World War I memorials

World War I memorials commemorate the events and the casualties of World War I. These war memorials include civic memorials , larger national monuments , war cemeteries , private memorials and a range of utilitarian designs such as halls and parks , dedicated to remembering those involved in the conflict . Huge numbers of memorials were built in the 1920s and 1930s , with around 176 @,@ 000 erected in France alone . This was a new social phenomenon and marked a major cultural shift in how nations commemorated conflicts . Interest in World War I and its memorials faded after World War II , and did not increase again until the 1980s and 1990s , which saw the renovation of many existing memorials and the opening of new sites . Visitor numbers at many memorials increased significantly , while major national and civic memorials continue to be used for annual ceremonies remembering the war .

Architecturally , most war memorials were relatively conservative in design , aiming to use established styles to produce a tragic but comforting , noble and enduring commemoration of the war dead . Classical themes were particularly common , taking the prevailing styles of the late 19th century and typically simplifying them to produce cleaner , more abstract memorials . Allegorical and symbolic features , frequently drawing on Christian imagery , were used to communicate themes of self @-@ sacrifice , victory and death . Some memorials adopted a medievalist theme instead , looking backwards to a more secure past , while others used emerging realist and Art Deco architectural styles to communicate the themes of the war .

The commissioning of memorials occurred through a wide range of national and local institutions , reflecting local political traditions ; funding was similarly disparate , with most countries relying heavily on local charitable contributions to cover the costs of construction . War cemeteries and memorials to particularly significant battles , however , were typically centrally controlled and funded by the state . The war encouraged the creation of new forms of memorial . Lists of memorial names , reflecting the huge scale of the losses , were a common feature , while Tombs of the Unknown Soldier containing a selected , unidentified body , and empty cenotaph monuments commemorated the numerous unidentifiable corpses and those servicemen whose bodies were never found . Ceremonies were often held at the memorials , including those on Armistice Day , Anzac Day and the Fêtes de la Victoire , while pilgrimages to the sites of the conflict and the memorials there were common in the inter @-@ war years .

Much of the symbolism included in memorials was political in tone , and politics played an important part in their construction . Many memorials were embroiled in local ethnic and religious tensions , with memorials either reflecting the contribution of particular groups to the conflict or being rejected entirely by others . In several countries it proved difficult to produce memorials that appealed to and included the religious and political views of all of a community . The Fascist governments that came to power in Italy and Germany during the inter @-@ war period made the construction of memorials a key part of their political programme , resulting in a number of larger memorial projects with strong national overtones being constructed in the 1930s . While few memorials embraced a pacifist perspective , some anti @-@ war campaigners used the memorials for rallies and meetings . Many of the political tensions of the inter @-@ war period had diminished by the end of the 20th century , allowing some countries to commemorate the events of the war through memorials for the first time since the end of the war . In the centennial of World War I , the memory of the war has become a major theme for scholars and museums .

Background

On the eve of World War I there were no traditions of nationally commemorating mass casualties in war . France and Germany had been relatively recently involved in the Franco @-@ Prussian War of 1870 to 1871 . Germany had built a number of national war memorials commemorating their victory , usually focusing on celebrating their military leaders . In France , memorials to their losses were relatively common , but far from being a national response , and many towns and villages did not erect memorials at all . A new organisation , the Souvenir Français , was established in the

1880s to protect French war memorials and encourage young French people to engage in military activities ; the organisation grew to have many contacts in local government by 1914 .

Britain and Australia had both sent forces to participate in the Second Boer War of 1899 to 1902 , which spurred an increased focus on war memorials . The Boer War had involved 200 @,@ 000 British volunteers alone , and attracted considerable press coverage . Numerous war memorials were erected on their return , either by local community leaders or by the local Lord Lieutenant , acting on behalf of the county regiments ; these were often situated in quiet locations to allow for peaceful reflection by visitors . Australia had honoured its volunteers by placing individual plaques inside buildings , creating outdoor memorial tablets and erecting obelisks in public places . Although the Boer War encouraged a shift away from memorials portraying heroic commanding officers , as had been popular earlier in the 19th century , towards depicting ordinary soldiers , annual ceremonies surrounding the memorials were not common and no official memorial day emerged . Boer War memorials in both countries were widely felt to lack a suitable quality of design and execution , echoing contemporary concerns in the US about the statues erected to commemorate the American Civil War .

The new European states that had formed in the second half of the 19th century typically had traditions of war memorials , but nothing on the scale that would later emerge from World War I. Italy built various war memorials after unification in the 1860s , but there was little agreement about who should be responsible for these within the new Italian state . Romania erected a number of heroically styled memorials after the Romanian War of Independence in 1877 and 1878 , usually celebrating famous leaders associated with Romanian independence , but also including the occasional modest local monuments Bulgaria and Serbia constructed many war memorials after the end of the First Balkan War in 1913 . The public played little role in these eastern European memorials , however , which were typically constructed by the central state authorities .

= = World War I (1914 ? 18) = =

= = = Experience of the conflict = = =

The memorials to World War I were shaped by the traumatic nature of the conflict and its impact on individuals and communities . The experience of the different nations influenced varied considerably , but common themes emerged . The war required a mass call to arms , with a significant percentage of the population mobilised to fight , either as volunteers or through conscription . Campaigns were conducted on multiple fronts across Europe and beyond . The fighting was mechanised and conducted on an industrial scale ; existing weapons , such as machine guns and artillery , were combined with the innovative deployment of aircraft , submarines and poison gas . In many theatres of operation , mobile campaigns degenerated into static trench warfare , depending on the slow attrition of the enemy over many years for victory . The battles spread across larger areas than ever before , with key engagements , such as that at Verdun etched on the memories of the nations involved .

One result of this style of warfare was a level of casualties unknown in previous conflicts . Approximately 2 million Germans and 1 @.@ 3 million Frenchmen died during the war ; 720 @,@ 000 British soldiers died , along with 61 @,@ 000 Canadian , 60 @,@ 000 Australian and 18 @,@ 000 New Zealand servicemen . On the Eastern front , 300 @,@ 000 Romanians alone died . The war had a global impact , and at least 2 @,@ 000 Chinese died in the European theatre of the conflict alone . Many of the deaths occurred within a short period of time , or affected particular groups : half of France 's casualties occurred during the first 17 months of the war , for example , while the French middle and upper classes suffered disproportionate losses . Many of those who survived were injured in the course of the fighting ; some injuries , such as facial traumas , resulted in the victim being shunned by wider society and banned from public events . These losses also left large numbers of widows and orphans ? 1 @.@ 36 m in France alone ? and affected most families in some way : in Australia , every second family had lost a relative . Even those left at home had

suffered extensively from stress , anxiety and grief .

The war had also led to political tensions , revolution and turmoil . In Russia , the conflict resulted in revolution and civil war between 1917 and 1923 , and the rise to power of the Communist Bolshevik government . The German Empire had seen revolution break out at the end of the war , with vicious street fighting in the major cities , including Berlin ; some Germans felt that this experience was too quickly forgotten in the post @-@ war years . Romania almost descended into revolution as well . There was turmoil in Ireland ; 210 @,@ 000 Irish served in the war as part of the British forces , but the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916 led in turn to the Irish War of Independence and the later civil war . Elsewhere the war exposed simmering ethnic and religious divisions . In Canada , for example , the distinctions between the English , largely Protestant , and French speaking , predominantly Catholic , parts of the country become increasingly apparent , with conscription becoming a major political issue .

In the years after the war , veterans , the bereaved and the rest of society focused , to the point of obsession , with the problem of death . There was tremendous interest in creating war memorials that celebrated the themes of glory , heroism and loss . In part , there was a rupture or dislocation with the pre @-@ war norms of how memorials should look and feel ; communities sought to find new , radical ways to mourn the millions of dead , killed in an essentially modern conflict . In other ways , the building of memorials drew on traditional forms and ideas , drawing on existing religious and architectural themes to explore loss and grief .

