

# VAISHALI MAHILA MAHAVIDYALAYA HAJIPUR, VAISHALI

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
Takes you to–



# Strange Meeting

Wilfrid Owen



## THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

ON 4TH NOVEMBER 1918, THE BRITISH 32ND DIVISION  
CROSSED THE SAMBRE-OISE CANAL HERE, AT ORS,  
IN THE FACE OF STRONG OPPOSITION. DURING THE  
ASSAULT FOUR VCS WERE WON. AMONG THE  
CASUALTIES WAS THE POET, LIEUTENANT WILFRED  
OWEN MC. 2ND BATTALION MANCHESTER REGIMENT,  
WHO WAS KILLED ON THE TOWPATH ON THIS SIDE  
OF THE CANAL ABOUT ONE KILOMETRE TO THE  
NORTH OF THE BRIDGE.

CETTE PLAQUE COMMEMORE LA TRAVERSEE  
VICTORIEUSE DE CE CANAL PAR L'ARMEE  
BRITANNIQUE LE 4 NOVEMBRE 1918. PARMIS  
CEUX QUI Y LAISSERENT LEUR VIE SE  
TROUVAIT LE POETE WILFRED OWEN.

"LET MY DEATH BE MEMORIED ON THIS DISC,  
WEAR IT, SWEET FRIEND, INSCRIBE NO DATE NOR DEED,  
BUT LET THY HEART-BEAT KISS IT NIGHT AND DAY,  
UNTIL THE NAME GROW VAGUE AND WEAR AWAY."  
(WITH AN IDENTITY DISC)

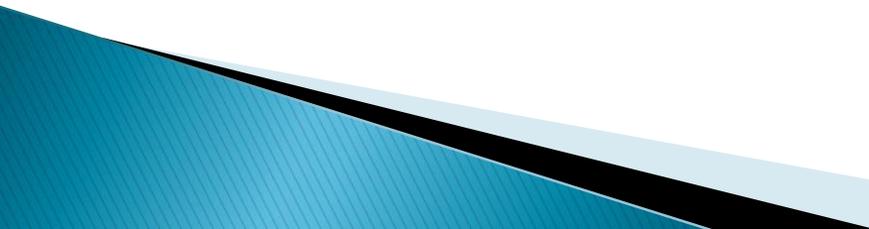
# STRANGE MEETING

–Wilfred Owen

- ▶ It seemed that out of battle I escaped
- ▶ Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
- ▶ Through granites which titanic wars had groined.
- ▶
- ▶ Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
- ▶ Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
- ▶ Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
- ▶ With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
- ▶ Lifting distressful hands, as if to bless.
- ▶ And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,—
- ▶ By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.

- ▶ With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained;
  - ▶ Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
  - ▶ And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.
  - ▶ “Strange friend,” I said, “here is no cause to mourn.”
  - ▶ “None,” said that other, “save the undone years,
  - ▶ The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
  - ▶ Was my life also; I went hunting wild
- 

- ▶ After the wildest beauty in the world,
  - ▶ Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
  - ▶ But mocks the steady running of the hour,
  - ▶ And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
  - ▶ For by my glee might many men have laughed,
  - ▶ And of my weeping something had been left,
  - ▶ Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
  - ▶ The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
- 

- ▶ Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
  - ▶ Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
  - ▶ They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress.
  - ▶ None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
  - ▶ Courage was mine, and I had mystery;
  - ▶ Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery:
  - ▶ To miss the march of this retreating world
  - ▶ Into vain citadels that are not walled.
- 

- ▶ Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels,
  - ▶ I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
  - ▶ Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
  - ▶ I would have poured my spirit without stint
  - ▶ But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.
  - ▶ Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
- 

- ▶ “I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
  - ▶ I knew you in this dark: for so you frowned
  - ▶ Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
  - ▶ I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
  - ▶ Let us sleep now. . . .”
- 

- ▶ 1) Strange Meeting was written in 1918 and stands in the forefront of Owen's achievement.
- ▶ 2) The quote 'I'm the enemy you killed my friend' is to be found on Owen's Memorial in Shrewsbury.
- ▶ 3) a) The poem is themed on war.
- ▶ b) Although the end of the war had seemed no more in sight, scholars assumed that.
- ▶ c) Neither side had enmity with each other at least not the soldier.
- ▶ d) Both the German & English soldier suffered the same disease, same terrible conditions and ironically were **treated at the same hospital**.
- ▶ e) Surprisingly both sides used to have football matches also.



WILFRED

OWEN



- ▶ 4)a)The title it seems,Owen has taken from Shelley's book 'The revolt of Islam'.
- ▶ b)Here Shelley says about a soldier who escapes, reaches hell, and meets his enemy there.
- ▶ c)For Owen, soldier meant war. Here the soldier escapes the battle down the tunnel.
- ▶ d)The tunnel is full of soldiers lying dead.
- ▶ e)The 'encumbered, sleepers' implies a peaceful passion.
- ▶ f)The poet wakes up one of the sleepers. Owen normally wrote about injuries.
- ▶ g)But in this poem there is no bloodshed.
- ▶ h)'Strange Meeting' is one of the most silent poems of Owen.

- ▶ i) There is no humming guns, no whistling bombs, only the silence of the dead.
- ▶ j) But still it is a war poem.
- ▶ k) In third stanza we get to know about the loss of that the soldier felt.
- ▶ k) He knew very well there is no glory in dying.
- ▶ l) Only 'pity of war' and the pity is the emotion that is most acutely felt in the stanza.
- ▶ 5) a) In the last stanza, the speaker admits to the listener that he is of 'the enemy you killed, my friend'.
- ▶ b) They recognise each other.
- ▶ c) There is no animosity on either side, though they were from different groups.

- ▶ d) It seems all the anger, venom and violence was last with the war.
  - ▶ e) In the Keatsian mood the poem ends where the poet invites his companion to sleep with him
  - ▶ f) Both have died. They forgot everything.
  - ▶ g) They know that war solves no problem.
  - ▶ h) Nothing can be resolved war still carries on, and the people will continue to die.
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**HOPE YOU  
UNDERSTOOD AND  
ENJOYED**

**THANK YOU**