

THE YOUNG DEAD SOLDIERS DO NOT SPEAK

Nevertheless they are heard in the still houses: who has not heard them?

They have a silence that speaks for them at night and when the clock counts.

They say, We were young. We have died. Remember us.

They say, We have done what we could but until it is finished it is not done.

They say, We have given our lives but until it is finished no one can know what our lives gave.

They say, Our deaths are not ours: they are yours: they will mean what you make them.

They say, Whether our lives and our deaths were for peace and a new hope or for nothing we cannot say: it is you who must say this.

They say, We leave you our deaths: give them their meaning: given them an end to the war and a true peace: give them a victory that ends the war and a peace afterwards: give them their meaning.

We were young, they say. We have died. Remember us.

[This text will be used by the Treasury Department. It will be published anonymously. I should appreciate it if it were treated as a private document until that time. Archibald MacLeish]