

I have been going to Remembrance Sunday services since I was a Brownie and although you begin to understand their importance the older you get, the act of participation opens up young eyes and minds to a time in our history that no text book can ever really bring alive. This year in particular I, like thousands of others, have felt rather affected by remembrance because of the centenary anniversary of World War 1. The commemoration events have been as extraordinary as they have been varied. The installation of the ceramic poppies at the Tower of London have not only captured the world's attention but the money raised will go to good causes that support our armed services personnel.

As part of the awareness raising work by the War Graves Commission I toured one of our local cemeteries where I saw well preserved headstones of fallen soldiers, many of whom were themselves from our neighbourhood. Some were so young. It saddens me to think that boys, because that is what they were, the same age as my nephew, went to the battlefield perhaps with a youthful sense of adventure but patriotic pride and never returned. The husbands and fathers that never were.

I have no real complaints about my education but the one regret I have is that we never learnt about World War 1 or 2. As important as the Tudors were or the Renaissance was, in terms of fully understanding why or how we should value our country and our freedom, then giving children the gift of learning and appreciating the sacrifices young men took to defend them is in my view more important.

On Sunday, I will remember all those who have fallen in conflict and those who have suffered life changing injuries, like those I met on the Royal British Legion charity expedition earlier this year. So as I remember them, I will also give thanks to the many organisations, charities and professionals who support them. We will never forget.