

FINDING AID

Lt. Col. John McCrae
Doctor, Soldier, Poet
1872-1918



IMAGE SOURCES IN FINDING AID

- Cover: Poppy illustration by Meg Ross, 2021
- Page 1: Photograph (detail) of John McCrae at Kennebunkport, circa 1903
Guelph Museums [M1968X.436.3](#)
- Page 5: Photograph (detail) of John McCrae with Bonfire and Bonneau, circa 1917
Guelph Museums [M1968X.362.1.1](#)
- Page 13-14: Medical Class, McGill University, 1914
Guelph Museums [M2008.1.1](#)
- Page 18-19: Soldiers Looking at Plaque at McCrae House, Guelph, circa 1940
Guelph Museums [1981.7.57](#)



OVERVIEW

Who is John McCrae?

In Flanders Fields is one of the most famous poems about the First World War. The poem was written by Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae in 1915. While remembered for his poetry, McCrae was also a doctor and a soldier. This Finding Aid highlights aspects of his life, career, and legacy.

John McCrae was born in 1872 in Guelph, Ontario. Historical records describe McCrae as an animal lover, a loyal friend with a keen sense of humour, and a talented physician. He was a dedicated student who received a bachelor's degree (1894) and a medical degree (1898) from the University of Toronto. Many of McCrae's early poems and writings were published in the 1890s, while he was a student. In 1899, he was awarded a fellowship in pathology at McGill University. McCrae postponed his acceptance of the fellowship to enlist in the Royal Canadian Artillery during the South African War.

When the First World War began in 1914, McCrae enlisted with the Canadian Army Medical Corps. During the Battle of Ypres in 1915, he witnessed horrific casualties. In response, McCrae wrote *In Flanders Fields*.

Lt. Col. John McCrae died in 1918, from pneumonia and meningitis, at the age of 45.

FAMILY

- Father:** Lieutenant-Colonel David McCrae
Born 1845 in Balmaghie, Scotland. Died 1930 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada.
- Mother:** Janet Simpson Eckford McCrae
Born 1846 in Angus, Scotland. Died 1920 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada.
- Brother:** Dr. Thomas McCrae
Born 1870 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Died 1935 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.
- Sister:** Mary Christie "Geills" McCrae Kilgour
Born 1878 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Died 1933 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.



TIMELINE

A detailed biographical timeline of John McCrae's life and career.

1870 David McCrae marries Janet Eckford and they move to 108 Water Street on January 21. Their first child, Thomas, is born on December 16.

1872 David and Janet's second son, John, is born on November 30. He is named after Janet McCrae's father John Eckford. *John McCrae does not have a middle name.*

1874 The McCrae family moves to Woolwich Street.

1878 David and Janet's daughter, Mary Christie, is born on December 19. She is known by the name "Geills."

Entries hereafter pertain to John McCrae specifically.

1878-85 Attends Central Public School in Guelph, Ontario.

1885-88 Attends Guelph Collegiate Institute (now known as Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute) in Guelph, Ontario.

1886 Joins the Highland Cadet Corps. Travels with his father to England and Scotland on a trip concerning the family business, the Guelph Woollen Mills.

1887 Awarded a gold medal by the Ontario Ministry of Education for being the best drilled cadet in the province.

1888 Enters the Knox College Faculty of Arts in Natural Sciences, University of Toronto. McCrae is the first student from Guelph to win a scholarship. He becomes a member of the Varsity Glee Club and a bugler in the 1st Brigade, Field Artillery.

Some records state that, in 1888, McCrae joined the Queen's Own Rifles — this is not true.

March 1889 Alice McRae, the sister of a classmate, dies of typhoid.

Some records state that Alice McRae was John McCrae's girlfriend — this is not true. McCrae wrote a single letter about Alice's death. He also uses her given name, Alice, although her family and close friends called her Janie.

1890 Joins the No. 2 Battery, First Brigade, Field Artillery as a gunner. At University of Toronto, McCrae joins the rugby team (with brother Thomas).

1891 Promoted to Quarter-Master Sergeant in the No. 2 Battery, First Brigade, Field Artillery.

October 1891 Falls ill (typhoid) and leaves school to recover at home in Guelph, Ontario.

Some historical records state that McCrae left school in 1891 due to asthma, attributed to poor air conditions in Toronto — this is not true. McCrae fell ill with typhoid.

