there?

If you leave
that boy's name out



You can take
my twa laddies names
off, an' all!



None of you are
fit to judge this!


He fought at
Neuve-Chapelle!

And Festurbert!

And Loos...

That was a dark
day for our boys..

THE LAD'S NAME SHOULD BE
ON THE MEMORIAL!



The committee should
either comply or resign!

Who's in favour?



That decides it then.

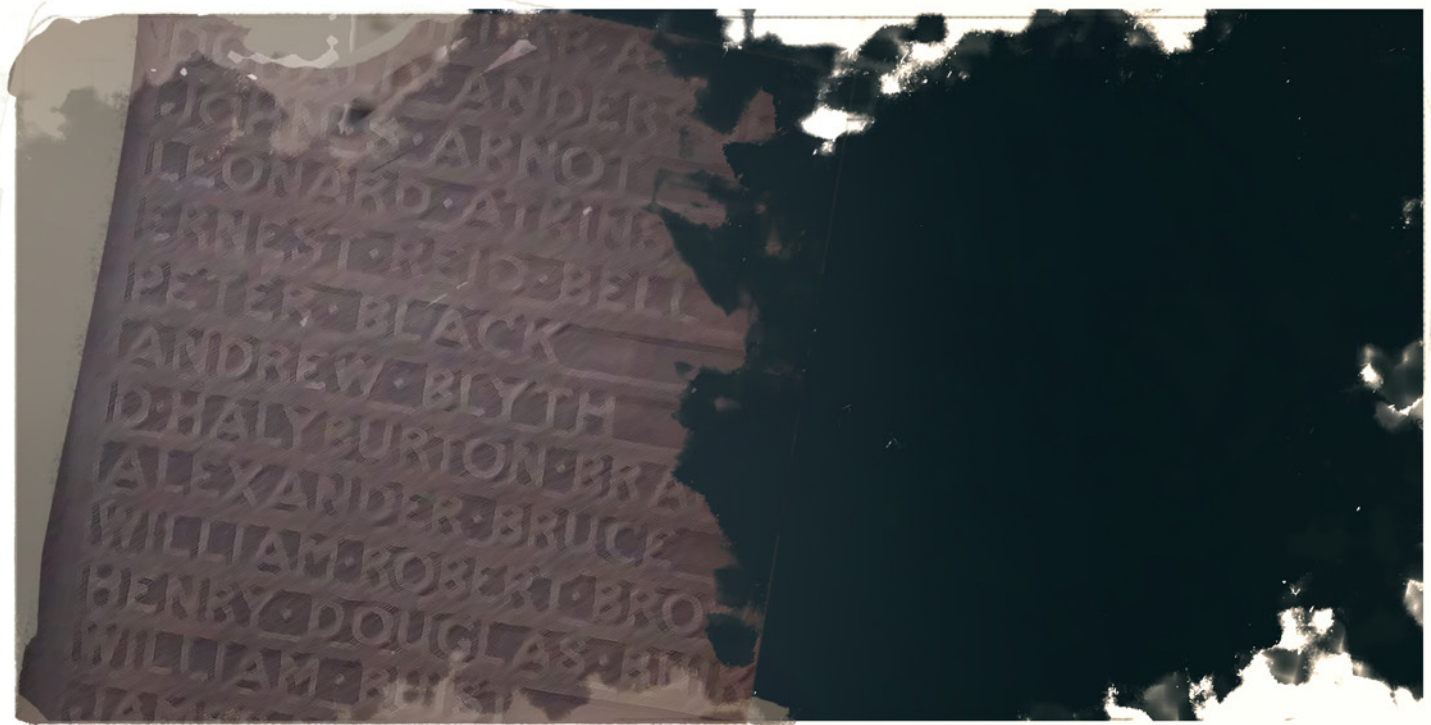
So, what
happened?



The committee
resigned.



Oh,



I'm glad.



Take care
of yourself
over there,
okay?



Of course!




Always do!

HONOUR THOSE WHO HAVE FOUGHT



THE COWARD,
THE BRAVE,
THE HURT





Don't forget to
call your mother
on your way!

I won't,
I won't!



I promise!

FOR THEY
ARE PEOPLE

LIKE YOU,

LIKE ME.



//THE END

At 5:47am on the 18 September 1916 Private Peter Black was executed for desertion. He was one of some 200,000 men who were court-martialled during the war: One of 20,000 convicted of an offence that carried the death penalty. One of 3,000 that received it and one of only 346 where it was carried out. Ninety years later in 2006 Private Black was one of 306 who were finally pardoned and are now commemorated by the Shot at Dawn Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum.

At a time where the stigma of being labelled a coward greatly affected the families and could disrupt communities, Black was commemorated not just once but twice. In 1920 his name was engraved onto the memorial at the Schoolhouse in Flisk. A few years later the debate over whether his name should be engraved on the Newport-on-Tay memorial led to several heated public meetings and an alleged threat to blow the monument up into the Tay if his name wasn't included. His contribution and his place on the memorial was championed by his friends and other veterans who returned. The community rallied and supported to defend one of their own for what he and many like him gave up when they volunteered in August 1914.