

OWEN THOMAS



KEY VOCABULARY

Inspiration

A person or thing that motivates, uplifts, or gives you the confidence to do something; someone or something that inspires.

INSPIRATION – YEAR 4

THE BIG QUESTION

How do people's beliefs impact on their life?

STICKY KNOWLEDGE – OWEN THOMAS

He was orphaned when he was 6 years old, and grew up in an orphanage. The orphanage was started by a famous Christian man, George Muller who believed that people could find God through prayer and faith, and that it was a good life to live exactly as Jesus taught in the Bible.

Young Owen grew up to be a believer as well, and always tried to do just what Jesus said.

When the first world war began, Owen remembered the teaching of Jesus: 'Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you.' He was sure it was wrong to carry a gun, to threaten others and certainly wrong to kill.

After 2 years a law was passed. Every man of the right age who was fit must join the army. If anyone refused, they would be sent to prison.

The government recognised Christian views so they set up the Non Combatant Corps. It was an army unit where men did not have to carry a gun, or try to kill enemy soldiers. They were given other work: carrying stretchers, loading and unloading supplies, digging trenches, working at the docks.

Owen decided that he would join the NCC. There were about 8000 other people in Britain who joined the NCC the year it started in 1916. That way Owen believed he could serve his country, but would not be involved in killing people, so he could follow Jesus' teaching as he understood it too.

Owen spent the next two years in France, and he never picked up a gun. Sometimes he carried stretchers in the most dangerous parts of the battlefield. That was saving lives, not threatening them.