

Doctor **John McCrae**, a Canadian wrote a poem in 1915 called "In Flanders Fields", in which he describes how the only thing that continued to grow in the aftermath of the devastation was the Poppy. **Moina Michael**, an American with the YMCA was so moved by the poem that she sold some poppies to her friends and donated the money that she raised to servicemen in need. In 1918 Moina wrote a poem in reply to "In Flanders Fields" entitled "We Shall Keep Faith". According to her Poem, she promised to wear a Poppy in "memory of our dead" and so the tradition of wearing a poppy on Remembrance Day was born.

A French Woman called **Madame Guérin** had an idea of making artificial poppies and selling them in order to raise money for areas of France that were devastated in the Great War. The Memorial Poppy was proclaimed the United States National Emblem of Remembrance at the American Legion Conference in 1920. **Guérin** sold millions of Poppies made by French women throughout the US in the name of the American and French Childrens' League and in 1921 sent French women to London to sell poppies. She persuaded Earl Haig that the Flanders Poppy should be adopted as a symbol of Remembrance by the British Legion.

In 1922 the founder of the Disabled Society, Major George Howson, suggested to the British Legion that members of his society could make the poppies thus creating the Poppy Factory, which produces 36 million poppies today. The Poppy Factory provides employment for many people who suffer from chronic illness in addition to raising funds to help approximately 5.5 million ex service persons and 7.5 million relatives of ex service personnel.

In Flanders Fields

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.



Lt Col McRae