1892-93 Appointed Assistant Resident and Mathematical Master at Ontario Agriculture College, where he teaches English and Math.

1893 Attends the militia artillery officer's course in Kingston, Ontario. He is promoted to Second Lieutenant.

September 1893	Returns to University of Toronto to complete his final year. Works behind-the-scenes on one of the University's drama productions, learns fencing, prepares for a Glee Club tour, and plays rugby. University of Toronto's <i>Varsity</i> magazine publishes his short story, called "A Love Affair."
1893	Initiated into Zeta Psi Fraternity.
1894	Attends a summer field course in marine biology at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Graduates with a Bachelor in Biology (with honours), earning a gold medal for academic achievement in physiology and pathology. Enters medical studies at University of Toronto.
1894-96	McCrae is published in <i>Varsity</i> , <i>Saturday Night</i> , and <i>Godey's</i> magazines.
1895	During school, McCrae keeps his position in the No. 2 Battery, First Brigade, Field Artillery and assists in practical work in pathology at the Ontario Agricultural College.
Summers 1896, 1897	Resident Physician at Garrett's Children's Hospital in Mount Airy, Maryland, USA.
1898	Graduates with a Bachelor of Medicine, receiving a gold medal for first class standing. Appointed resident house officer at Toronto General Hospital and John Hopkins University.
1899	Receives a Governor's fellowship in pathology at McGill University in Montreal. Becomes a pathologist at Montreal General Hospital. Postpones the McGill fellowship to serve in the South African War. On December 29, McCrae is assigned to the 16th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery.
1990	Commanding the 2nd (Right) Section of D Battery, McCrae arrives in Cape Town, South Africa on February 18.
February 1900	The Canadian Batteries, Colonial contingents, British regular, and volunteers parade through Cape Town. McCrae meets British novelist Rudyard Kipling.
1900	They march from Cape Town to Pretoria, arriving in Victoria West on March 4, Carnarvon between March 14-17, Kenhardt between March 18-28, and Bloemfontein on April 5. They arrive at Victoria East on April 17 and remain to guard the railway line.
July 1900	They arrive in Pretoria. D Battery attaches to General Cunningham's brigade on July 17.
January 1901	McCrae returns to Canada with Guelph members of D Battery. The South African War would continue to May 31, 1902.
March 1901	Appointed resident assistant pathologist at Montreal General Hospital.
1902	Becomes a Governor's Fellow in Pathology at McGill University, editor of the American Journal of Medical Sciences, resident pathologist at Montreal General Hospital and, later, assistant pathologist at Royal Victoria Hospital.
March 1902	Takes a four-month leave of absence from his position as Director of Pathological Laboratory in order to study European laboratories.
1903	Appointed Special Professor to the University of Vermont Medical College. McCrae would lecture one day per week for 8 years.
1904	Resigns his post as resident pathologist at Montreal General Hospital on Jan 4.
1904	Goes to London, England to become a Master of Royal College of Physicians. Becomes assistant pathologist in medicine at Royal Victoria Hospital.

- 1905 Switches from Pathology to Clinical Medicine in his lectures at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. McCrae becomes known as an excellent lecturer.
Starts a successful part-time private practice in Montreal.
- 1906 Becomes a member of the Royal College of Physicians in England.
McCrae travels to Paris, where he meets with Harry Higinbotham and Beatriz d'Arneiro, who would later marry renowned Guelph-born tenor, Edward Johnson.
- 1908 Becomes registrar in pathology at McGill University.
- 1909-14 Becomes assistant physician at McGill University.
- 1910 M.D. University of Toronto School of Medicine for his thesis: "A study of 850 cases of scarlet fever with more particular consideration of 71 fatal cases."
- Summer 1910 Serves as expedition doctor on a trip to Hudson Bay with Lord Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada.
- 1911 Contributes chapters to the textbook, Principles of Pathology (Professor Adami).
- 1911-13 In Montreal at Royal Victoria Hospital and McGill University.
- 1911-14 Writes articles for *Scientific Journal*.
- 1912 Co-authors A Textbook of Pathology for Students of Medicine (Professor Adami).
- Jan 1914 McCrae has an appendectomy (his appendix is removed). Spends the month with his brother Thomas McCrae and his wife Amy Gwyn in Philadelphia.
- July 1914 Travels to Atlantic City, New Jersey, where the second edition of his textbook on pathology was being published.
- 1913-14 Elected member of the Association of American Physicians.
- Summer 1914 Sails to England for a vacation.
- September 1914 Sails back to Canada and joins the 1st Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery.
- 1914 Appointed Major (Medical Officer), 1st Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery on September 22. Embarks for Britain on October 3.
- 1915 Writes the poem, *In Flanders Fields*, on May 3.
In Flanders Fields is published in Punch magazine on December 8.
McCrae is transferred to No. 3 Canadian General Hospital (McGill) on June 1.
- 1918 McCrae is transferred to No. 14 British General Hospital for Officers on January 25. Appointed as consulting physician to the British Army in France.
Dies of pneumonia and a strain of meningitis on January 28.
Buried at Wimereux Communal Cemetery (Plot 4, Row H, Grave 3) in France on January 30, 1918.

