

Every November we remember those who laid down their lives to defend our country and to commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women in two World Wars and subsequent conflicts. As every child is rightly taught, the date of Remembrance Sunday is to coincide with the anniversary of Armistice Day, the day the First World War ended. But next year will be the centenary of the start of the First World War, a conflict in which 9 million people died but changed global politics forever.

Kent, with its geography and strategic placement of military resource, played an important part in both World Wars but it is telling how vital it was by the number of our conscripted men, as they would all have been a 100 years ago, are buried in our local church yards. In my own constituency there are 380 World War I Commonwealth War Graves and a further 135 World War II Graves. This will in part be from the legacy of the Dockyard and the Royal Engineers but it was also the farmers, the millers, the industrial workers who left home to fight for King and Country.

The strong association between the small villages, towns and cities that make up our great county and their forefathers who died leaving their name etched with pride on our memorials remains and responsibility lies with us, as each veteran passes, to remember.

This strength of feeling and responsibility will live on in “Frontline Kent” and for me personally I felt enormous pride when I went to pick up my wreaths from the Royal British Legion Industries for this Remembrance Sunday because each and every wreath laid by Members of Parliament up and down the country will have been made in, and distributed from Aylesford. We will never forget.