

“The Greatest Vow”

Essay by Jasmine Trayer, Branch #62 Salmon Arm

A man not much older than eighteen was running through a battlefield when he felt his foot land on something soft. He stopped and looked down at where his foot had rested. There he saw that he had stepped on a patch of poppies growing in the smoke of battle.

He reached down and picked a beautiful red poppy. Then he closed his eyes and tried to forget the war for just a minute. He thought of home; his mother baking in the kitchen, his father sitting in his chair reading the newspaper, his younger brother in school, and his dog curled up on the rug in front of the fireplace. How he longed to be home again! Suddenly he realized how much he wanted to keep them all safe and free.

There the young man stood vowing to himself that he would fight long and hard to save the people he loved the most, even if it meant dying. Behind him bullets whizzed by, wounded men cried, bombs exploded, yet the beautiful red and white flag flew triumphantly.

Fearfully, she opened the letter from the military, read it, buried her head in her hands, and sobbed. Then a slip of paper fell out of the envelope and fluttered to the floor. She reached down, picked it up, and read it. It was a note that her son had written about a vow he had made to himself before he died. Her son, the young man, had died to save his family and to fight for the country he loved: Canada.