Compiled Bev Dietrich, Curator (retired), Guelph Museums

[100 Years of In Flanders Fields – Map Journal](#)



Earl Grey Canoe Trip from Lake Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay - 1910
An avid outdoorsman, John McCrae is invited to serve as expedition physician when the Governor General, Lord Grey, journeys by canoe from Norway House on Lake Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay.

Expédition en canot Earl Grey, du lac Winnipeg à la baie d'Hudson - 1910
Avid amateur de plein air, John McCrae est invité à être membre d'une expédition en tant que médecin lorsque le gouverneur général, Lord Grey, voyage en canot depuis Norway House sur le lac Winnipeg jusqu'à la baie d'Hudson.

Earl Grey Steam Ship passage to the Maritime Provinces - 1910
Once the group arrives in Hudson's Bay, they travel by steam ship to Labrador, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island before docking at Quebec City. In Charlottetown, John meets Lucy Maud Montgomery.

Passage du navire à vapeur Earl Grey dans les provinces maritimes - 1910
Une fois arrivé à la baie d'Hudson, le groupe voyage à bord d'un navire à vapeur jusqu'au Labrador, Terre-Neuve, et à l'île du Prince-Édouard avant d'accoster dans la ville de Québec. À Charlottetown, John rencontre Lucy Maud Montgomery.

Mount Airy, Maryland - 1897
John McCrae spends the summer as resident physician at the Robert Garrett Hospital, a convalescent home for sick children in Mount Airy outside of Baltimore.

Mount Airy, Maryland - 1897
Pendant l'été, John McCrae fait son internat à l'hôpital Robert Garrett, une maison de convalescence pour enfants malades située à Mount Airy près de Baltimore.

London and Paris - 1906
John McCrae sails to London on the Empress of Ireland (passage October 5, 1906) to take his Royal College of Physicians examinations. Before returning to Canada, John visits his school friend Harry Higinbotham in Paris.

London et Paris - 1906
John McCrae prend place à bord de l'Empress of Ireland (passage du 5 octobre 1906) pour se rendre à London et passer ses examens au Royal College of Physicians. Avant de revenir au Canada, John visite son ami d'école Harry Higinbotham à Paris.



1 1872 Guelph, Ontario - November 30, 1872
John McCrae Birth Place Place and Date
Guelph (Ontario) - 30 novembre 1872 — Lieu et date de naissance de John McCrae

2 1890 Toronto, Ontario — John McCrae graduates from Guelph Collegiate Institute and is the first Guelph student to win a scholarship to the University of Toronto.
Toronto (Ontario) — John McCrae obtient son diplôme du Guelph Collegiate Institute et est le premier étudiant de Guelph à recevoir une bourse de l'Université de Toronto.

3 1898 Toronto, Ontario — John McCrae receives a Bachelor of Medicine degree and the gold medal from the University of Toronto medical school.
Toronto (Ontario) — John McCrae obtient un baccalauréat en médecine et la médaille d'or de l'école de médecine de l'Université de Toronto.

