

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

A few days later the news of his death was published in the *Times* with the following appreciation:

"W. S. C." writes: "Rupert Brooke is dead. A telegram from the Admiral at Lemnos tells us that this life has closed at the moment when it seemed to have reached its springtime. A voice had become audible, a note had been struck, more true, more thrilling, more able to do justice to the ability of our youth in arms engaged in this present war, than any other—more able to express their thoughts of self-surrender, and with a power to carry comfort to those who watch them so intently from afar. The voice has been swiftly stilled. Only the echoes and the memory remain; but they will linger.

"During the last few months of his life, months of preparation in gallant comradeship and open air, the poet-soldier told with all the simple force of genius the sorrow of youth about to die, and the sure, triumphant consolations of a sincere and valiant spirit. He expected to die; he was willing to die for the dear England whose beauty and majesty he knew; and he advanced toward the brink in perfect serenity, with absolute conviction of the rightness of his country's cause and a heart devoid of hate for fellowmen.

"The thoughts to which he gave expression in the very few incomparable war sonnets which he has left behind will be shared by many thousands of young men moving resolutely and blithely forward into this, the hardest, the cruellest, and the least-rewarded of all the wars that men have fought. They are a whole history and revelation of Rupert Brooke himself. Joyous, fearless, versatile, deeply instructed, with classic symmetry of mind and body, ruled by high, undoubted purpose, he was all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be in days when no sacrifice but the most precious is acceptable, and the most precious is that which is most freely proffered."

"W. S. C.," as many probably guessed at the time, was the Rt. Hon. Winston Spencer Churchill, a personal friend and warm admirer of the poet. Many other tributes followed, notably from an anonymous writer in the *Spectator*, from Mr. Walter de la Mare, Mr. Edward Thomas, Mr. Holbrook Jackson, Mr. Jack Collings Squire, Mr. James Douglas, Mr. Drinkwater, Mr. Gibson, and Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie. From most of these writers I have already quoted at some length, but space must yet be found for the last three, the surviving members of the brilliant quartette who produced *New Numbers*. Mr. Drinkwater wrote as follows: "There can have been no man of his years in England who had