= = = Responses during the war = = =

As the war progressed , memorials began to be created in most countries , either in civic centres , personal homes or on the battlefields themselves . Memorials took various names across Europe ; amongst English @-@ speaking countries , such memorials had previously been called fallen soldiers ' monuments , but the term " war memorial " became popularised by the conflict , drawing attention to the role of society as a whole in the events . Germany followed suit , terming the memorials Kriegerdenkmal , war monuments . By contrast France and Italy termed them monuments aux morts and monumenti ai caduti : monuments to the dead , an explicit reference to the deceased . Many of these memorials were in private homes rather than in public places , as bereaved families often made domestic memorials , using photographs of the deceased and personal objects sent back from the front .

In Britain and Australia , early memorials were closely linked to the need to promote military recruitment and the state had an ambivalent attitude towards the informal memorials that emerged during the conflict . In Britain , stone memorials to the war began to be erected in towns and villages from 1915 onwards ; some of these were given out by the state as rewards to communities for meeting military recruitment targets . In Australia , the existing memorials to mark the Boer War were used initially used for commemorative ceremonies intended to increase military recruitment . As casualties increased , rolls of honour listing the dead began to be displayed in Britain and honour tablets with the names of those who had enlisted were put up inside Australian buildings : Australia used these lists to apply moral pressure on those who were not yet joined up . Informal memorials began to multiply as the war progressed . Local Australian groups erected small monuments , such as drinking fountains and stone pillars , to the point where the government became concerned about the expenditure on them and passed a law in 1916 to control their numbers . In Britain , some Anglican church leaders began to create street war shrines to the dead . These cheap , local memorials were mainly constructed in working class districts , often built from wood and paper , and were used for holding short services in honour of the dead and to hold donations of flowers . They were criticised , however , as promoting Catholic ritualism . Official support for the shrines only came after a national newspaper campaign , efforts by the Lord Mayor of London and a well @-@ publicised visit from Queen Mary to a shrine , and standardised stone shrines then began to replace the earlier , temporary versions .

Across the German Empire nagelfiguren , war memorials made from iron nails embedded in wood , became popular , particularly in Austria . These took various forms , including knights , shields ,

eagles and crosses , as well as submarines . This practice had medieval origins , and the memorials were reinforced by the promotion of burgfrieden during the war , a medieval pact in which disparate German communities would put aside their differences during a conflict . In some cases , relatives of the deceased were encouraged to hammer memorial nails in as part of the ceremonies , while children might be encouraged to read out poems in a medieval style . At some nagelfiguren a charge was made for each nail used , with the revenues donated to charities supporting soldiers , orphans and others affected by the conflict .

Some relatively large memorials were constructed during the war . The largest nagelfiguren was a statue of General Hindenburg , famous for his victory over the Russians in Prussia at the battle of Tannenberg ; the 12 m tall statue was put up in Berlin , complete with scaffolding to allow participants to reach the statue and hammer nails in . By the end of the war , architects in Germany already considering how to commemorate the dead . A large , temporary memorial shrine was built in Hyde Park in August 1918 , with over 100 @,@ 000 visitors in its first week : it lasted over a year . The Hyde Park shrine encouraged debate in Britain about permanent war memorials in the major cities and towns . Museums to remember the events of the war also began to be commissioned ; governmentally : the Imperial War Museum in Britain in 1917 , Australia began a War Museum in 1917 ; privately , the repository of wartime records in France , Germany the Kriegsbibliothek .

During the conflict itself , monuments were erected near the battlefields and the temporary cemeteries being used to store the dead . It had been hoped in Britain to repatriate the war dead , but this rapidly proved entirely impractical , leading to haphazard , improvised arrangements around the battlefields . By 1916 over 200 war cemeteries had been commissioned in France and Belgium , prompting debate about what longer term memorials might be appropriate at these sites . The government was concerned that unsuitable , even distasteful memorials might be erected by relatives at the cemeteries and the decision was taken that the cemeteries would be controlled by the state , and that a uniform design would be applied to the memorials at the graves . French cemeteries were used for as memorial sites for ceremonies by injured soldiers during the war and many towns began to name streets and squares after Verdun . In Belgium , where the movement of the war and losses of territory had meant that the Flemish elements of the population were increasingly forming a disproportionate percentage of the army , the language on the memorial headstone gradually became an issue , leading to calls for the creation of heldenhuldezerkjes , headstones inscribed in Flemish , rather than the usual French . In Imperial Russia , the Moscow City Fraternal Cemetery was constructed for the war dead in 1915 by the Imperial royal family and senior Moscow political leaders , who hoped that its inspiring architecture would ensure patriotism in future generations of Russians .

= = Inter @-@ war (1919 ? 39) = =

= = = Construction = = =

= = = = Commissioning memorials = = = =

Various different mechanisms for commissioning the construction of war memorials emerged during the inter @-@ war period . In most of the nations involved in the conflict , the memorials erected in towns and cities were usually commissioned by local community leaders and other civic groups , with relatively little or no central state involvement . Some national organisations emerged , including the British War Memorials Committee and the Canadian War Memorials Fund , but these focused on narrow , limited projects , rather than trying to coordinate a national response . The local processes and committees could result in multiple memorials being created for the same community or event : the site of Verdun was commemorated by three different memorials , for example , while some British towns saw rival memorials created by competing groups in the community .

In contrast , the construction of war cemeteries , graves and their associated memorials were

typically placed under the control of a central state authority . The Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) took on this role for Britain and her empire . The Commissione nazionale per la onoranze ai caduti di guerra in Italy coordinated the military repatriation of bodies and the construction of cemeteries . The German war graves commission , the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge (VDK) , was established in 1919 , and took strict control over the creation and style of German war cemeteries . The American Battle Monuments Commission oversaw US military graves in a similar fashion .

In Britain and Australia , local community leaders were expected to organise local committees to create war memorials . Britain had a strong tradition of local government and mayors , council chairmen or similar leaders would usually step forward to establish a memorial committee . These committees might then bring in a wider cross @-@ section of local community leaders , including Christian clergy , Jewish leaders , voluntary organisations , rifle clubs and volunteer police , although sometimes committees were more tightly controlled by local government officials . Former servicemen occasionally felt that their opinions were excluded from the formal processes , while in other cases complaints were made that the wealthier members of the community were given a disproportionate role in decision @-@ making . In both Britain and Australia , local memorials were also supplemented by other memorials that reflected wider groups in society , such as military units or particular sports , hobbies or even animals . North America largely followed a similar process . In Canada , the early memorials to the war were typically organised by groups of former soldiers , the Canadian Legion or local authorities . There was considerable discussion in the US during 1919 about the need to construct a suitably grand , national monument to commemorate the war dead , but the discussions failed to produce a consensus and no project was undertaken .

In other countries , the state played a stronger role in the process of commissioning memorials . France , for example , mostly relied on local communities to organise and commission most war memorials , but the state played a comparatively larger role than in Britain and similar countries . A law was passed in 1919 establishing an official role for local government officials in the process of commissioning memorials ; many towns then formed committees to take this process forward , typically at the commune level . Members of the Souvenir Français organisation played an important role in many of the resulting local committees . In other cases , governments increased their role in commissioning memorials during the inter @-@ war period . In Romania , most memorials in the early 1920s were initially erected by local communities ; in 1919 the royal family created the Societatea Cultul Eroilor Mor?i to oversee commemoration of the war more generally ; the organisation was headed by the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church . By the 1930s official concern over the diverse range of designs led to increased central control over the process .

The rise of Fascism in particular frequently encouraged greater state involvement . In Italy , between the end of the war and 1923 local groups and organisations had established their own local memorials in villages and towns . Not all villages agreed that memorials were appropriate , either for political or religious reasons . With the Fascist revolution , this process became more centralised ; veteran groups were assimilated by the Fascist government in 1926 , and a systematic attempt to construct suitable national and local memorials followed . In Germany , the political and economic chaos of the immediate post @-@ war years discouraged the construction of civic war memorials and comparatively few civic memorials in their larger towns , mainly due to the shortage of funds in the inter @-@ war German economy and political disagreements between local groups as to what to commemorate and how . Those memorials that were constructed were often built instead by local movements , representing particular factional interests . It was only after the rise of the German Nazi party to power in 1933 that substantial funding began to flow into construction programmes , controlled from Berlin .

