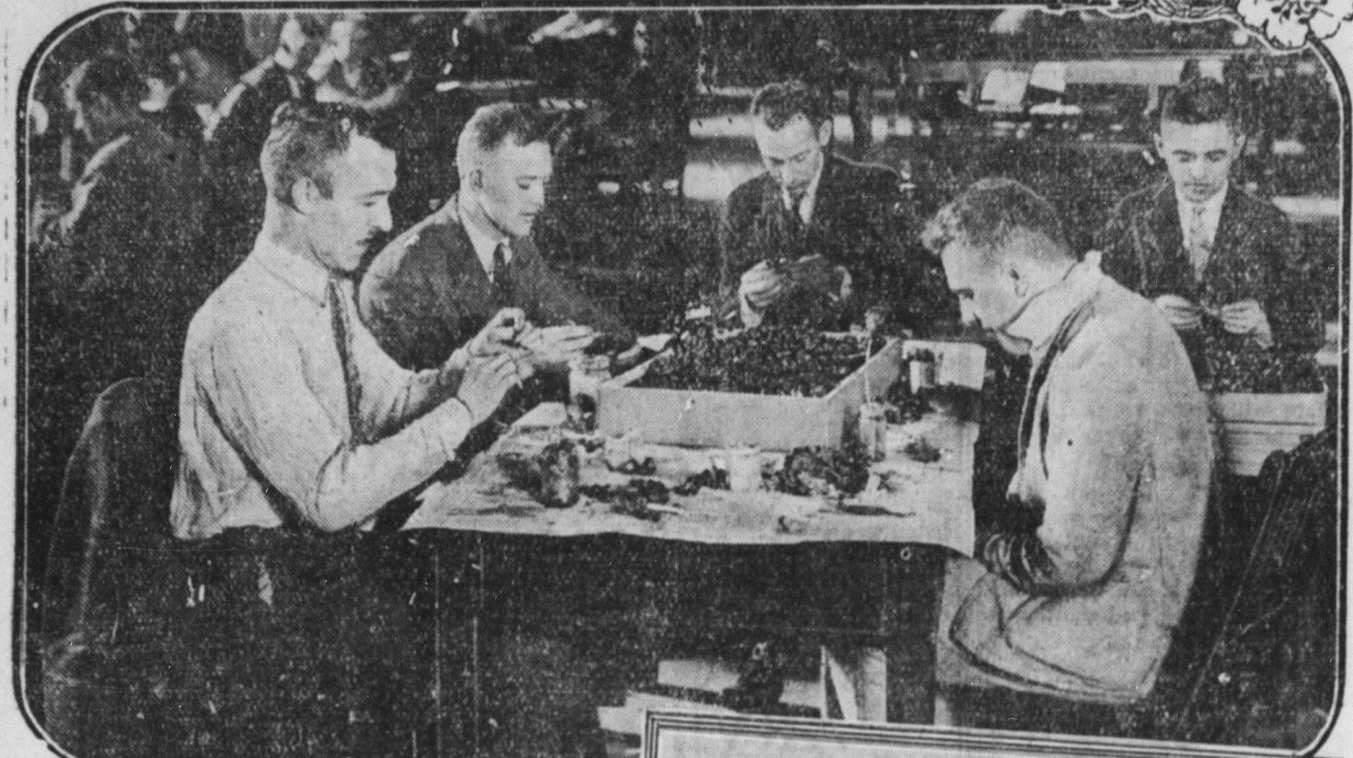


The Red Poppy—Symbol of Armistice Day



By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

WITH the coming of another Armistice day men and women all over the world will pin flaming red poppies over their hearts as symbols of the blood which was shed on the battlefields of the World War. For the red poppy has become the emblem of Armistice day and we wear it on November 11 as a memorial not only to the men who died during the war-torn years of 1914-18 but also to those who came back to their homes alive but bearing upon their bodies and in their minds the scars of that holocaust—the disabled veterans.

The story of how the red poppy became the emblem of Armistice day goes back to November, 1918—before there was an Armistice to lighten the burden of a war-weary world. In it there is a curious parallelism between the establishment of this custom and another custom observed on another day when we honor our war dead. It was a group of southern women in Columbus, Ga., who in 1865 banded together to decorate the graves of soldiers, both Union and Confederate, thus originating a custom which is perpetuated in our Memorial day observance. And it was another southern woman, Miss Michael of Athens, Ga., who originated the idea of adopting the red poppy as a symbol of the sacrifices of the fighting men of the World War and whose efforts have resulted in this flower's being adopted as the Armistice day emblem.

