

Remembrance Day

King George called for the first Remembrance Day (also known as Armistice Day) on 11 November in 1919 a year after the First World War had ended. The Armistice was signed in the early hours of the 11 November 1918 between Germany and the Entente (British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and America) and brought the fighting to an end at 11 o'clock that morning.



Above: Wreaths at the Ibstock War Memorial
© Michael Faulkner

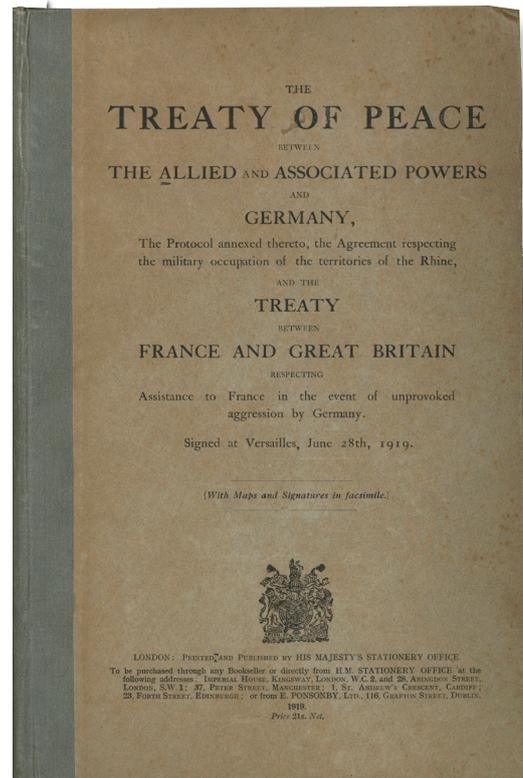
In fact, the war officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on the 28 June 1919. However, it is the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month of 1918 that is traditionally observed with a two minutes silence, not only in the UK but in other commonwealth countries, to remember all those who died in the First World War.

There is a National Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London on 11 November.

Historically the Queen has paid tribute alongside members of the government and representatives of the armed forces.

This wreath-laying ceremony will be repeated at many memorials throughout the UK at 11 am at events organised by local branches of the Royal British Legion.

The two minutes silence during the laying of the wreaths dates from the 11th of November 1919 and now observed by many, with large parts of the country falling silent to remember the brave souls who gave their lives in the First World War.



Above: Treaty of Versailles
© Public Domain

Remembrance events

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Remembrance Sunday and the Poppy Symbol

In the UK Remembrance Sunday is held on the second Sunday in November, the one that is nearest to Remembrance Day (Armistice Day), to commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women in the two World Wars and later conflicts.

On Remembrance Sunday many towns cities and villages across the UK commemorate their local war heroes with ceremonies at local war memorials.

Events that are held will typically be organised by the Royal British Legion; involve church services and be attended by civic dignitaries, serving and ex-military personnel from regular and reserve units, as well as Army Cadets, The Scouts Associations and Girl Guides and the local community.

Often the ceremonies will include a parade and like Remembrance Day, a two-minute silence is observed with wreaths being laid. It is customary for the Last Post to be played by a bugler to signify the start of the two minutes silence and ended by the playing of The Rouse.

The wearing of a poppy

Poppies were a common sight in the battlefields of the First World War flourishing in the soil that constantly churned up with the fighting and shelling. It was the flower's ability to bring new life to ground which had witnessed so much death that inspired its use as a symbol of remembrance.

It was an American humanitarian, Moina Michael, who campaigned to make the poppy a symbol of the First World War 1918. In 1921 the first artificial poppies were sold in Britain to raise money for the Earl Haig Fund that supported ex-servicemen and their families. Now the sale of poppies by the Royal British Legion raises approximately 50 million pounds a year to support ex-servicemen and their families.

THE POPPY IS...

- A symbol of Remembrance and hope
- Worn by millions of people
- Red because of the natural colour of field poppies

THE POPPY IS NOT...

- A symbol of death
- A sign of support for war
- A reflection of politics or religion
- Red to reflect the colour of blood



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Coalville's Remembrance Sunday event at the Clock Tower

North West Leicestershire District Council is committed to remembering local people who have lost their lives at war going back as far as the First World War, as well as those who have died in more recent conflicts.

Local veterans have access to social housing as well as discounted rates for Council amenities.

The Council observes the two-minute silence at their offices and organises the event in Memorial Square on Remembrance Sunday, which is attended by over three thousand people from the local community.

Following a service at Christ Church representatives of the Royal British Legion Whitwick Branch, Coalville Army Cadets, The Scouts Associations and Girl Guides, the Rotary Club, as well as groups from local schools, join a procession to the Memorial Clock Tower. The Deputy Lieutenant of Leicestershire – the Lord Lieutenant's representative (representing the Queen) is in attendance.

The Coalville Male Voice Choir sings songs and hymns of remembrance. The Leicestershire Co-op Band provides music and a bugler who plays the Last Post. The Last Post is a military tradition – at war it signals the end of the day's fighting and it is also played at military funerals to signal that a soldier has been laid to rest. Current serving military salute for the duration of the call.

It is believed that Coalville is the only town in the country to have a large group of local motorcyclists who follow the rear of the parade. Remembrance Day in Coalville is for everybody in the community. You can find out more by watching this 5-minute video clip:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=199&v=oJHa-IPxO-8



Above: Motorcyclists at the Coalville Remembrance Sunday Parade. © North West Leicestershire District Council

The Royal British Legion was founded after the First World War in 1921. It is an organisation for all of the Armed Forces, for those who are currently serving, have served, their families and dependants.

The original purpose of the Legion was to care for those who had suffered during the War either being one of those who had fought, or a member of that person's family.

Today the organisation has grown to be worldwide and adopted many more roles.

Find out more at: www.britishlegion.org.uk

Glossary

Armed Forces	The military of a nation or group of nations including the army, navy and air force
Armistice	An agreement to stop fighting
British Empire	Great Britain and the places that were under its control
British Commonwealth	A group of nations consisting of the United Kingdom and several former British colonies that are now sovereign states but still pay allegiance to the British Crown
Commemorate	Remember and show respect for someone or something
Entente	An informal alliance between countries that are involved in a treaty
Glorification	The action of describing or representing something as admirable, especially unjustifiably
Humanitarian	Having concern for the health, welfare and happiness of people
Lieutenant	An officer of middle rank in armed forces
Lord Lieutenant	The chief executive authority and head of magistrates in each county of the UK
Memorial	Something designed to preserve the memory of a person, event, etc.
Organisation	A group of people who work together
Plaque	A plaque is a sign that is used to identify what is being remembered, fixed to a memorial, structure and others
Remembrance	The act of remembering something from the past
Rotary Club	A group of businesses and people who come together to provide humanitarian services
Royal British Legion	A charity that gives support to members and ex-members of the Armed Forces, their families and their dependants
Salute	A gesture of respect or polite recognition, especially one made to or by a person when arriving or departing
Treaty	A formal agreement between two or more states about peace, alliance, commerce, or other international relations
Veterans	A person who has had a long service in the Armed Forces