

BUS TRAGEDY FUNERAL

In Gillingham and nearby they mourn twenty-four cadets who died as they marched through the dusk. Now, from the Catholic church where they worshipped, three go to their last resting-place, borne by men of the Royal Marines by whose side they had hoped some day to serve their country. Lightly they bear on the strong shoulders which carry them - they were so young. Behind them come those whose homes are darkened by their passing. There is a Bishop to give them their church's last rites.

The flag they honoured hangs low as the little procession winds between the graves. Somewhere, a man suffers unseen. What happened that evening when his bus reared out of the dusk to leave death in its path we do not yet know. He was a kindly man, a friend to many of them.

Eager to serve, they were called to answer a higher roll. It is not given to us to understand the mysteries of life and death. We know only that brief life is here our portion. How brief were these.