4 1899-1902 South Africa (Cape Town, Victoria West, Kenhardt, and Bloemfontein) — When the Boer War in South Africa begins, John McCrae feels that it is his duty to fight. In order to serve in South Africa, he requests postponement of a fellowship in pathology that he had been awarded at McGill University in Montreal. McCrae volunteers and serves in South Africa as an officer in the Royal Canadian Field Artillery. He commands the D Battery, Canadian Field Artillery. John McCrae sails to South Africa in January 1900 and spends a year there with his unit.
Afrique du Sud (Cape Town, Victoria West, Kenhardt et Bloemfontein) — Lorsque la guerre des Boers commence en Afrique du Sud, John McCrae croit qu'il est de son devoir de combattre. Afin de servir en Afrique du Sud, il demande que la bourse d'études en pathologie que lui a décernée l'Université McGill à Montréal soit reportée d'un an. John McCrae se porte volontaire et sert en Afrique du Sud à titre d'officier de l'Artillerie royale canadienne. Il commande une batterie D de l'Artillerie canadienne de campagne. En janvier 1900, John McCrae se rend en Afrique du Sud en bateau et y passe une année avec son unité.

5 1901-1904 Montreal, Quebec — John McCrae settles in Montreal on his return from service in the Boer War. In 1902, he is appointed resident pathologist at Montreal General Hospital and, by 1904, he is made associate in medicine at the Royal Victoria Hospital.
Montréal (Québec) — À son retour de la guerre des Boers, John McCrae s'établit à Montréal. En 1902, il est nommé pathologiste résident à l'hôpital général de Montréal et, en 1904, il est nommé adjoint en médecine à l'hôpital Royal Victoria.

6 1903-1911 University of Vermont — John McCrae is appointed professor of pathology at the University of Vermont, a position he holds from 1903 to 1911.
Université du Vermont — John McCrae est nommé professeur de pathologie à l'Université du Vermont, un poste qu'il occupe de 1903 à 1911.

7 1914 France - August 4, 1914 — Britain declares war on Germany and Canada quickly responds. Within three weeks, 45,000 Canadians rush to join the service, John McCrae among them. He is appointed medical officer to the First Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery with the rank of Major.
France - 4 août 1914 — La Bretagne déclare la guerre à l'Allemagne, et le Canada réagit rapidement. En moins de trois semaines, 45 000 Canadiens se précipitent pour s'engager. John McCrae est parmi eux. Il est nommé médecin militaire au sein de la première brigade de l'Artillerie canadienne de campagne, avec le grade de major.

8 1915 Ypres, Belgium - April 1915 — John McCrae is in the trenches during the Second Battle of Ypres. He tended hundreds of wounded soldiers, surrounded by the dead and the dying.
Ypres, Belgique - avril 1915 — John McCrae est dans les tranchées durant la seconde bataille d'Ypres. Il s'occupe de centaines de soldats blessés, entourés de morts et de mourants.

9 1915 Flanders, Belgium - May 3, 1915 — John McCrae writes "In Flanders Fields: The day before he had presided over the burial of his close friend Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, Helmer's makeshift grave, then marked with a simple wooden cross, has since been lost. Helmer is among the 54,896 soldiers who have no known grave in the battlefields of the Ypres Salient. "In Flanders Fields" gives voice to the lost soldiers. It is the second last poem John McCrae would write.
Flanders, Belgique - 3 mai 1915 — John McCrae écrit « In Flanders Field ». La journée précédente, il présida le service de messe en terre de son ami le lieutenant Alexis Helmer. La tombe de Helmer, alors marquée d'une simple croix de bois, a disparu depuis. Helmer fait partie des 54 896 soldats qui n'ont pas de lieu de sépulture connu dans les champs de bataille du saillant d'Ypres. « In Flanders Field » donne une voix aux soldats qui ont perdu la vie. C'est l'avant-dernier poème que John McCrae alla écrivit.

10 1915-1917 Boulogne, France — John McCrae is transferred to No. 3 (McGill) Canadian General Hospital, where he is the officer in charge of medicine. The hospital is housed in huge tents until cold wet weather forced a move to the site of the ruins of the Jesuit College at Boulogne. When the hospital opened its doors in February 1916, it was a 1,500-bed facility covering 26 acres. Here the wounded were brought from the battlefields of Somme, Vimy, Ypres, Arras, and Passchendaele.
Boulogne, France — John McCrae est transféré à l'hôpital général canadien no 3 (McGill), où il est chef des services médicaux. L'hôpital est aménagé dans de grandes tentes, jusqu'à ce que le froid et l'humidité nécessitent qu'on réaménage dans les ruines du collège des Jésuites à Boulogne. Lorsque l'hôpital ouvre ses portes en février 1916, il compte 1 500 lits sur une superficie de 26 acres. On y retrouve des blessés des batailles de Somme, de Vimy, d'Ypres, d'Arras et de Passchendaele.

