

In the spring of 1915, shortly after losing a friend in Ypres, a Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was inspired by the sight of poppies growing in battle-scarred **fields** around the strategic Belgian town of Ypres to write a now **famous** poem called 'In **Flanders Fields**'.

The town of Ypres saw some of the heaviest and most prolonged fighting.

The total Allied and German casualties in the **five**

Battles of Ypres is thought to exceed **850,000**.

The poem is from the view of the **dead** soldiers.

The **fields** were unmaintained for years before they were made into a memorial. Today **Flanders Fields** is home to tens of thousands of poppies.

After the First World War, the poppy has become known as “The Flower of Remembrance” and is worn in memory of our veterans.



Buddy Poppy

Before Memorial Day in 1922, the VFW conducted its first poppy distribution, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The poppy soon was adopted as the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as it remains today.

During our 1923 encampment, we decided that VFW "**Buddy**"[®] **Poppies** would be assembled by disabled and needy veterans who would be paid for their work to provide them with financial assistance. The next year, disabled veterans at the Buddy Poppy factory in Pittsburgh assembled VFW Buddy Poppies. The designation "Buddy Poppy" was adopted at that time.

In February 1924, we registered the name Buddy Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting our organization all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers. We've made that trademark a guarantee that all poppies bearing that name and the VFW label are genuine products of the work of disabled and needy veterans. No other organization, firm or individual can legally use the name Buddy Poppy.

Today, our Buddy Poppies are still assembled by disabled and needy veterans in VA Hospitals.

The VFW Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to the veterans who assemble the poppies, provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home For Children.