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## ST. MARTIN'S DAY 2018

This year, 2018, marks the centenary of the end of the Great War. As we will all know at the 11th hour of the 11th month of 1918 the Armistice, which ended the fighting of the War, came into effect. The 11th of November is St. Martin's Day. St. Martin is the patron saint of soldiers, as well as being our Patron Saint. Therefore, this year we will not only be celebrating our Patron Saint, but will be commemorating the end of the Great War. It is because the two celebrations fall on the same day that this year we will keep St. Martin's Day, 11th November, in a special way. Set out below is how.

Sunday 11th November 2018

### St. Martin's Day

The Centenary of the Armistice of the  
Great War

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| 10:50am | All to be in Church  |
| 10:55am | The Laying of a Wreath of Poppies on the Memorial Altar  |
| 11:00am | A Toll of 11 Rings to commemorate the beginning of the Armistice followed by the Two minutes Silence |

11:02am The Commemoration Poem followed by the choir

11:05am The Parish Eucharist continues with the Gloria in excelsis deo

As 2018 marks the centenary of the Armistice bellringers throughout the world will join together in ringing the commemoration. On this day our ringers will ring a half-muffled peal in place of the Intercessions at the Parish Eucharist. This ringing will not only commemorate the Armistice but will also recall that many bell towers could not ring in 1918 because of the loss of ringers to the War. This account of the ringers of Edington Priory points to this fact.

*After the First World war the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers wrote to every tower to ask for the names of the fallen for their Great War Memorial book. The beautifully produced volume contains 1,100 names inscribed with their bell towers.*

*A letter was sent to Edington Priory Church but no reply appears to have been received and so none of Edington's ringers were listed in that first book.*

*Tucked between the chalk downs and close to Westbury's famous White Horse, the sleepy Wiltshire town of Edington is dwarfed by the massive 14th century church, Edington Priory Church which, in 1914, had 6 bells.*

The Edington ringers were at the heart of the working community. While one was a carer in a local hospital, others were farmers and the wheelwright. Four of the 6 played in the local football team. Along with tens of the village men, 6 ringers went to war.

A hundred years later Alan Regin, one of the world's leading Ringers and Steward of the Rolls of Honour, Central Council of Church Bell Ringers started to look into the names collected immediately following the war. He soon discovered that dozens were missing. Research to date has revealed 300 additional names, enough to warrant the creation of a second volume of the Great War Memorial book.

Perhaps no one reply came from Edington Priory because there was no one to write back. By the end of the war The Edington Six had died. Only one other Bell Tower in Britain - in Bamburgh Northumberland - lost as many ringers. The impact on the village would have been devastating.

Five are buried along the Western Front in Cambrai, Abbeville, Hermies Hill, Arras and Heverlee, but one, Private Leonard Drewett, the hospital worker, served in the Labour Corps and suffered increasingly with epilepsy. He died during hospital treatment in Colchester, and was brought home to Edington for burial. He is buried with a Commonwealth War Grave headstone near family graves in the peaceful Wiltshire churchyard.