As a result of all these processes , large numbers of memorials , more than for any other conflict , were built across the world during the inter @-@ war period . It is estimated that France built around 176 @,@ 000 war memorials , including around 36 @,@ 000 in the local communes . Most of the local commune memorials were built by 1922 , but those in the towns and cities typically required more protracted negotiations , and their construction stretched into the 1930s . The 1920s were particularly busy for construction of memorials in Britain , although the trend tailed off in 1930s , with

the last inter @-@ war memorial unveiled at the town of Mumbles in 1939 . The commissioning of Australian war memorials similarly reduced after the mid @-@ 1920s . Over 3 @,@ 500 Romanian memorials were erected . Many German memorials were built during the 1930s . Russia was unusual in building very few war memorials to the events of World War I , mainly as a result of the devastation of the Civil War and the political views of the subsequent Bolshevik government .

= = = = Community and civic memorials = = = =

Civic and private memorials in response to the war took many forms , from monuments , sculpture , buildings , gardens , artistic works or special funds to support particular activities . One of the major distinctions between proposed war memorials involved a distinction between utilitarian and non @-@ utilitarian , symbolic designs ; in the US , utilitarian memorials were termed " living memorials " . Utilitarian memorials were intended to commemorate the dead by having a practical function and typically include projects such as libraries , small hospitals , cottages for nursing staff , parks , clock towers or bowling greens , although in Britain and Canada , large @-@ scale urban redevelopment projects were also proposed , including rebuilding the centre of Westminster , to form a huge war memorial complex and building a subway under the Detroit River . In contrast non @-@ utilitarian memorials , such as monuments , remembered the dead purely through their symbolism or design . Locations could be also contentious : in France , some arguments as to whether market places , for example , were suitable locations : was it good to choose a central location , or did this cheapen the symbolism ? In Britain , in a shift from 19th century practices , memorials were typically placed in busy public places .

In some countries , such as France and Germany , utilitarian memorials were considered totally unsuitable ; the Germans , for example , thought them unpatriotic and disrespectful to the dead . In other , particularly more Protestant countries , however , a vigorous debate raged as to whether utilitarian or symbolic memorials were more appropriate . In Britain , this debate was spurred on by the formation of various national societies to promote particular perspectives . Some felt that practical memorials failed to remember the war dead properly ; others argued that these memorials helped support the survivors of the war and society as a whole . Although these arguments frequently became embroiled in local politics , there was little correlation between national political views and opinions on the form of memorials . Most memorials in Australia were monumental rather than utilitarian , but practical memorials such as hospitals , schools or new roads were increasingly popular in the post war period , although some concerns were raised that these memorials might be later demolished as Australia 's towns expanded . In America , utilitarian memorials were more popular , and the establishment of the National Committee on Memorial Buildings supported this trend . The American " living memorial " movement was aided by widespread criticism of the war monuments to the American Civil War , which many felt to have been purely executed .

For symbolic memorials , numerous designs were possible , from simple monuments through to much more complex pieces of sculpture . Obelisks had been a popular memorial form in the 19th century and remained so in the inter @-@ war years , including in Britain , France , Australia and Romania . One factor in this popularity was that obelisks were relatively cheap to build , while they also fitted well with the existing civic architecture in many towns . Memorial plaques were another popular memorial style around the world . Soldiers , either individually or in groups , were a popular sculptural feature in most countries , portrayed in various stances ; typically these were allegorical , although in France the style of the soldier could also carry political meaning and reflect local political sympathies . Although the trend pre @-@ dated the First World War , very few Western war memorials portrayed heroic commanding officers , as had been popular earlier in the 19th century ; if soldiers were depicted , they were invariably ordinary soldiers , usually infantrymen . After the unveiling of the Cenotaph in London , it became a popular design in many other locations in Britain and Australia too .

In other respects , individual countries had different preferences for styles of memorial . French communities usually chose simple monuments , located in public spaces , and deliberately avoided political or religious imagery and rhetoric . In Australia and the US , memorial halls ? some of which

were large , grand structures ? were popular . Australia also created the idea of an Avenue of Honour , involving lines of trees , with memorial plaques , along a road . Canadians often brought back various material from Europe for their memorials , including pieces of local European churches and soil from the relevant battlefields . Individual countries also had typical national symbols that were widely incorporated , from the British Britannia , to the Gallic rooster to the Romanian vulture . Postcards of war memorials were widely produced in Britain and Italy , and ceramic models of the more famous ones , such as the Cenotaph , were sold as souvenirs .

= = = = Cemeteries = = = =

The World War I war cemeteries represented important memorials sites to the conflict and typically incorporated specific monuments commemorating the dead . Under the Treaty of Versailles , each country was made officially responsible for maintaining the military graves inside their territories , but the relevant countries of the fallen soldiers were typically granted the freedom to design and build the military cemeteries themselves . Some countries ' cemeteries would naturally be on their own soil , but in other cases , such as for Britain and the Dominions , the cemeteries could be relatively distant ; the failure to repatriate British war dead from Europe early in the war had proved domestically controversial , and when the US joined the war in 1917 their government had promised relatives that bodies would be repatriated to the US ; around 70 percent of the US war dead were sent back . Along the Western front , the cemeteries were typically concentrated in specific locations , with the bodies brought in some distances to form larger cemeteries ; elsewhere , the cemeteries tended to be smaller and more scattered .

There was much discussion across the British empire about how the IWGC should commemorate the war dead . The construction of war cemeteries was a clear priority , but there was an ambition to produce a ground @-@ breaking series of memorials to the fallen soldiers and the key battles along the Western front , while in the east there was an urgent political requirement to construct memorials to reinforce Britain 's inter @-@ war claims to influence and territories across the region . The Dominions also wanted to have their own national monuments as part of the programme of work . Initially twelve major memorials were planned , each of which would combine a memorial to a key battlefield , a cemetery and a monument to a specific Dominion , but the French government raised concerns over the considerable number and size of these memorials , leading to the plans being halved in scale .

IWGC war cemeteries featured grass and flowers within a walled area , intended to resemble an English garden ; almost all were constructed around a War Stone and a Cross of Sacrifice , described in more detail below . The style varied slightly by architect and location , but typically the cemeteries followed classical influences in buildings and monuments , sometimes adapted slightly to appeal to the style of a particular Dominion . The buildings at the cemeteries were important symbolically and formed a key part of these designs . The graves proved controversial : initially they were marked by wooden crosses but , after some argument , it was agreed to replace these with Portland stone markers ; the original wooden memorials were in some cases returned to the soldier 's next of kin . Each marker was identical in shape and individualised only through the inscription of the name , regiment , date of death , a religious symbol and a short text agreed by the next of kin . Public debate ensued about these graves throughout the 1920s . British officials were concerned about families erecting their own memorials on the sites and detracting from the appearance of the cemeteries ; critics complained about the secular nature of the memorials , the limited options for families to individualise the graves and the excessive role of the IWGC in determining how the soldiers were buried .

The construction of the French cemeteries was complicated by even more heated arguments over how the bodies of the war dead should be dealt with . During the conflict the French war dead had ended up being split between special war cemeteries , local civilian cemeteries and some had been returned to their original villages . Catholic traditionalists in the government called for the bodies to be buried together in special cemeteries along the Western front , while others campaigned for them to be returned to local cemeteries . In 1919 , the decision was taken to use special war cemeteries

and to ban the repatriation of bodies , but by 1920 this decision had been reversed and 300 @,@ 000 French bodies were repatriated to their original homes . The French war cemeteries were typically much larger than their IWGC equivalents and used concrete Catholic crosses for all the graves , with the exception of the Islamic and Chinese war dead .

 German war cemeteries are somewhat different from French and British ones , being more austere and simple in design . They were built around lawns , without flowers or other decorations , intended to highlight acceptance of the tragedy and avoid the expensive and pretentious sentimentality that the German VDK felt Allied cemeteries invoked . German war cemeteries also included heldenhaine , heroes ' groves populated with oak trees and large boulders , dolmen . Both symbolising nature ; this landscaping was considered to be particularly important for German war cemeteries . The cemeteries used slate grave markers , less individualised than British or French equivalents , and felt to better symbolise the importance German nation as a whole .

