Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

What Are We Fighting For? New Poems About War

Written by

Roger Stevens & Brian Moses

Illustrated by

Nicola L. Robinson

Published by

Macmillan Children's Books

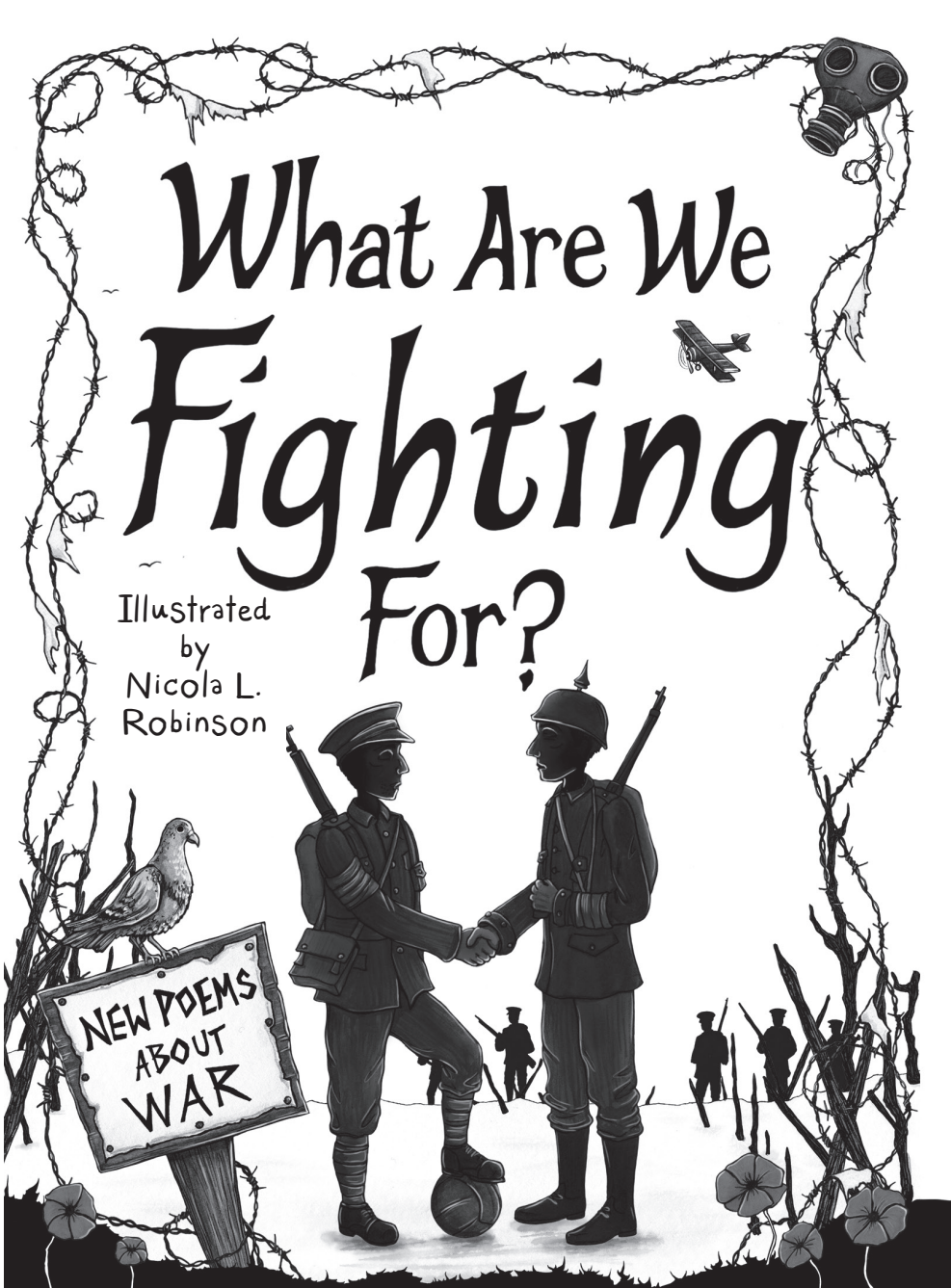
All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

What Are We Fighting For?