11 1918 France — John McCrae is deeply affected by the fighting and losses in France. For respite, he takes long rides on his horse Bontex through the French countryside, often accompanied by his canine companion Borneau. Writing also allows John to escape the pressure of his hospital duties. His last poem is titled "The Anxious Dead."
France — John McCrae est fortement ébranlé par les combats et les pertes subies en France. Pour se détendre, il fait de longues promenades à cheval dans la campagne française avec son cheval Bontex. Il est aussi souvent accompagné de son compagnon canin, Borneau. L'écriture permet aussi à John d'oublier temporairement les pressions de ses fonctions administratives à l'hôpital. Son dernier poème s'intitule « The Anxious Dead ».

12 1918 Boulogne, France - January 28, 1918 — John McCrae dies of pneumonia. He is ever after remembered as an extraordinary physician and soldier, and as the writer of "In Flanders Fields."
Boulogne, France - 28 janvier 1918 — John McCrae meurt d'une pneumonie. Il laisse le souvenir d'un médecin et d'un soldat extraordinaires, ainsi que de l'auteur du poème « In Flanders Field ».

Main Image: World Map, 1882, The George F. Cran Company, Inc.

McCRAE COLLECTION

Photographs in Guelph Museums' online collection database

There are many ways to navigate the Guelph Museums' online collection database, which contains more than 50,000 individual catalogue records.

The McCrae House Collection at Guelph Museums contains artifacts owned and used by Lt. Col. John McCrae and the McCrae family. The collection includes material related to the South African War (1899-1902) and to the First World War (1914-1918), as well as material about McCrae House and the Lt. Col. John McCrae Birthplace Society.

The McCrae House Collection contains 1,438 records, including 495 photographs. Access to images without watermarks are available on request.

Click [HERE](#) to see the 495 photographs in the McCrae House Collection.

In the searchable online collection, the "Advanced Search" menu option allows for more precise searching.

Under "Advanced Search," select "Photo Search" (only). You will see a white checkmark in a blue box beside the words "Photo Search." (Deselect all other check boxes.)

On the same screen, go to the "Catalogue Number" text box. Type "M*" in the box. The asterisk symbol [*] is found on the number 8 key on a standard keyboard.

Click the "Search" button (white text in a green box). The results will pull from the McCrae collection.

You can make your search even more specific by using the different search fields:

Title can be used if you are looking for an artifact that you know the name of.

Object Name can be used to specify a type of object, such as photographs, medals, sketches, etc.

Description can be used to find an artifact with certain features (use descriptive words).

Subject can be used to find artifacts of a certain theme or nature, such as military, medical, etc.

People can be used to find artifacts associated with a particular person. For example, searching "Janet McCrae" in this section will show you photographs of Janet McCrae, as well as the photographic albums that she made.

You can filter your search by including some or all of the check boxes at the top of the "Advanced Search" page. For example, if you are looking for photographs **and** objects, select both the "Object Search" and "Photo Search" check boxes.

McCRAE COLLECTION

Below are links to common areas of interest within the McCrae House Collection. There is much more to explore through the Online Collections Database.

Life and Death

[Military](#)—Involved in the military since his youth, John McCrae served in both the South African War and the First World War.

[Medical](#)—John McCrae was a physician who specialized in pathology. He published his scholarly and scientific research in medical journals and textbooks.

[Medals](#)—As a prominent and dedicated military figure, John McCrae was honoured with several medals for his service.

[Letters](#)—John McCrae sent and received many letters during his lifetime.

[Death](#)—After his death, many memorials were created in respect and remembrance of John McCrae.

Art and Poetry

[Sketches](#)—John McCrae was a keen observer of the world around him and made many sketches.

[Poems](#)—John McCrae is a well known poet, in particular for the First World War poem, *In Flanders Fields*.

[In Flanders Fields](#)—John McCrae's poem *In Flanders Fields* is an enduring part of his legacy.

Animal Companions

[Bonfire](#)—The trusted horse that accompanied John McCrae in service during the First World War.

[Bonneau](#)—A dog owned by Monsieur and Madame Debacker, that became one of John McCrae's animal companions during the First World War.

Family

[Janet McCrae](#)—Wife of David McCrae and mother to siblings Thomas, John, and Geills.

[David McCrae](#)—Husband of Janet McCrae and father to siblings Thomas, John, and Geills.

[Thomas McCrae](#)—Eldest child of Janet and David McCrae, and brother to John and Geills.

