

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

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By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

**In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the dead: Short days ago,
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved: and now we lie
In Flanders fields!**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields**



To the British, there is no greater symbol to memorialize World War 1 than the image of a poppy flower growing in a field. Lt. Col. John McCrae wrote the poem you see above while looking on a battlefield where his close friend had died the day before. The image of a beautiful flower growing between the bodies of the dead soldiers was such a strong image of the ugliness of war, that he wrote

the poem you read above. He wrote the poem to remind everyone that those who survive a war (whether they are soldiers, or simply people living in a country hundreds of miles away) have an obligation to make sure that the sacrifice of the soldiers who died for their cause is not in vain.





Each of the 888,246 blooms in the artwork, "[Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red](#)," represents a British life lost in World War I -- one for each of the British and Colonial soldiers killed in the conflict that began 100 years ago. Also top left, a picture of the graveyard close to where McCrea wrote his poem.

Comprehension Questions

1. From whose perspective is the poem written?
2. Why do you think the author of the poem chose to use poppies as a symbol? Why do you think that the artist who did the artwork shown above chose poppies as his symbol?
3. "From failing hands to you we throw the torch..." What is the torch?

Write about it.

Write your own poem (minimum 8 lines) that memorializes a loss of our country.