Illustrated by Nicola L. Robinson



BRIAN MOSES AND ROGER STEVENS

MACMILLAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS



First published 2014 by Macmillan Children's Books
a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited
20 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RR
Basingstoke and Oxford
Associated companies throughout the world
www.panmacmillan.com

ISBN 978-1-4472-4861-3

Text copyright © Brian Moses and Roger Stevens 2014
Ilustrations copyright © Nicola L. Robinson 2014

The right of Brian Moses, Roger Stevens and Nicola L. Robinson to be identified as the authors and illustrator of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the publisher. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

To the memory of both my father, Harry Moses, whose 'During the war . . .' stories I often failed to appreciate as a child, and my father-in-law, John Joseph Ford, who, at fifteen years old, ran away from home to join the army.

(BM)

For my father, Tom Stevens, who drove a tank in the Second World War and told me the story of tanks passing by, and my father-in-law, Roy Pryor, who was in the Royal Army Medical Corps and was captured at Dunkirk, and who still tells me what life was like as a prisoner of war.

(RS)

Contents

The First World War		**1**
The Great War	*Roger Stevens*	2
The Angels of Mons	*Brian Moses*	3
Smile Please	*Roger Stevens*	4
The General's Message on the Morning of Battle	*Brian Moses*	5
Christmas Truce	*Brian Moses*	7
Home by Christmas	*Brian Moses*	9
Big Bertha	*Roger Stevens*	11
Dear Mum	*Roger Stevens*	12
Goodbye Note	*Brian Moses*	13
The Colour of Your Skin	*Roger Stevens*	15
When Your Name's Not on the List	*Roger Stevens*	16
Somme	*Roger Stevens*	17
Tipperary	*Brian Moses*	18
The Nation at Home	*Brian Moses*	20
Trench Warfare	*Roger Stevens*	21
Abandoned Dog	*Brian Moses*	22
Tanks	*Roger Stevens*	24
Luke and Jessie	*Brian Moses*	25
Pals	*Brian Moses*	26
Conscientious Objector	*Roger Stevens*	28
Bravery	*Roger Stevens*	29
Pip, Squeak and Wilfred	*Roger Stevens*	30
Cenotaph	*Roger Stevens*	32

