

In Flanders Fields

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae

In campus Flandriarum

Captain Michael Lambert

This *11 November 2018* is the century anniversary of the commemoration of the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front, the First World War

In Flanders Fields, is the standard by which poems of Remembrance are measured. Colonel McCrae's celebrated poem is presented in English and Latin

In campus Flandriarum

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, and 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.

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae
In Flanders Fields

In campus Flandriarum

In campus Flandriarum crescunt papavera,
Inter cruces in ordinem, quae sepulcra nosti designant.
Et in caelo alaudae adhuc aciter canentes volant,
Vix audita in media armorum.

Mortui sumus. Ante brevibus diebus, in vita fuimus,
Aurora affecti sumus, crepuscula ardentia vidimus,
Amavimus et amati sumus.
Nunc in campus Flandriarum iacemus.

Proelium cum hostibus accipite.
De manibus invalidis facem vobis mitemus,
Ut eam tamquam vestri tollatis.
Si nobis morientibus fidem falletis,
Quamquam in campus Flandriarum crescunt papavera,
Non requiescemus.

Captain Michael Lambert
In campus Flandriarum

***Pauca verba de poema translato –
A few words about the translated poem***

It is asserted Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae's stirring words, as embodied in his mid-First World War poem, ***In Flanders Fields***, is the standard by which poems of *Remembrance* are measured.

Within a total of five sentences over three short stanzas, McCrae's words march forth as steady as the soldiers' foot-fall of left-right, left-right.

The year 2018 is the century of the cessation of hostilities. This year, by the congruence of month, day, and hour; this Sabbath *is* Remembrance Sunday.

The mud, over which McCrae's soldiers fought and died, is the same earth soldiers of Rome's Legions first marched in the year 57, Before Common Era.

To commemorate the hundredth year since 1918, and the link between the first foreign troops, Rome's Legions and latter day soldiers, the Canadian Expeditionary Force, ***in Gallia Belgica***, in the Belgium country; McCrae's words have been translated into Latin.

We commence with the poem's title, ***In campus Flandriarum***. Customarily, Latin place names are in the singular; and with every rule there is an exception. ***Flandriarum***, *Flanders* is in the plural. ***Campus***, meaning a flat or level plain on which a battle may be fought, was central to Rome's rule. The title commences with the preposition ***In***. This little word, for two millennia, remains unchanged in spelling and nuance. The preposition's sense is accusatory: ***In*** (the matter of) ***campus Flandriarum***.

The poem's first stanza sets the scene. The scene is bleak. Only the ***alaudae***, *larks* are present. On the ground, ***in ordinem***, *in serried rows* are the ***papavera***, *poppies* and ***crucis***, *crosses* that mark *not places* but ***sepulcra***, *graves*. The larks ***in caelo***, *in the sky*, ***aciter canentes volant***, *fiercely singing fly* are not ***Vix***, *hardly* heard for the ***armorum***, *arms* – the weapons – below.

Mortui sumus, *We are the Dead*, starkly opens the second stanza. In quick succession and measured beat, ***ante brevibus diebus***, *before short days ago*, ***Aurora affecti sumus***, *Aurora*, the goddess and herald of the morning and the new day, *affected us* and ***crepuscula ardentia vidimus***, *twilight glowing saw*. The Dead express the poem's central point, ***Amavimus et amati sumus***, *We loved and were loved*. The stanza's last sentence declares, ***Nunc in campus Flandriarum***, *Now in Flanders fields*, ***iacemus***, *we lie*.

The opening line of the third stanza is an imperative command, ***Proelium cum hostibus accipite***, *Take the battle to the enemies*. The Roman soldier did nothing by half-measure. ***De manibus invalidis***, *from infirmed hands* the ***facem***, *the torch* is passed. ***Si nobis morientibus***, *If our dying* ***fidem falletis***, *you will deceive faith*. The Dead now pose their proposition.

Quamquam in campus Flandriarum crescent papavera, *Although poppies grow in Flanders fields*, ***Non requiescemus***, *We will not re-rest*. The ending verb is ***quiesco***, *I rest* (in peace). ***Quiesco*** serves several masters. It refers to the second stanza's final verb, ***iacemus***, *we lie*. If you have deceived the Dead by breaking ***fides***, the Dead, will *not* re-rest, to achieve the poem's denouement, ***Non requiescemus***.

***Ultima verba –
Final words***

Sit tibi terra levis, *May the earth rest lightly on you*, was a popular Roman inscription on the tomb of a fallen Legionnaire. Our sentiment is, *Rest in Peace*.

***Nota bene -
Note well***

In Flanders Fields

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae's poem
Quoted in full from the anthology: Busby, Brian, editor
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In campus Flandriarum

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Latin in vogue

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