

# How did Georgetown become the Red Poppy Capital of Texas?



From 1914-1918 the United States was in a war with many other countries. It became known as World War I. A young man named Henry Compton lived in Georgetown, Texas. Henry became a soldier and went to war. While he was in France, he visited a cemetery in Flanders. Many people knew about Flanders because an army doctor had written a poem which began:

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row.*

Henry saw the cemetery filled with white crosses. Many of the men buried there were American soldiers that never made it home.

When Henry returned to Georgetown, he brought his mother a bag of seeds from the red Flanders poppy. She planted these in the front yard of her house on 507 East Seventh St. Mrs. Compton would water and take care of her poppies. Each year the poppies would return.



Flanders Poppy "Papaver rhoeas"

Other people started planting the Flanders poppies until you could see red poppies all over town. In 1990, the Texas legislature certified Georgetown as the *Red Poppy Capital of Texas*. Each April when the poppies are in bloom, Georgetown celebrates the Red Poppy Festival.

<http://www.visitgeorgetown.com/news.php?announcementid=1581>  
<http://www.greatwar.nl/frames/default-poppies.html>