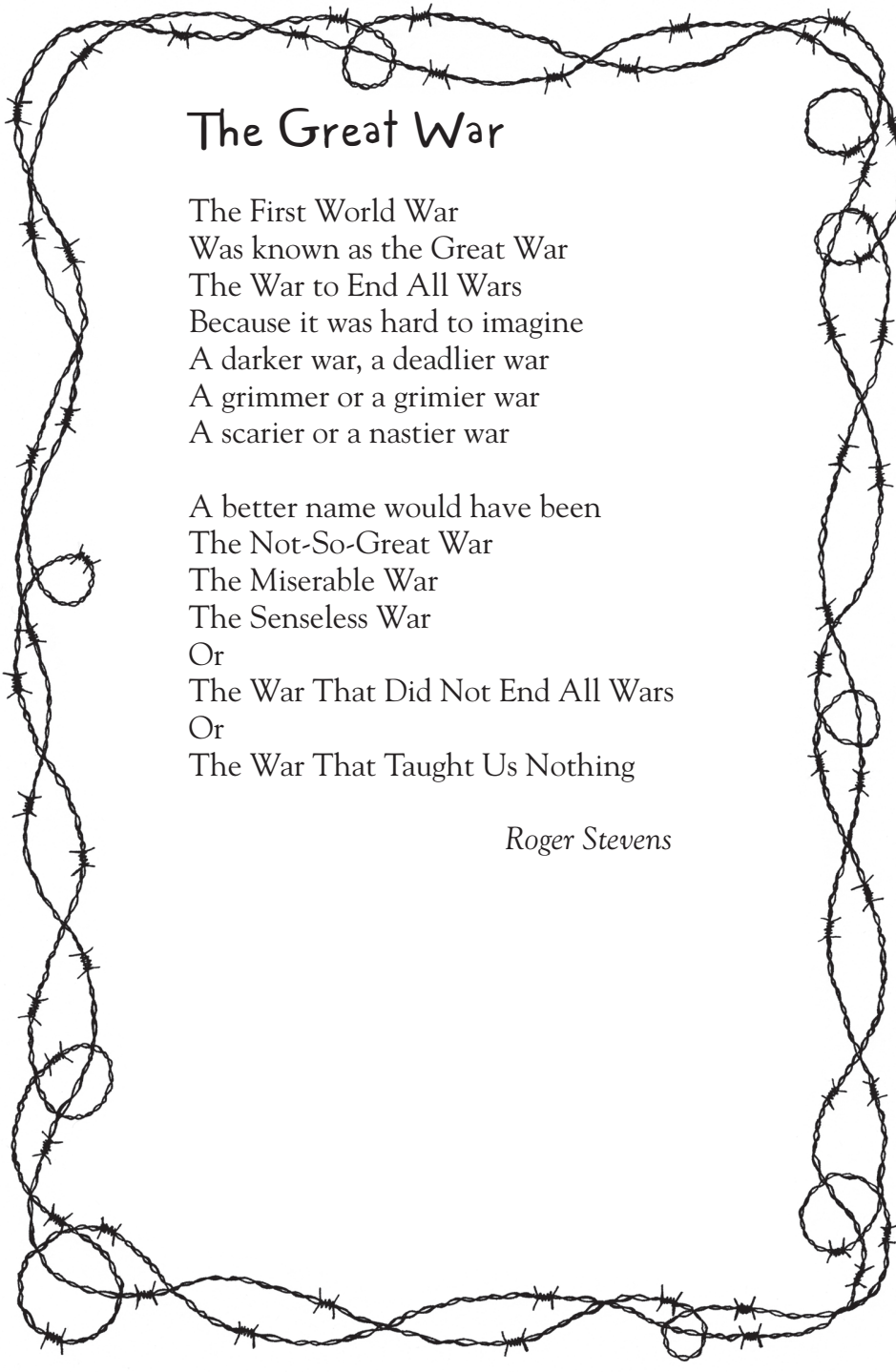
The Second World War 33
3rd September 1939 *Brian Moses* 34
Evacuation *Roger Stevens* 36
Mollie *Brian Moses* 37
Letter from Two Elderly Ladies Who Volunteered to Do Their Bit and Help the War Effort by Taking in Evacuees *Brian Moses* 39
Another War *Brian Moses* 41
Rude Noises *Brian Moses* 43
No Surrender *Brian Moses* 45
Photograph *Roger Stevens* 46
The Little Ships *Brian Moses* 47
Safe *Brian Moses* 48
Night after Night after Night *Brian Moses* 50
A Message to Adolf *Brian Moses* 51
Airmen *Roger Stevens* 52
Shrapnel *Brian Moses* 53
Eating Carrots *Brian Moses* 55
Learner Drivers *Roger Stevens* 57
Sweets *Brian Moses* 58
Women's Work *Roger Stevens* 60
Salvage *Brian Moses* 62
My Father's War *Brian Moses* 63
The Women's Land Army *Roger Stevens* 65
Wartime Food *Brian Moses* 67
The Animal Victoria Cross *Roger Stevens* 69
Pigeon *Roger Stevens* 70

Doodlebug	*Roger Stevens*	72
Miss Leaky Mouth	*Brian Moses*	73
A Pocketful of Soil	*Roger Stevens*	74
Carrots	*Brian Moses*	76
Subterfuge	*Roger Stevens*	78
VE Day	*Brian Moses*	79
Shadows	*Roger Stevens*	80
What Are We Fighting For?		**81**
The War Factor	*Roger Stevens*	82
Don't You Know There's a War on?	*Brian Moses*	84
Missiles in Cuba	*Brian Moses*	86
Vietnam Veterans' Memorial	*Roger Stevens*	88
Sniper	*Roger Stevens*	89
Hide-and-Seek	*Roger Stevens*	90
The War on Terror	*Roger Stevens*	91
Deadly Duo	*Roger Stevens*	92
Escalation	*Roger Stevens*	93
The Shouting Side	*Brian Moses*	95
What Causes War?	*Roger Stevens*	97
Spoils of War	*Roger Stevens*	98
What Are We Fighting For?	*Brian Moses*	99
Index of First Lines		**101**

The First World War

'Swear by the green of the spring that you'll never forget'

Siegfried Sassoon



The Great War

The First World War
Was known as the Great War
The War to End All Wars
Because it was hard to imagine
A darker war, a deadlier war
A grimmer or a grimier war
A scarier or a nastier war

A better name would have been
The Not-So-Great War
The Miserable War
The Senseless War
Or
The War That Did Not End All Wars
Or
The War That Taught Us Nothing

Roger Stevens

The Angels of Mons

Did the British have divine protection
in the first months of the war,
and was something seen on the battlefield
that had never been seen before?