[Geills McCrae](#)—Youngest child of Janet and David McCrae, and sister to Thomas and John.

McCrae House

[McCrae House](#)—John McCrae was born in a limestone cottage in Guelph, Ontario. The national heritage site is now a museum dedicated to McCrae's life and legacy.



The Class of 1914 are represented in oval frames and the faculty in rectangular frames. John McCrae (enlarged detail) is among the faculty pictured along the right border, fourth image down in the left column.

Les étudiants de la promotion de 1914 sont représentés dans des cadres ovales et les membres du corps professoral, dans des cadres rectangulaires. John McCrae (agrandissement) compte parmi les membres du corps professoral photographiés le long de la bordure de droite; il apparaît sur la quatrième photo à partir du haut de la colonne de gauche.

Medical Class McGill University. 1914
Classe de médecine de l'Université McGill. 1914

PUBLICATIONS

Textbook chapters, journal articles and poems written by John McCrae.

Adami, J. George, and John McCrae. "A Text-Book of Pathology for Students of Medicine / by J. George Adami and John McCrae." Philadelphia and New York: Lea & Febiger, 1912; 2nd ed., 1914. Accessed November 13, 2022. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b2907990&view=1up&seq=5>

McCrae, John (posthumous) and Andrew Macphail. *In Flanders Fields and Other Poems*. New York and London: The Knickerbocker Press (G. P. Putnam's Sons), 1919; reissued Toronto: Dundurn, 2015.

McCrae, John. "Notes on Three Hundred Agglutination Tests with *B. Coli Communis*." *Journal of Bacteriology* 3, no. 5 (1918): 441-44.

McCrae, John. "Notes Upon The Agglutinations Obtained By Intraperitoneal Insertion of Celloidin Capsules Containing Bacilli and Upon A Mode of Preparing Such Capsules." *Journal of Experimental Medicine* 5, no. 6 (1901): 635-42.

McCrae, John. "The Montreal Medical Journal : [Vol. 34, No. 1 ...]" *Canadiana Online*. Accessed July 9, 2021. https://www.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_05178_199/35?r=0&s=1.

McCrae, John. "Archive Record." 2012.43.8 - Book, 1941.

Library & Archives Canada holds a collection of McCrae family records, including the correspondence and diaries of John McCrae; one manuscript written by John McCrae; and miscellaneous posthumous material. Source: Library & Archives Canada (Ref. R2288-0-2-E, MG30-D209).

Excerpts from John McCrae's letters to his mother during the South African War were published in the *Evening Mercury* (Guelph, Ontario) between January and December 1900.

McCrae's poems originally appeared in literary magazines. The most complete collection was issued posthumously, as *In Flanders fields and other poems* (Toronto and New York, 1919) and includes a biographical sketch by Sir Andrew Macphail, titled "An essay in character."

READING MATERIALS

Suggested reading materials for further research into John McCrae's life.

Betts, Amanda (ed.). *In Flanders Fields: 100 Years: Writing on War, Loss and Remembrance*. New York: Knopf, 2015.

A collection of essays published on the 100th anniversary of the writing of *In Flanders Fields*. In this anthology, thirteen Canadian historians, novelists, and poets contemplate the evolving meaning of the poem, the life of its author, and the backdrop of the First World War. Themes of valour, grief, and remembrance trace the iconic symbolism of the poppy.

Carter, Richard (MD). "John McCrae (1872-1918): Doctor—Soldier—Poet." *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery: Our Surgical Heritage*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (1997): 264-68.

Richard Carter offers a detailed description of the destructiveness of the war and sets a tone of empathic understanding of John McCrae's "literary creativity." With contributions from Bev Dietrich, Curator of Guelph Museums (retired), this article offers a broad overview of McCrae's life.

Culver, David M, and Alan Freeman. "The Medical Staff." *Royal Victoria Hospital, 1887-1947*, 2014, 37-78.

A journal article that examines John McCrae's medical career at McGill University and Royal Victoria Hospital (Montreal). The authors discuss McCrae's lectures on pathology, describing his knowledge as "encyclopedic."

Dietrich, Bev. "Colonel John McCrae: From Guelph, Ontario to Flanders Fields." *Canadian Military History* (Laurier Centre for the Study of Canada), Volume 5, Issue 2, Article 5 (1996).

