

Memorial Day

25 April 2017

The True Meaning of Memorial Day

“In Flanders fields the poppies blow, between the crosses, row on row, that marks our place, and in the sky. The larks still bravely singing fly.” This is part of a poem writing by John McCrae in May of 1915. I had the opportunity to sing this poem in a school choir as a tribute to all who passed away. The poem continues, “We are the dead, short days ago. We lived felt dawn, saw sunset glow. Loved and were loved, and now we lie in Flanders fields” (McCrae).

To me the true meaning of Memorial Day is remembering our ancestors and passed away family members. While I am not close enough to visit my ancestors’ graves, my grandparents visit my deceased family members and take flowers. One of the family members my grandparents visit is Clara Lucille Wright. I am the namesake of Clara Lucille Wright, my first name being Clara. Memorial Day is taking the time to learn about my ancestor who gave me my name, and remembering those my grandparents so fondly speak of. My grandfather tells me stories of his grandfather, Guy Leland Poppleton Maughan; he tells me they would sit on his front porch and watch Fourth of July Parades. As an adult, my grandfather said he recognized his grandfather's wonderful religious faith. He spent many hours in serving others, often involving his grandchildren. Memorial Day to me is learning about the life and personality of my great-great-grandparents.

To the world, Memorial Day was made as a remembrance of those who passed away while serving our country (History.com Staff). Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day. “On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at

Arlington National Cemetery, and 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there” (Claybourn). They later formed the idea of wearing poppies in remembrance. The Civil War sparked the beginning of this tradition, we now, years later, still celebrate this significant holiday.

Remembering those who served this nation is important; they are some of the largest contributors to having the country we do now. This nation is made great by those in it, a name may hold credit, but what is a name without the person or people behind it? We cannot forget that this country is formed of everyone, the reason we have the things we do, the houses, the names, the livelihood, and most important the traditions. There is no country without people to live there. Everyone has people to remember and to thank for the life they live today.

Even more recently in 2000, they declared that on May 29, Memorial Day, at 3 p. m. all should take a moment to pause what they are doing in remembrance. This is something that is not largely known, but I hope to spread this knowledge forward that we may all remember the importance of our ancestors and those who served this country.

Works Cited

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