 In eastern Europe , Romania built what were termed heroes ' war grave cemeteries , either in existing heroes ' cemeteries , on the sites of the World War I battles , or in new cemeteries symbolically placed on the edges of towns . The situation was somewhat different in Russia , however , where the Moscow City Fraternal Cemetery was used not just for the war dead of World War I , but also for the casualties of the Civil War , and then the victims of the secret police . It was finally closed by the Bolsheviks in 1925 and turned into a park ; subsequently , possibly on the orders of Joseph Stalin , the Eastern Orthodox church and the headstones were systematically destroyed until almost no trace of the cemetery remained .

 A final wave of war cemetery memorials were completed in the 1930s under the Fascist governments of Germany and Italy . The main Italian war cemeteries were not finished until 1938 , and their positioning in some cases carried special political meaning , emphasising Italy 's right to claim important , but ethnically diverse , border regions . In Germany , the same decade saw the completion of totenburgen , fortresses of the dead , used as war cemeteries and memorials . These were in some senses an extension of the cemetery designs of the 1920s , celebrating a natural German landscape , but included extensive modernist , monumental features , intending to highlight German artistic skill .

= = = = Battlefields = = = =

 Most nations considered certain battlefields particularly important because of the national losses that had been incurred there , and took steps to erect special memorials to them , alongside the cemeteries that held their war dead . The French regarded the battles around Verdun as symbolic of the entire war , while for the British the battle of Ypres in Belgium and the battle of the Somme in France ? in particular Thiepval hill ? had similar resonances . Australian and New Zealand forces placed special significance on the events of Gallipoli . In the same way , Romania regarded the battles of M?r??e?ti and M?r??ti as hugely significant sites , worth of special remembrance . In the inter @-@ war years , these battlefields were frequently described as forming " sacred " ground because of the number deaths that had occurred there .

 National governmental bodies and charities were rapidly formed to produce memorials for these sites . The British government , for example , set up the Battle Exploits Committee in 1919 to create national battlefield memorials , alongside the work of the IWGC . Initially their intent was to celebrate the more heroic aspects of the fighting , and to avoid the flavour of memorials to the fallen that were being built elsewhere ; by 1921 , however , the committee had entered into a partnership with IWGC and adopted the same focus on the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers . The Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission (CBMC) was similarly established in 1920 to produce war memorials for the major battlefields involving Canadian forces .

 A range of battlefield memorials emerged . The huge Douaumont ossuary was built to remember Verdun through a private French charity , organised by the Bishop of Verdun . The ossuary was deliberately multi @-@ faith , however , with Catholic , Protestant , Jewish and Islamic facilities . The Romanian authorities built a similar mausoleum at M?r??e?ti , explicitly likened to the use French ossuary at Verdun . Canadian Vimy Monument . Amidst some concerns about denigrating

the importance of other battlefields , the CBMC focused on producing a single major memorial at Vimy . In Turkey , the entire battlefield of Gallipoli was ceded to Britain and her imperial allies in 1923 , and the area was turned into an extended memorial to the war dead . There were no settlements to reconstruct , so the graves were largely left scattered in individual graves or small cemeteries , and the slopes were planted with Australian vegetation . Obelisks were particularly popular memorials at Gallipoli along the ridges , including one obelisk 100 ft high .

There was uncertainty as to how to treat the wider battlefields surrounding these monuments . At the end of the war , visitors and tourists could easily see the damage caused by the war and the detritus of the fighting , but post @-@ war reconstruction meant that by the 1930s most of this damage along the Western front had been restored . In several cases , veterans felt that the battlefields should be maintained in their immediate post @-@ war condition as memorials ; the reconstruction of the town of Ypres was opposed by some who favoured keeping the ruins as a memorial . It was proposed to leave the fortifications of Douaumont in ruins as a memorial to the dead of Verdun , and the issue of whether or not to replant the region with trees in the 1930s proved controversial with veterans . Some parts of the trench systems were preserved intact as memorials , however , including the Beaumont @-@ Hamel Newfoundland Memorial and the trench system at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial . In other theatres , such as Iraq and Palestine , reconstruction took much longer and bodies remained unburied at least until 1929 .

= = = = Economics = = = =

Resources and funds were needed to construct most memorials , particular larger monuments or building projects ; sometimes professional services could be acquired for nothing , but normally designers , workmen and suppliers had to be paid . Different countries approached this problem in various ways , depending on local culture and the role of the state . Despite the special nature of the memorials , contractual arguments and issues over costs , timings and specifications were common , from smaller works in villages through to major works , such as the Vimy Memorial . The sheer volume of work encouraged industrial innovation : carving the inscriptions into the many thousands of British memorial stones had to originally be undertaken by hand , for example , until a Lancashire company invented an automated engraving process .

In Britain , voluntary subscription , rather than funding from local or central government , was considered the only correct way to pay for a war memorial , although it was disputed whether active proactive fundraising was appropriate . Raising the sums required could be quite difficult , and many committees tried various means , including moral blackmail , to exhort larger sums out of the more wealthy members of the community . The amount of money successfully raised varied considerably : the city of Glasgow , with a million inhabitants , raised approximately £ 104 @,@ 000 for memorials ; Leeds , with around half a million inhabitants , only £ 6 @,@ 000 . A typical memorial monument in Britain costed between £ 1 @,@ 000 and £ 2 @,@ 000 , but some could be cheaper still ; larger pieces , such as the Royal Artillery Memorial , could cost as much as £ 25 @,@ 000 . Australian communities raised funds in similar ways to their British equivalents , but the process of fund @-@ raising was much more open , and included directly canvassing for donations . Typical Australian projects cost between £ 100 and £ 1 @,@ 000 , with the larger memorials costing up to £ 5 @,@ 000 ; bank @-@ loans were also sometimes used . Memorials along the Western front , being larger , cost rather more than their civic equivalents ; the Villers ? Bretonneux Australian National Memorial , for example , cost the IWGC and Australian government around £ 40 @,@ 000 .

The French approach to funding memorials also relied mainly on voluntary fundraising , but featured a greater role for the state . A law passed in 1919 provided for a subsidy from central government to local authorities to assist in building memorials ; the money was distributed in proportion to the number of local citizens who had died in the war . Nonetheless the largest French projects , such as the Ossuary of Douaumont , were still paid for mostly through private fund raising across France and the international community : it could take many years to raise the sums required . The Ossuary cost 15 m francs to build ; at the other end of the scale , more modest urban memorials cost around 300 @,@ 000 francs .

Much of the inter @-@ war period saw economic recession or stagnant growth , making fund @-@ raising more challenging . Partially as a result , many memorial projects had to be cut back or altered due to lack of money . The final size of Douaumont had to be cut in size by a third when fund @-@ raising slowed . Proposals to turn the planned Imperial War Museum into a grand memorial for the war dead were shelved due to lack of funds .

The construction of memorials produced a lot of business in all the countries involved in the war . In Britain and Australia , stone masons provided large quantities of mass @-@ produced design , often advertising through catalogues , while professional architects acquired the bulk of the specialised commissions for war memorials , making use of their professional organisations . Professional sculptors argued that their work was superior and more appropriate than that of architects , but they received far fewer commissions . British stone masons provided cheap products through catalogues . In France , funeral directors played a large part in the business of producing designs , producing catalogues of their designs for local communities to choose from . In the US , there was sufficient interest that a specialist magazine , Monumental News , was created to support the trade in war memorials .

= = = Innovation and grieving = = =

= = = = Naming the dead = = = =

The deaths caused by World War I were difficult for post @-@ war societies to cope with : their unprecedented scale challenged existing methods of grieving . Furthermore , an expectation had arisen during the war that individual soldiers would expect to be commemorated , even if they were low ranking members of the military . One method used to address this was the inclusion of lists of names . In part , this was a response to the practical problem of commemorating such large numbers of dead , but it carried additional symbolic importance ; in some ways , the physical presence of a name acted to compensate for an absent body . The lists could vary in size from the 21 names listed in a small English village like East Ilsley , to the 54 @,@ 896 names inscribed on the Menin Gate and the 73 @,@ 357 on the Thiepval Memorial .

Civic memorials in Britain and France typically had names inscribed ; in Britain , these were often combined with other mottos or script , in France , where the significance of the name took even greater importance , just the names were used with a simple introduction . In France the names were usually listed in alphabetical order , resembling a military presentation . The British phrase , adopted by IWGC , " their name liveth for evermore " , was popularised by Rudyard Kipling , who had lost a son during the war . British lists often omitted the soldier 's rank , creating an impression of equality in death . Long lists of names ? up to 6 @,@ 000 ? incorporated into churches in England and Germany . In Australia , where the forces were solely volunteers , all those who served were typically recorded on memorials , while in New Zealand , where conscription applied , only the fallen were recorded on memorials .