The idea came to Miss Michael while she was serving on the staff of the Y. W. C. A. overseas headquarters at Hamilton hall, Columbia university, in New York. On Saturday, November 9, 1918, she was sitting in the headquarters office when a soldier came in and placed a copy of a monthly magazine on her desk. In it she happened to read Colonel McCrae's now-famous poem, "In Flanders Fields." She was so stirred by the lines that she re-read it several times and then with a sudden inspiration she wrote this reply to it:

Oh! You who sleep in Flanders fields,
Sleep sweet—to rise anew!
We caught the Torch you threw
And holding high, we keep the Faith
With all who died.
We cherish, too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led:
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies,
That lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders fields.
And now the Torch and Poppy red
We'll wear in honor of our dead.
Fear not that ye have died for naught;
We'll teach the lessons that ye wrought
In Flanders fields.

As she wrote, she decided that she would wear a poppy for remembrance and she would also ask others to do the same. While thinking about this three overseas Y. W. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. workers, who had been attending a conference at Columbia, came in to bring her a check for \$10 in appreciation of her efforts to make a model hostess house of their headquarters. She immediately told them that she would use the money with which to buy poppies and then explained her idea. They were so enthusiastic about it as she was, and, returning to their conference, spread the news. As a result, all of the workers at the conference that afternoon were wearing poppies which Miss Michael had provided.

The next morning Miss Michael went to see her friend, Dean Talcott Williams of the Columbia school of journalism, and confided to him her poppy-thought. He was very much pleased and offered to pass the thought on that afternoon to a war workers' committee on which were Mrs. Preston, the former Mrs. Grover Cleveland, and Rodman Wanamaker. He attended the meeting of the committee and brought back to Miss Michael enthusiastic reports of the manner in which her plan had been received.

Then came the armistice and Miss Michael turned all her energies to spreading the idea of the poppy as a national emblem. She presented the plan to other conferences and they



The pictures shown above are photographs taken in a disabled veterans' hospital where the patients make Buddy Poppies to be sold throughout the country by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the proceeds being devoted exclusively to welfare work among disabled veterans and ex-service men.

straightway adopted it. Home-coming programs were made and the poppy idea was introduced into them.

Miss Michael wrote her congressman, Charles H. Brand, and he replied on December 10, 1918: "I am writing today the War department in behalf of your suggestion that the poppy be adopted as the national emblem in commemoration of our soldiers who died in France."

Miss Michael wrote to many institutions of education, women's clubs and other organizations, explaining that as it was impossible to have triumphal arches or great memorials in all places from which came the heroes of the World War, she begged them to adopt the poppy as a tribute to the men who won the victory.

"Out of every great event of the world has come an emblem," she wrote, "Lest we forget." Into this war went many emblems: The flags of nations, the Red Cross, the Red Triangle, the service flag and pin. Now out of this war should come some symbol perpetually to remind us and unfailingly to teach coming generations the value of the light of liberty and our debt to those who so valiantly saved it for us.

On the eve of the Georgia State convention of the American Legion, August 19 and 20, 1920, in Augusta, Miss Michael went to the Legion headquarters in Atlanta and turned over to them her arguments concerning the adoption of the poppy. Charles M. Gallene of Post No. 1, Atlanta, took charge of the material and presented the movement to the convention. It was adopted and the delegation to the national convention was instructed to present it at Cleveland, Ohio, and to support the resolutions. The resolutions were presented to the national convention in September, 1920, and the poppy became the National American Legion Memorial Flower.

The happy inspiration which this southern woman had had was not confined in its result to this country alone. For her idea has spread to other countries. Madam E. Guerin of Paris read Miss Michael's poem pledging to "Keep the Faith," and her plans for wearing poppies to memorialize the sacrifices of the war. She immediately organized the American and French Children's league and sold poppies for the benefit of the orphans in France.

In an official report, which she issued on February 8, 1922, from Canada on Poppy days, she announced: "The great war veterans have sold 1,000,000 small poppies and 200,000 large ones, clearing \$90,000 for their relief work, and for the French, \$80,000 to go to the poor French children of the battlefields."