Was there really an army of angels
when the British thought they were beat?
Were there shining figures among the clouds
that protected the British retreat?

Was the German cavalry stopped in its tracks
as the horses refused to advance?
And was it a supernatural sight
that gave the British a chance?



Some say that it was spectral figures
with flaming swords that lit the night.
Others say bowmen fired arrows
tipped with bright pulsating light.

Whatever happened soldiers escaped
when really they should have died.
And the Angels of Mons showed British troops
that Heaven could be on their side.

Brian Moses

Some British soldiers claimed to have seen visions in the sky while retreating after the Battle of Mons, August 1914.

Smile Please



I saw some old newsreels
Of the Great War

And I saw young men
From the towns and villages of Britain
Smiling for the cameras
Smiles as wide as sunshine
Like they were going on holiday

But as the French winter set in
And the mud in the trenches
Got thicker and colder

And more of their friends died
From bullet wounds
From explosions
From poisonous gas

The young men
Wading up to their waists in freezing mud
Tending the wounded and the dying
Were no longer smiling for the cameras

I saw some old newsreels
Of the Great War
And wondered
What were we fighting for?

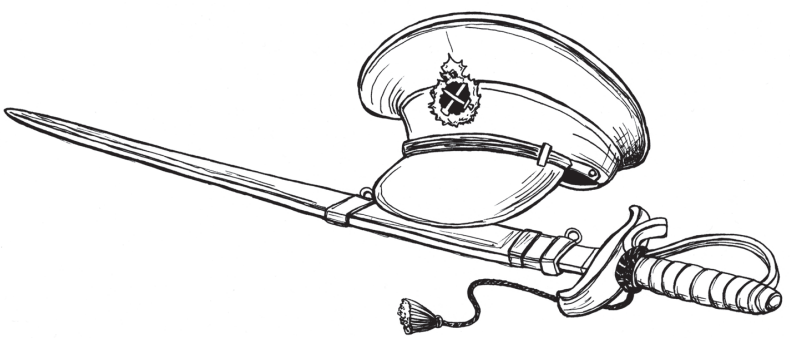
Roger Stevens

The General's Message on the Morning of Battle

It's a beautiful day for a battle,
the sun is shining bright,
birds are high in the sky,
it's a lovely day for a fight.

God is on our side, lads,
he's sure to help us win.
We're fighting the good fight,
impatient to begin.

The war will soon be over,
the war will soon be won.
We just need one more push to
help us rout the Hun.



Good luck to every one of you,
play up and play the game,
we've beaten them at football
and again we'll do the same.

So come on lads, do your duty,
it's over the top you go.
I'll be with you there in spirit
as you race to meet the foe.

Our enemy is weakened,
we're sure to have them beat.
But just in case we don't,
I'll be leading the retreat!

Brian Moses

The Hun – First World War slang for German soldiers

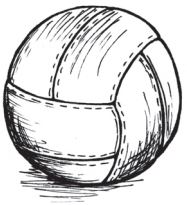
Christmas Truce

'Hey, Tommy, you like tobacco?'
'Hey, Fritz, have my bottle of beer.'
'It's Christmas Day,
goodwill to all men, so,
what are we doing here?'

And maybe it would have stopped
then and there, once Tommy and Fritz had realized
that both were ordinary men.
That both had families,
girlfriends, wives,
that both were a long, long way
from anywhere anyone
called home.

And all that sad, strange Christmas Day,
Tommy and Fritz shook hands with each other,
sang together the Christmas songs
that both discovered they knew.
They joked with each other
through gestures and signs,
in a language that needed
no words.

Then a football was found
and they played a match,
two nations in the midst
of war, the score unimportant.



And it finished with a rifle shot
that sent men back to their dugouts.
Shouts of, 'Merry Christmas, Tommy,'
and, 'Happy New Year to you, Fritz.'
'Meet you again tomorrow,
show you photos of my girl.'

But it wouldn't do
for the guns to stay silent
or to think of your enemy
as a friend.

The rules of war
are clearly defined,
and someone must win
in the end.

Brian Moses

Tommy – First World War slang for British soldiers
Fritz – First World War slang for German soldiers