Touching the names of the dead on memorials was common gesture of grieving in the inter @-@ war period ; sometimes mourners would also kiss the names . Visitors to the memorials on the Western front would often photograph or trace on paper the relevant names on the memorials , taking these reminders back with them to their homes . By contrast , the naming of the dead played a less significant role in Italy , where formal lists of the war dead were not established until the mid @-@ 1920s ; local communities compiled their own lists , used to produce local memorial plaques , but the national lists remained inaccurate for many years .

After the war , a bronze memorial plaque , inscribed with the name of the deceased alongside Britannia and a lion , and a scroll , sent to the next of kin of those had died in the service of the British Empire . Honour rolls in Canada were very popular , particularly immediately after the end of the war , although the decision on which names to include on them proved contentious : should accidental deaths , for example , be included ? Where it was impractical to inscribe names in churches , usually due to the number of casualties and available space , books of names were often

recorded instead .

 A large number of soldiers who died in the war were never found , and similarly bodies were recovered that could not be identified ; once again , this required new forms of memorial . The scale of the issue was once again huge : 73 @,@ 000 Allied dead were never found at the Somme , for example , either because their bodies had been lost , destroyed or were unrecognisable , more than one in ten of the losses in the battle .

 One of the key developments in memorials to the war , the cenotaph , used an empty tomb to symbolise these aspects of the war . In 1919 , Britain and France planned victory marches through their respective capitals and as part of this France decided to erect a temporary cenotaph , an empty sarcophagus monument , which would be saluted by the marching troops . The British Prime Minister David Lloyd George decided that a similar memorial should be built in London , despite ministerial opposition that a cenotaph was an inappropriate , Catholic form of monument . The victory marches went ahead ; French political leaders had the memorial in Paris removed immediately after the parade , on the basis that it was too Germanic in appearance , but the London cenotaph proved very popular and hundreds of thousands flocked to see it . The popularity of the temporary Cenotaph resulted in it remaining open until the following year , when the decision had to be taken about what to do with the decaying structure : there was concern from the government that a permanent memorial might be vandalised , while the popular press criticised any suggestion of dismantling the existing structure . A new , permanent cenotaph designed by Edwin Lutyens was commissioned and unveiled on Whitehall Street on Armistice Day 1920 , effectively turning this part of London into a memorial to the war ; over a million people visited the site during November that year . The memorial style became very popular and spread to other countries in the subsequent years .

 In contrast to the empty cenotaph , another new form of memorial , the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier , used the idea of burying one of the unidentified bodies from the war as a symbolic memorial to all of the lost soldiers . This idea had begun to emerge towards the end of the war , and was actively promoted by some British veterans ' groups in 1919 . Initially , however , it failed to gain traction with the government because of the success of the Whitehall Cenotaph , and a second memorial was felt to be unnecessary . Finally , in 1920 , following lobbying by British cleric David Railton , Britain and France both decided to create a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier , choosing an unknown body and creating a special memorial around it ; the tombs were inaugurated on Armistice Day . The choice of location for the French tomb proved controversial , however , and it was not finalised until the following year , when the body was laid to rest under the Arc de Triumph . The concept proved popular , and encouraged similar memorials in other countries .

 In Italy , the idea of an Unknown Soldier memorial was particularly popular , both because lists of memorial names were less common and because the Italy had suffered particularly heavily from unidentifiable casualties as a result of the campaigns in the Alps ? as many of 60 % of the corpses buried at Redipuglia were unidentifiable . The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Rome was built in 1921 , with other unidentifiable bodies being adopted by local cults of the dead across Italy . The Italian tomb was significant in political terms ; Italy was deeply divided in the post @-@ war years and the Liberal government hoped that the opening would reunify the country . In practice , the tomb became a point of tension between the Liberals and the Italian Fascist movement , and Benito Mussolini claimed to have timed his seizure of power the next year to ensure that the 1922 ceremonies at the tomb would occur under a Fascist government .

 Other countries considered similar memorials . The US constructed a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1921 ; while the idea was clearly a foreign concept , it proved very popular with the American public and by 1936 was attracting over 1 @.@ 5 m visitors a year and acting as an informal national monument to the war . Edwin Redslob , part of the German government , supported a similar scheme in 1925 , but without success , and Mainz Cathedral and Ulm Minster were later proposed as options for a tomb . In Germany , a tomb was not finally built until 1935 , when it was sponsored

by the Nazi government ; the final memorial contained 20 bodies of unknown German soldiers from the Eastern front . Other countries also constructed tombs , including Belgium and Portugal , and as in France and Britain these tombs were placed in capital cities ; there was an abortive attempt to place the Romanian tomb at M?r??e?ti , but this proved impractical for both logistic and ceremonial reasons . Canada , Australia and New Zealand declined to build their own tombs , as they were considered to be represented by the burial in London .

= = = = Ceremonies = = = =

  Ceremonies came to surround many memorials ; many memorials were formally opened or unveiled in public ceremonies , while others were used for recurring ceremonies on commemorative days . Memorials in Britain and France were typically opened in civic ceremonies involving local dignitaries , veterans and the next @-@ of @-@ kin of fallen servicemen . Some memorials acquired daily ceremonies ; in 1928 it became customary to play the Last Post bugle call at the Menin Gate memorial each evening , for example , and this practice spread to many other similar memorials in France .
 Some ceremonies were formed around the memorials on specific days of the year . During the war , the British had commemorated the 4 August as Remembrance Day , but this was superseded at the end of the conflict by Armistice Day on 11 November each year . It became the norm for ceremonies to be held at memorials across Britain at 11 am on this day , supported by two minutes of silence , instituted by the Government , police and local authorities . The London Cenotaph formed the national hub for these ceremonies from 1919 onwards ; at the first Armistice Day ceremony , it received 500 @,@ 000 visitors in four days . The ceremony at the Cenotaph was equated to a religious event : the Daily Mail , for example , described the emotion and the " mystic meaning " at the ceremony which combined to produce a special " halo " and an " aura " . Ceremonies at the Cenotaph were covered and photographed by the national papers , and national radio broadcasts of the event commenced in 1928 .
 Armistice Day ceremonies also became important in France . The early ceremonies were organised by veterans ' associations on the 11 November , but in 1921 the French government became concerned that these ceremonies were impacting on industrial productivity and moved the commemoration to the first available Sunday . Following protests , a national French holiday was declared in 1922 . The ceremonies were heavily influenced by the state , with national and local officials playing an important part , and there was an expectation of universal national participation . Attendees would march , often from the local church , past the local cemeteries to a relevant memorial ; tricolour flags , black wreaths and wreaths of flowers would be place on or around the memorials , but unlike Britain there was almost no military symbolism involved in the ceremony . Up to a hundred names of the dead would then be read out , typically by a war orphan , and the crowd would follow each name by saying " Mort pour la France " ? " He died for France " ? in unison .
  Other important days were commemorated at memorials around the world . Australia commemorated Armistice Day , but held larger scale commemorations around Anzac Day on 25 April . Anzac Day was founded to remember the Gallipoli campaign , and memorials were erected for the first ceremonies in 1916 ; dawn services at local memorials formed a key part of the national event . In France , the authorities in Verdun organised the Fêtes de la Victoire on 23 June , centring on the city 's memorials and the nearby ossuary . These usually involved senior French military figures and pageantry . Ceremonies to honour the fallen of the battle of the Somme were held by the British at the Somme memorials on the Sunday nearest 1 July throughout the 1920s and 1930s . Romania ? inter @-@ war years , the Feast of the Ascension used to commemorate the war dead . Termed Heroes ' Day , civic processions under central guidance from the Societata took place to the local war memorials . The 6 August was also used to commemorate the battle of M?r??e?ti at the site . Many of these adopted the British use of collective silence during the memorial ceremonies .
  In some locations , these ceremonies could prove controversial . Canada ? ceremonies on Armistice Day in the 1920s not straightforward in Montreal ; predominantly Anglican and English , with French and Catholic elements largely excluded until the end . The opening of the Vimy

Memorial drew criticism for its secular nature @-@ no clergy were invited to speak @-@ despite the religious symbolism of much of the building .

