PRAYERS FOR USE AT REMEMBRANCE TIDE

Prayers from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer which would have been familiar to Church of England/Anglican troops in WWI and WWII

A: FROM MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER

Mattins - Second Collect - For Peace
O GOD, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mattins - Third Collect - For Grace
O LORD, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evensong - Third Collect - For Aid against all Perils
LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The above would have been familiar to large numbers of troops. Mattins and Evensong were widely attended at this time, and these three prayers were used every Sunday (and indeed daily by the devout). In a prayerful moment before turning in for the night, some will have used the much-loved words of the Nunc Dimittis.

Nunc Dimittis
LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation;
Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

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B: FROM PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS

In the time of War and Tumults
O ALMIGHTY God, King of all kings, and Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful to them that truly repent: Save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, from the hands of our enemies; abate their pride, asswage their malice, and confound their devices; that we, being armed with thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the only giver of all victory; through the merits of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Peace and Deliverance from our Enemies
O ALMIGHTY God, who art a strong tower of defence unto thy servants against the face of their enemies: We yield thee praise and thanksgiving for our deliverance from those great and apparent dangers wherewith we were compassed: We acknowledge it thy goodness that we were not delivered over as a prey unto them; beseeching thee still to continue such thy mercies towards us, that all the world may know that thou art our Saviour and mighty Deliverer; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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C: FROM THE COLLECTS FOR SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Collects from the Prayer Book were known (sometimes by heart) much more widely than now. Some, like those below, were clearly relevant in situations of hardship or danger.

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
O GOD, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity
O GOD, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

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D: FROM THE PSALTER

Many will have been used to the Psalms in worship. Psalm 23, in particular, will have been known and loved, and often used in times of anxiety, injury or death.

PSALM 23 (BCP version)

THE Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.
2 He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
3 He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his Name’s sake.
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
5 Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
6 Surely thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

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E: FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED AT SEA

Thanksgiving Prayer - After Victory or Deliverance from an Enemy

O ALMIGHTY God, the Sovereign Commander of all the world, in whose hand is power and might which none is able to withstand: We bless and magnify thy great and glorious Name for this happy Victory, the whole glory whereof we do ascribe to thee, who art the only giver of Victory. And, we beseech thee, give us grace to improve this great mercy to thy glory, the advancement of thy Gospel, the honour of our Sovereign, and, as much as in us lieth, to the good of all mankind. And, we beseech thee, give us such a sense of this great mercy, as may engage us to a true thankfulness, such as may appear in our lives by an humble, holy, and obedient walking before thee all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit, as for all thy mercies, so in particular for this Victory and Deliverance, be all glory and honour, world without end. Amen.