

# Collingbourne Ducis

While attending Remembrance Day at Collingbourne Ducis School a few years ago, Laurence Mcgowan wondered if any children had similarly stood there in the past between the wars, fought in WWII and that their names would subsequently be read out from the roll of honour. Many of the family names are still to be found in the area. Anyway, it led him to write the attached verse.



## REMEMBRANCE

*At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, November,  
The village children gather here, to mark and to remember.  
They've left behind the playtime noise and boisterous playground games,  
To listen, still and quiet to the Roll of Honour names.  
And as the names are given, young heads think, ' It's like mine',  
And ancestral hands reach out to them across some spectral line.*

*No bowed head Portland statue, forever keens the village loss,  
Instead it marked the missing with a sacrificial cross,  
And on the base the names are writ, their memory bequeathed,  
Today to be fresh haloed and in Flanders red enwreathed.  
This is the place where faith is kept to guard the requiem,  
As for the first time children say " We will Remember Them".*

*The lucky quick are there, those who've known and those who've seen,  
The squandering of young lives, the waste of what may have been,  
Infants all unknowing, unaware of mortal doom,  
Are stripped of innocence today, bloodied by poppy's bloom.  
Did other children, 'tween the wars, wear the self same flower?  
And did they ever think they'd have their names intoned this hour?  
And are there any here today whose fate will be fulfilled,  
As names intoned, in turn, red writ by Destiny, cruel quilled?*

*Please God no.*

*By Laurence Mcgowan*