The emotional character of the ceremonies around the memorials changed as grieving took place and many individuals , inevitably , continued with their lives . Some early ceremonies around memorials were believed to be closely associated with spiritual events . The opening of the Menin Gate memorial , for example , inspired Will Longstaff 's dream that led to the famous Menin Gate at Midnight painting , portraying the fallen dead rising and walking through the gateway , while the Cenotaph ceremonies were photographed in 1922 , and believed by some to show the ghosts of the war dead . Indeed , early ceremonies at the London Cenotaph after the war were felt to be particularly emotional ; commentators felt that by the late 1920s , the events were more formal and less fraught with emotional than previously . Initially foreign diplomats in Britain were expected to lay wreaths on Armistice Day ; this requirement was reviewed in the 1930s . In Australia , there were initially many local ceremonies at memorials on Anzac Day specifically for bereaved mothers ; by the 1930s , these had been discontinued and incorporated into the wider ceremonial occasion .

= = = = Pilgrimages = = = =

Organised or structured visits to war memorials became popular during the inter @-@ war years . These were often termed pilgrimages , in keeping with the spiritual and religious nature of the journeys . These were frequently combined with other ceremonies at the sites . Tensions existed between those who travelled to the sites as tourists and those who perceived themselves as pilgrims .

Along the Western front these began quite early after the war and continued for several decades , dropping in number in the mid @-@ 1920s , when interest in the war temporarily diminished , and again in the Depression years of the early 1930s . Flemish pilgrimages to Belgium graves , particularly the heldenhuldezerkjes , and memorials began in 1919 , continuing through the subsequent decades . The Ossuary at Verdun was the centre for many veterans pilgrimages in the 1920s , one of the better known groups being the Fêtes de la Bataille , which travelled to the site to undertake a vigil , processions and lay wreaths . These pilgrimages were typically low @-@ key and avoided military symbolism or paraphernalia . Ypres became a pilgrimage destination for Britons to imagine and share the sufferings of their men and gain a spiritual benefit ; the Ypres League was established by veterans , and sought to transform the horrors of trench warfare into a purifying spiritual quest . The Menin Gate memorial became a focal point for British pilgrims to the Western front after it was opened in 1927 . Pilgrims could come long distances : in the 1920s Canadians began to journey to Vimy and Australians began visiting Gallipoli from 1925 onwards , bringing back military souvenirs relics .

Guidebooks for English @-@ speaking visitors became common , including a number of official publications , some extremely detailed . Major Dwight D. Eisenhower spent years working on a guide to American battlefields . A 1920 British guide book , The Holy Ground of British Arms captured the mood of the Ypres League , stating : " there is not a single half @-@ acre in Ypres that is not sacred . There is not a single stone which has not sheltered scores of loyal young hearts , whose one impulse and desire was to fight and , if need be , to die for England . "

In central and eastern Europe , the state played a greater role in organising these pilgrimages . The National Orthodox Romanian Women 's Society , supported by the church and the state , played an important part in enabling regular pilgrimages to important Romanian sites up until 1939 . In Germany and Italy , the Fascist governments took a keen interest in organising such journeys . In Italy , these involved large , state @-@ influenced organisations , and the government steadily discouraged private visits or unofficial groups from taking part in alternative ceremonies at these sites . In Nazi Germany , pilgrimages were organised to the new war memorials sponsored by the government in the 1930s .

= = = Politics = = =

The memorials to World War I were frequently politicised , either by the debates over their construction and design , or by the symbolism incorporated into them . Even where attempts were made to ensure political neutrality , as in France where the inscriptions on memorials were usually deliberately neutral , avoiding political controversy , national politics influenced the symbolism and messages incorporated into the memorials .

Pacifism slowly began to emerge after the war , but very few war memorials communicated a pacifist message , largely because in the 1920s , most in the victorious countries felt that the war , while costly in human life , had been worth fighting . Anti @-@ war protests in the inter @-@ war years did use war memorials , however , as locations to communicate their messages ; the Communist party in France , for example , held rallies at them . In Britain , political views about the war influenced attitudes towards memorial design and the ceremonies that surrounded them . Those who supported the war were keen to see the ideals of justice and freedom embodied in the designs ; those who opposed the conflict sought memorials that would convince people to avoid future slaughter . The opening of the tomb of the Unknown Soldier was criticised for what anti @-@ war campaigners felt was its pro @-@ war pomp and ceremony , and the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster raised controversy between those who liked the ceremony , and those who thought that the pageantry was designed to distract from the poor living conditions faced by the survivors of the war .

Religious differences and tensions could make it difficult to design inclusive war memorials . In US , the separation of church and state meant that crosses were discouraged . Despite being banned from onwards 1905 , many French monuments were explicitly Catholic in character , including a Catholic cross . Australia also minimised the use of crosses , partially for similar reasons , but also because over concerns about excluding their Jewish community . Decisions to incorporate Christian imagery into memorials in Britain could also exclude minority groups , such as Jews , from participating in a memorial . In Britain , the religious differences between Anglicans , Nonconformists and Roman Catholics were frequently played out at a local level in arguments over the location and symbolism to be used in memorials . In Canada , where these differences were overlaid across the English and French speaking national divide , war memorials attempted to reunify the country ; the Cross of Sacrifice memorial in Montreal , for example , was deliberately situated in between the Catholic and Protestant war cemeteries . This was only partially successful ? inauguration ceremony and the military parade resulted in shouted arguments between French and English speaking parts of the crowd .

World War I memorials were also involved in the civil wars and ethnic disputes of the inter @-@ war period . After independence and the civil war , for example , the Republic of Ireland did not prioritise commemorating the dead of World War I , and indeed the events were largely ignored . Attempts to construct memorials during the 1930s , such as the National War Memorial Gardens in Dublin , were discouraged by the Republican movement and finally blocked altogether in 1939 . By contrast , Unionists in Northern Ireland made the war a key part of their political narrative , emphasising their role in events such as the Battle of the Somme . Monuments were erected in prominent locations in the centres of key Northern Ireland cities .

Other multi @-@ ethnic parts of Europe frequently found war memorials equally contentious . In Flanders , the IJzertoren , a controversial Flemish memorial tower , was opened in 1930 , commemorating the sacrifices during the war , but also celebrating Flemish identity and marking the hard treatment of Flemish activists by the Belgian authorities during the conflict . In disputed multi @-@ ethnic territories in the east , such as Transylvania , the war had created bitter memories between Hungarian and Romanian inhabitants . The arguments were played out in differences as to how the dates of the war @-@ in which Hungary and Romania had entered and left at different times @-@ were recorded on tombstones and other memorials . In Serbia , the Kosovo Maiden was extensively used in war memorials , drawing a link between the war and the Battle of Kosovo .

The Fascist movements in Italy and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s made extensive use of World War I memorials to communicate a political message . War memorials were a key part of the Italian Fascist government 's programme , with memorials set up in the name of the fallen and the Fascist revolution . Local Fascist organisations made extensive use of the war memorials and associated

ceremonies to promote loyalty both to Italy , and to the revolution . The government promoted the " cult of the fallen hero " , stressing that the war dead had played a vital role in transforming Italy 's position in Europe and transforming history . The Fascist leader Mussolini was less enthusiastic , however , about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier , which he felt was associated with the former regime ; he discouraged its use , although remained sensitive to its symbolic importance to various parts of Italian society . Military fly @-@ pasts were added to the Armistice ceremonies and the Tomb itself was moved in 1935 , to make it easier to use the memorial in military parades .

The later German monuments constructed by the Nazi government were substantial , but communicated a limited range of symbolic messages , focusing on German heroism , conservative nationalism sentiments and masculinity . Use of mass graves symbolised the sense of German community . When Paul von Hindenburg died in 1935 , the Tannenberg Memorial was then used as his mausoleum , commemorating elite military leadership during the war . The Nazi government attempted to have the Jewish names removed from the war memorials , but this proved impractical and instead a law was passed forbidding their addition to any future memorials . The government also removed more experimental earlier war memorials which were felt to communicate an inappropriate message about the war , such as the work of Ernst Barlach .

