

Canadian poet John McCrae was a doctor and teacher who served in both the South African War and the First World War. His poem, "In Flanders Fields" was published in Punch magazine, on December 8, 1915. This poem honours the thousands of soldiers who fought and died in the First World War. According to legend, he was inspired by seeing the blood-red poppies blooming in the fields where many friends had died. In 1918 McCrae died at the age of 40, of pneumonia.

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.

In Flanders Fields

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