Bev Dietrich, Curator of Guelph Museums (retired), describes John McCrae's service history and includes excerpts from letters to his mother during the First World War. The text is recognized for its accuracy and clarifies misunderstandings about the writing of *In Flanders Fields*.

Graves, Dianne. *A Crown of Life: The World of John McCrae*. St. Catharines, ON: Vanwell Pub., 1997.

Dianne Graves recounts the impact of the poem, *In Flanders Fields*, on four individuals who contributed to the founding of the remembrance poppy campaign that annually honours the war dead of the Allied nations in the First World War and in subsequent conflicts to present day.

Duncan, Robert (director). *John McCrae's War: In Flanders Fields*. National Film Board of Canada, 1998: 46 mins. Accessed November 13, 2022: https://www.nfb.ca/film/john_mccraes_war/

A 45-minute film that highlights John McCrae's childhood, upbringing, education, and the First World War battlefields that he served as a soldier. The film tells the story of Lt. Alexis Helmer, whose death near Ypres, Belgium, on May 2, 1915 inspired McCrae to write *In Flanders Fields*.

Nash-Chambers, Debra, and Linda Granfield. "In Splendid Chorus: John McCrae's Living Faith." *Guelph Historical Society*, 2016.

An article centred on the Presbyterian values of the McCrae family, particularly their involvement at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Guelph, Ontario.

Prescott, John F. *In Flanders Fields: The Story of John McCrae*. Erin, ON: Boston Mills Press, 1985.

A practical handbook on the life of John McCrae. Several of the chapters address the significance of the poem, *In Flanders Fields*, as well as McCrae's career in the Canadian Military Hospital.

Raby-Dunne, Susan. *Bonfire: The Chestnut Gentleman*. Black Diamond, Alberta: Monday Morning Writers Group, 2015.

A fictionalized account told from the perspective of Bonfire, John McCrae's warhorse during the First World War. The story is based on the real history and events of the time. Author Susan Raby-Dunne pictorializes the tender relationship between a soldier and his horse.

RESEARCH MATERIALS

Additional resources in other museums, archives, and centres of scholarship.

Canadian War Museum

Located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the museum is dedicated to Canadian efforts in war.

<https://www.warmuseum.ca/tilston-medals-collection/recipient/76761/>

University of Guelph

Located in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, the university was formed in 1964 through the amalgamation of three colleges: Ontario Veterinary College, Ontario Agricultural College, and Macdonald Institute.

<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/archives/our-collections/regional-early-campus-history/john-mccrae-collection>

McGill University

Located in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, the university was formed in 1821. John McCrae held a fellowship in pathology and later served as a lecturer at McGill.

<https://archivalcollections.library.mcgill.ca/index.php/mccrae-john>

<https://archivalcollections.library.mcgill.ca/index.php/informationobject/browse?names=1076&sort=alphabetic&sortDir=asc>

University of Toronto

Located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, the university was formed in 1827. John McCrae graduated from University of Toronto at the top of his class.

<https://discoverarchives.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/john-mccrae-fonds>

Library and Archives of Canada

Located in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, LAC traces its origins to the Dominion Archives, formed in 1872, and the National Library of Canada, formed in 1953, which merged in 2004.

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/100-stories/Pages/mccrae.aspx>

Veterans Affairs Canada

Founded in 1944, Veterans Affairs Canada is a federal department dedicated to the commemoration, care, services, and benefits of veteran, still-serving, and retired members of the military. The website provides information about military figures along with virtual memorials.

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/Detail/84214>

Canadian Medical Hall of Fame

Founded in 1994, the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame is dedicated to honouring Canadians who have contributed to the understanding and improvement of health and medicine. Lt. Col. John McCrae was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2015.

<https://cdnmedhall.ca/laureates/johnmccrae>

McCrae House Virtual Tour

McCrae House was designated a national historic site of Canada in 1966, for its significance to the history of architecture and as the birthplace of Lt. Col. John McCrae, who was born there on November 20, 1872.

<https://www.gotyoullooking.com/1mccraehouse/mht.html>

A black and white photograph of two young men in military uniforms standing in profile, looking at a memorial plaque on a stone wall. The man on the left has his hand on the wall near the plaque. The man on the right is slightly behind him. The background shows a wooded area with trees and dappled sunlight.

BIRTHPLACE OF
LT-COL. JOHN MOORAE
DOCTOR SOLDIER POET
1872 - 1918