= = = Architecture = = =

Most World War I war designers attempted to produce memorials that were , as cultural historian Jay Winter describes , noble , uplifting , tragic and endurably sad . There were various architectural styles used on memorials , but most were essentially conservative in nature , typically embracing well established styles such as classicism and embracing mainstream Christian symbolism . This conservatism in part resulted from the age and background of the committees that were commissioning the memorials , and also from a sense that established architectural styles , rather a potentially more transitory but fashionable style , would be more enduring and appropriate .

Professional concern was raised in several countries about the quality of memorials . Australians expressed critical concern from 1919 onwards about the poor quality of the sculptures of soldiers on memorials , the blame being placed on the cheap reproductions by stone masons . Their government responded by establishing advisory boards to discourage this trend . Britain also saw concerns over the " stereotyped designs " being supplied by firms of stone masons , and here again numerous bodies issued guidance on better practices , including the Royal Academy of Art , the Church of England ; the Civic Arts Association was formed specifically to help . The opinion of professional artists and critics remained quite important for committees when choosing designs , however , and there was vigorous discussion between supporters of different styles and architectural traditions .

Many designers were involved in the construction of memorials , but some became particularly well known for their work in this area . Many of the sculptors active on the memorials were established , Victorian @-@ era individuals ; the war had disrupted the training of a new generation , and many young sculptors had been killed . Some attempts were made to give preference to designers who had fought in the war , but this was far from universal . In British circles , Edwin Lutyens , Herbert Baker , Reginald Blomfield and Charles Holden formed the core of the established artists ; these were joined by Charles Sargeant Jagger , Gilbert Ledward and Eric Gill from the younger generation . Pietro Porcelli was a particularly prolific Australian designer . In Germany , Käthe Kollwitz memorial of a grieving mother at the Roggevelde cemetery particularly famous , and based on her own loss of a son during the fighting in the war .

= = = = Symbolism = = = =

World War I memorials made extensive use of symbolism and allegory . Some of these symbols were national in character , carrying a simple message about national victory ? a Gallic rooster triumphing over a German , the croix de guerre , or the Romanians ' symbol for their heroes ' cult for example ? but others , such as images of infantrymen , could be used in different ways , depending

on how they were portrayed . Some sculpture of French infantrymen , for example , aims to capture the spirit of French republicanism , while others are designed with more right @-@ wing , nationalist attributes .

Major memorial themes , such as victory and death all had their symbols . Many Canadian and British soldiers are shown raising a hat or a rifle , a sign of victory first introduced into Boer War memorials . The Greek goddess Nike herself frequently appears on civic memorials , particularly in Britain and Canada , personifying victory , often pointing the way to soldiers : the image is far less , common , however , on more sombre memorials in battlefields and graveyards . Personifications of Death rarely feature on these memorials , however , probably because the emphasis is typically on the self @-@ sacrifice of the soldiers involved , rather than their being taken or claimed by Death . Death is more typically presented through images of widows , orphans and elderly parents on memorials , all popular inter @-@ war allegorical forms for death and grieving . Figures of women often represented peace , civilisation or wider humanity .

By far the most important source of symbolism on memorials , however , is Christian imagery and icons . Religious imagery permeated many war memorials , even the secular . The most important of these symbols was the Christian cross , a widely used symbol of hope and suffering . The cross could take multiple forms , from Catholic designs in France , to Orthodox crosses in eastern Europe . Celtic crosses were popular in Britain and Ireland , partially because they avoided Catholic connotations , although they were considered vulgar by more classical architects such as Blomfield . In France , les croix des bois , wooden crosses , became popular symbols at memorials after Roland Dorgelès 's novel of the same name . German memorials made extensive use of the image of the Virgin Mary tending her son Christ , following in the tradition of the pietà . The crucifixion was also a widely used symbol , as seen in Derwent Wood 's Canada 's Golgotha , although Christ himself was relatively rarely typically seen on British memorials .

The widespread use of Christian symbolism led to questions about how to produce memorials suitable for non @-@ Christians . Lutyens attempted to solve this problem for the IWGC through the design of the Great Stone of Remembrance , or War Stone . This was a large , simple stone , intended to resemble an altar and evoke the theme of sacrifice . In practice , many commentators felt it resembled a sarcophagus . Lutyens wanted it to avoid conventional Christian symbolism and based it on designs in Chinese Ming tombs . One of Lutyens ' arguments in favour of his design was that explicit Christian symbolism excluded the Indian and Jewish communities and atheists . The IWGC designs for the Indian and Chinese war cemeteries in Europe deliberately did not use Christian imagery ? although , as historian Xu Guoqi notes , the Chinese role in the Allied armies remains largely uncommemorated through memorials .

= = = = Classicism = = = =

Many memorials drew on a classical style of architecture to produce their effect . This had been a popular style for many pre @-@ war memorials , such as those for the dead of the Boer War , and used Greek or Roman structures , styles and symbolism . A key feature of the classical style was the concept of the " beautiful death " ? classical memorials might include figures of soldiers , sometimes dying in conflict , but always heroically and , ultimately , peacefully . Soldiers in these memorials were still frequently depicted as Homeric warriors , rather than more realist figures . The classical symbolism was often used to distance the event of death from the observer , appealing to allegories for sacrifice , justice and victory , in an attempt to make mourning easier to bear .

Some inter @-@ war architects developed this approach further . Some traditional classical memorials had been criticised in both England and Germany as being fussy and overly ornate . Men such as Lutyens took the classical principles , but simplified them until the design became almost abstract . These memorials used abstract , beautiful designs intended to remove the viewer from the real world , and focus them on an idealised sense of self @-@ sacrifice , a continuation of the principle of a " beautiful death " . In many ways the simplified , but still classical , forms of memorials like the Cenotaph meant that mourners could read their own thoughts and concerns onto the memorial . Where dead soldiers were shown , they were depicted in an image of serenity and peace

, often physically distanced from the viewer on a high platform , the entire effect reflected by the silence that traditionally surrounds ceremonies at the Cenotaph .

Many classical themes were used in this way . Thiepval Memorial , for example uses the classical themes of a victory arch and an abstract pattern of diminishing arches to produce what historian Jay Winter has termed " an embodiment of nothing " . The various Cenotaphs adopt the principle of entasis ? Greek method with apparently straight lines , that are in fact slightly curved . Many memorials and war cemeteries used precinct walls to mark out the memorial as special and sacred , originally a Roman feature made popular again in the 19th century . Some features were more literally interpreted : the Victoria State Memorial in Australia , for example , was closely based on a Persian step pyramid .

Classical themes , like Christian symbolism , emphasised the sacred nature of the memorial sites . Nonetheless , there was some criticism of classicism by those who wanted a clearer separation of pagan and Christian symbolism ; this was played out in arguments in Germany over whether Iron Crosses or traditional Christian crosses should be used on memorials . Similarly , Lutyens ' War Stones were criticised for their blending of Christian and non @-@ Christian design , while the London Cenotaph was critiqued by the Catholic Herald as being " insulting to Christianity " . Some Christian symbols were redesigned in the simplified classical style , however , including the Cross of Sacrifice . This cross , in a classical style and featuring a white cross and an inverted bronze sword , was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield for the War Graves Commission , widely used in Commonwealth countries . The design was criticised by some who felt that it excluded other faiths from the memorial site , but nonetheless , over a 1 @,@ 000 of these crosses were ultimately built .

= = = = Medievalism = = = =

In some countries , particularly Germany and England , memorials used a medieval style , reaching back to a more distant past . Some of these medieval styled memorials were set in existing medieval buildings , fusing older and newer themes . Memorial church windows , for example , could combine medieval and modern features , including armoured knights on horseback , modern weapons @-@ including @-@ tanks and aircraft @-@ and modern national flags . Other memorials deliberately chose medieval themes and symbols , such as the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster , where the language of the inscriptions was deliberately archaic , and the tomb itself made from a medieval chest , decorated with a crusader 's sword . England 's patron saint , Saint George , was a particular popular symbol in British designs , typically shown mounted and wearing armour . The Arthurian Round Table and the medieval crusades proved popular themes in Canadian memorials .