In England the poppy program flourished tremendously. Earl Haig's British Legion adopted the selling and wearing of poppies in 1921 and since that time more than \$11,000,000 has been cleared for ex-service men. In 1927 alone the British legionnaires sold 28,000,000 poppies and made a profit of \$2,522,000. In 1928 the sales reached the \$3,000,000 mark. In every British community, no matter how remote from the mother country, anniversary of the armistice is observed by the sale of poppies. The full list of overseas collections from poppies, as printed in the 1927 report of the British Legion, assumes the appearance of a gazetteer of the world. There are listed there the Azores, Egypt, the Grand Canary Islands, Morocco, Nigeria, the Sudan, the Orange Free State, Bermuda, British Guiana, Trinidad, Borneo, British Malaya and dozens and dozens of other countries.

Instead of the poppy becoming a national emblem, as the Poppy Lady first dreamed, it has become an international emblem. In Europe, besides the British Isles and France, 19 countries wear the blood-colored blossoms in their lapels: Italy, Holland, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, Greece, Rumania . . . oh, almost every corner of the globe. Poppies are even worn in Japan, China, Mexico, Asia Minor and in every country of North and South America.

The poppies are made by disabled veterans in hospitals in the East, at piece-work cost and the state departments of the Veterans of Foreign Wars all taken certain quotas. A small amount is deducted for national and state relief and the rest goes to the posts that sell the poppies to be used as their relief needs arise. The veterans are paid one and one-quarter cents for every poppy they make and some of them are skillful enough to turn out from 800 to 400 poppies in a day, thereby earning about \$5.00.

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Triumph Over Paralysis Claimed by Physician

General paralysis may be detected in its incipient state, making a complete cure possible, by a test just revealed and demonstrated by Dr. K. O. Newman, pathologist of the Oxford County and City Mental hospital, in England. He claims to have devised a blood-test, which would do away with the present process of removing spinal fluid from patients by a minor surgical operation, often painful and troublesome. The blood test would give an opportunity to apply treatment at a stage when prevention is possible, declares Doctor Newman. It is believed a cure might be effected by an early system of artificial inoculation with malarial fever.

Come, Come!

First Bridge Fiend—Why do you answer Congressional Record every time your wife offers an opinion? Second—Sh-h-h. It's the only way I can safely say "nonsense."—Brooklyn Eagle.

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Call for Definition of Still Small Voice

The case of the woman who has advertised for the owner of a gold pin set with small diamonds which she found 25 years ago, is described as one of troubled conscience. Through a quarter of a century the woman must have been stilling the small voice within her that was reminding her that she was keeping something which was not hers and which she was making no effort to return to its owner.

What is this conscience which abides with all human beings and compels us to acts which we do not wish to perform? The dictionary definition is of no help in answering the question. "The knowledge of our own acts and feelings as right or wrong" explains nothing. The difference between right and wrong is so often a personal one, and when a person wishes to justify an act of his to himself it is generally easy. Wrong can be made to appear right to oneself if self-interest is allowed to become paramount. But despite the justification, conscience is never wholly stifled.

It nags and nags at one and gives no peace until, like the woman with the pin, it finally forces what may be called confession. The cynical Talleyrand said that to be happy a man should have a good digestion and no conscience. Possibly, but if it is so, practically no one is truly happy. Conscience may undoubtedly be fostered and what troubles one generation may not trouble another. But conscience is a fixed part of ourselves, something which is born with us. It is of the moral order of the universe, a monitor implanted within us by a Supreme Power.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Sent Suit to Waxen Effigy

Just before his recent visit to this country Sir Thomas Lipton went to Madame Tussaud's museum in London, which is famed for its collection of wax effigies of famous men, with the object of inspecting the figure of himself which had just been put on view. Sir Thomas at once took exception to the manner in which the figure was clothed, and the next day he sent one of his own yachting suits down to the museum with the request that the figure be put in it, which was promptly done. The manager of the place said that the new suit fitted the dummy to a "T."

Wood Produced From Cotton

Synthetic wood produced from compressed and hardened cotton material has been perfected by a Clerkenwell (England) man. It is said to be indistinguishable from mahogany, oak or any other wood, and can be used in making furniture and all kinds of house fixtures. Its cost is much less than ordinary wood and its life will be as long, the inventor says. It may be molded into any

shape or thickness and does not warp. It is expected to reduce the cost of houses as well as of furniture.

Day of Water Trough Gone

The four once popular water troughs in Main and High streets in London have gone the way of the horse and buggy and the bootjack of yesterday. Workmen have removed the troughs from the streets. The metal bowls were junked and the concrete bases broken.

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