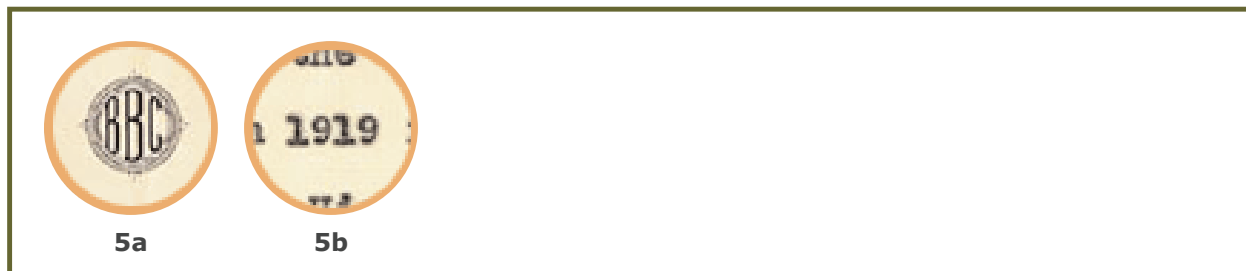




## Source 5

A letter from 1932 explaining how the idea emerged of the 2 minutes silence to mark Remembrance Day

(Catalogue ref: HO 45/20184)



### How to use this source:

Study this source carefully and see what it tells you about how British people remembered the war in the years 1919-30. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- Who came up with the idea of the two minutes silence?
- What gave him the idea?
- Do you think a period of silence is an effective way to show respect and remember the fallen?
- Will you choose this as your memorial to evaluate?



## Source 5a

29th March, 1932.

Dear Madam,

Your letter of March 23rd addressed to the Secretary of State for War in regard to the origin of the Two Minutes Silence on Armistice Day has been forwarded to this Department and I am desired by the Home Secretary to say that more than one individual has claimed to have first made the suggestion but no doubt some similar idea occurred at various times to a good many people. There is, however, little doubt that the first concrete proposal was put forward by the late Sir Percy Fitzpatrick who had been much impressed by a Three minutes Pause which was observed in South Africa every day at noon during the War, the signal being given by the 12 o'clock gun in Cape Town, while on the Rand Gold Fields the sirens and hooters in the mines were used for the purpose. On the conclusion of peace Sir Percy Fitzpatrick suggested that something of a similar nature should be adopted throughout the Empire and pointed out that the day and hour - Armistice Day, 11 o'clock, were marked out.

The first official direction for the observance



## Source 5b

of the Two Minutes Silence throughout the Empire was given  
in 1919 in a Message addressed by His Majesty The King to  
All His People.

Yours very truly,  
(Signed) H. R. BOYD.