New memorial buildings could also adopt a medieval style . The Scottish National War Memorial , for example , a Scots baronial styled memorial hall complete with stained glass in Edinburgh Castle , attempts to blend in with the surrounding medieval fortress . In Germany , the totenburgen usually looked to the past for their style ; Tannenberg , for example , was heavily medieval in appearance , resembling a castle , albeit combined with a huge cross and mass graves . The dolmen boulders used around the outside of many German memorials reinforced the archaic feel of the monuments . In other cases Germans chose to preserve or rebuild real medieval buildings and architecture to form war memorials , such as parts of Dorsten and Dülken .

Medievalism was popular with mourners because it reached back to the past , attempting to heal some of the discontinuities and ruptures of the war . In a period of great uncertainty , the style was reaffirming and apparently immutable , lost in a distant past . By placing the recent dead alongside those who had fallen before , the style gave reassurance that the World War I dead would not be forgotten ; in Westminster , the Dean of Westminster , emphasised when he noted that the Unknown Warrior would be resting alongside his " Saxon and Norman , Plantagenet and Tudor " predecessors . The style was actively promoted by a number of extant artistic and architectural institutions and groups , such as the Victoria and Albert Museum , the Arts and Crafts Movement and Gothic revivalists .

= = = = Alternative styles = = = =

Only a minority of war memorials used some of the newer styles emerging in the inter @-@ war period , such as modernism , realist and Art Nouveau approaches . As noted above , typically existing , traditional themes were preferred for memorials as a way of grounding mourning in a more familiar perspective . Nonetheless , some of the memorials to use the newer styles became particularly famous . There are a handful of memorials conducted in an Art Deco style , including the ANZAC War Memorial in Sydney which uses the delicate aspects of the Art Deco style to invoke sadness in the viewer , and is the only war memorial in the world to depict a naked soldier . The Douaumont Ossuary also draws on Art Deco principles in its structural architecture , avoiding straight lines in favour of gentle , soft , intersecting curves . Modernist principles were taken further in a small number of British memorials designed by Eric Gill , characterised by their highly abstract , simplified forms .

Realism and early modernist principles were applied in Britain to produce a critique of the conventional classical approach and the concept of a " beautiful death " , most notably by Charles Jagger . Jagger 's later work during the inter @-@ war period , most notably his Royal Artillery Memorial , uses realism techniques to portray an oversized BL 9 @.@ 2 inch Mk I howitzer in detail , mounted on a huge , architecturally simple plinth with detailed carvings of military events involving ordinary artillerymen . The sheer size of the piece creates a dehumanizing impact , despite the portrayal of a team of artillerymen , including a covered corpse . Critiqued by much of the British press when unveiled in 1925 , many veterans however felt that the style connected to them in a way that more classical themes could not . While the Royal Artillery Memorial is unique , elements of the style can be seen in some other memorials , such as the Cameronians Memorial which includes a realist , almost tactile depiction of a machine gun position .

Historical accuracy was important to many British designers , resulting in the use of genuine military equipment as models for memorials , and long discussions with committees over the details to be incorporated into designs . In contrast , the British interest in accurately depicting real weaponry from the war was far less common on German monuments , where usually stylised medieval weapons and armour were used .

= = Second World War and Post @-@ War = =

The Second World War that broke out in 1939 consumed the attention of a new generation . Across most of the theatres of conflict , the participants attempted to respect the memorials to World War I. After the Second World War there was no equivalent mass construction of memorials to the war dead ; instead , often local World War I memorials were adapted for use instead : additional names might be inscribed to the existing lists . In some cases , this resulted in memorials losing their exclusive focus on World War I. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington , for example , was expanded in 1950s to include corpses from the Second World War and Korea War , broadening the memorial 's remit to commemorate most modern wars . In other cases , such as the Australian War Memorial , begun in the inter @-@ war years but only opened in 1941 , an essentially new memorial was formed to honour the multiple conflicts .

In Italy and Germany , 1945 saw the collapse of Fascism ; many memorials in Italian towns and cities were used to execute and display the bodies of the overthrown regime , and the inter @-@ war Fascist pilgrimages and ceremonies around the memorials were abandoned and quickly forgotten . The World War I memorial sites continued to be used , but a combination of anti @-@ war feelings and their residual Fascist links limited the attendance at their public ceremonies . Due to the changes in national borders , in the post @-@ war era some sites favoured by the Nazi government , such as the Tannenberg Memorial , found themselves in Poland ; the demolition of Tannenberg began in 1949 and its stonework was reused for Soviet party buildings .

Elsewhere , changes in post @-@ war politics impacted considerably on the memorials. in Belgium , the Flemish IJzertoren tower had become associated with Fascism during the Second World War and was blown up in 1946 by anti @-@ Flemish activists , leading to outrage . Proposals were put forward to build a national monument on the site , but ultimately a second Flemish memorial was

constructed instead . In Romania , the Communist post @-@ war government moved away from commemorations around Ascension Day , which was seen as carrying too many religious meanings . The Romanian Societata itself was abolished in 1948 , pilgrimages to the memorials ceased and the focus of the Communist government was almost entirely placed on commemorating the sacrifices of the Soviet army during World War II . Unusually , political changes in Canada led to the construction of new World War I memorials ; some of the inter @-@ war tensions eased , and 35 new memorials were added in Quebec to the existing 68 in the post @-@ war years , often built as combined memorials to later conflicts .

As a whole , interest in the war memorials diminished considerably in the 1950s and 1960s , reflected in a reduced level of ceremonies and a simplification of the commemorative events around memorials . In the post @-@ war years , for example , the separate official and veterans ceremonies at the Verdun memorials blended into one ; in 1956 , German and French ceremonies were also united into a single event . Attendance at events like Anzac Day diminished . Many memorials slowly deteriorated : in some cases the original inter @-@ war funding had never included maintenance , in other cases the materials used to construct the memorials were not durable . In some towns and cities , the memorials were moved to less prominent locations as part of urban renewal projects , or hidden by new buildings . World War I memorials were commonplace in many countries and were paid little attention .

= = Since 1990 = =

In the 1990s , however , there was a resurgence of interest in World War I memorials . This was driven partially by a sequence of academic works on the social and cultural character of the conflict , aided by a sequence of artistic exhibits of some of more famous designers in the 1980s , and partially by generational change in many countries . As the generation who had lived and fought during the war died off , explaining the context of the memorials became more important . In France , veteran groups had begun to build memorial museums alongside the major monuments and battlefields from the late 1930s onwards .

Similar efforts made at the end of the 20th century to create additional museums to explain the events of the war and the memorials ; these initiatives have the support of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission ? the successor to the IWGC ? but caused concerns amongst British government officials , due to concerns that they might cheapen the symbolism of the memorials . As old imperial links declined , in 1993 , Australia decided to repatriate one of its unidentified war dead from the Western front to form its own Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Canberra .

Meanwhile , some of the political tensions of earlier generations faded , allowing new memorials to be built . In the Republic of Ireland , new war memorials were built , trips organised to war memorials in Europe , and the National War Memorial Gardens were restored and finally officially opened in 1995 .

In Russia , the Memorial Park Complex of the Heroes of the First World War was built on the site of the former Moscow City Fraternity Cemetery after the fall of Communism , opening in 2005 at a cost of 95 million roubles . The park includes 12 monuments , amongst which was the only surviving headstone from the cemetery and a new memorial chapel . In contrast , by the early 21st century , the numbers visiting the IJzertoren tower during the annual pilgrimages declined significantly as memories of the conflict faded .

In the late 1990s and start of the 21st century visitor numbers to the Western Front memorials have risen considerably , and Australian visitors to the memorials at Gallipoli have increased hugely in recent years ; the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand opened a new memorial at the site in 2000 . World War I memorials remain in ceremonial use on Remembrance Day ? the post @-@ World War II successor to Armistice Day ? Anzac Day and other national occasions , while many utilitarian memorials are still in use by local communities in the 21st century . Systematic efforts are being made to catalogue and record the memorials , with a number of individual restoration projects undertaken with public and private funding . In the centennial of World War I , the memory of the war has become a major theme for scholars and museums . Many museums and historical societies

have set up special exhibits , websites , and multimedia exhibits . Proposals were put forward to construct a new national U.S. memorial to the conflict in Washington .