

Mark Pays His Respects

As a serving member of the Armed Forces, I joined around 30 other MPs, all of whom had either served or continue to serve in the military, to take part in an act of Remembrance ahead of Sunday's official national commemorations.

With the MPs drawn from across a number of parties, the Guards Chapel in London's Wellington Barracks provided a fitting setting to remember those who had died in the two World Wars and conflicts since.

With this, the hundredth year since the start of WWI, the service carried particular significance. Alongside the hundreds of thousands of British Servicemen killed while on active service in the Great War, were nineteen serving Members of Parliament, commemorated in the House of Commons Books of Remembrance.

The commemorative photo highlights the wealth and breadth of military service in the House of Commons, sending the message to today's military personnel that their experiences and beliefs are not alien to those representing them. The experience and knowledge that can be brought to bear from within the House ensures that military matters experience the strongest of scrutiny and support.

My operational service in the Balkans and Afghanistan and my continuing service in the Army Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Engineers, makes me very proud to be able to pay my respects in this unprecedented way.

The historic link between Parliament and the armed forces has always been very strong but it often surprises people just how many MP's have served. At a time when we are withdrawing our forces from Afghanistan after 13 years hard service, it is right that on Remembrance Sunday this year we remember veterans both young and old and thank them for their service to our country.