



Poppies are worn by millions as a symbol to remember all the people who have given their lives for their country in wars.

The poppy has a long association with Remembrance Day. But how did the distinctive red flower become such a potent symbol of our remembrance of the sacrifices made in past wars?

Scarlet corn poppies grow naturally in conditions of disturbed earth throughout Western Europe. The destruction brought by the Napoleonic wars of the early 19th Century transformed bare land into fields of blood red poppies, growing around the bodies of the fallen soldiers.

In late 1914, the fields of Northern France and Flanders were once again ripped open as World War One raged through Europe's heart. Once the conflict was over the poppy was one of the only plants to grow on the otherwise barren battlefields.

Armistice Day is on 11 November and is also known as Remembrance Day.

It marks the day World War One ended, at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month, in 1918.

A two-minute silence is held at 11am to remember the people who have died in wars.

There is also Remembrance Sunday every year, which falls on the second Sunday in November.

This year, it will fall on Sunday 14th November.

On this day, there are usually ceremonies at war memorials,



cenotaphs



and churches throughout the country, as well as abroad.

The Royal Family



and top politicians gather at The Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, for a memorial service.

Why do we hold a two-minute silence?

The first two-minute silence in Britain was held on 11 November 1919, when King George V asked the public to observe a silence at 11am.

This was one year after the end of World War One.

He made the request so "the thoughts of everyone may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the glorious dead".