

GUIDE TO MANITOBA MEMORIAL TYPES



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The memorials honouring Manitoba's dead of World War I are a profound historical legacy. They are also a major artistic achievement.

This section of the study of Manitoba war memorials explores the most common types of memorials with an eye to formal considerations – design, aesthetics, materials, and craftsmanship. For those who look to these objects primarily as places of memory and remembrance, this additional perspective can bring a completely different level of understanding and appreciation, and even delight.

Six major groupings of war memorial types have been identified in Manitoba:

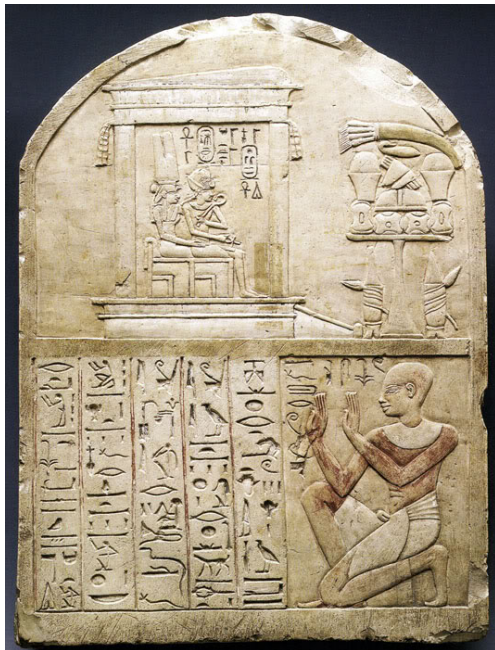
- **Tablets**
- **Cairns**
- **Obelisks**
- **Cenotaphs**
- **Statues**
- **Architectural Monuments**

Each of these is reviewed in the following entries, with a handful of typical or exceptional Manitoba examples used to illuminate the key design and material issues and attributes that attend the type.

Tablets

The apparently simple and elemental form of the tablet, also known as a stele (from the ancient Greek, with *stelae* as the plural), is the most common form of gravesite memorial. Given its popularity and cultural and historical resonance, its use for war memorials is understandable. The tablet is economical—in form and often in cost—but also elegant. And while the simple planar face is capable of conveying a great deal of inscribed information, the very form itself can be seen as a highly abstracted version of the human body – and thus often has a mysterious attractive quality. In addition, the tablet is a particularly apt form to remind us of the war memorial’s function as a gravestone *in absentia*.

The tablet or stele has a very long history. Even the earliest stelae featured texts and often had decoration, which may have been inscribed, carved in relief, or painted onto the slab. The examples noted below suggest the origins of the tablets used for World War I memorials, and remind us of the endurance of this form.



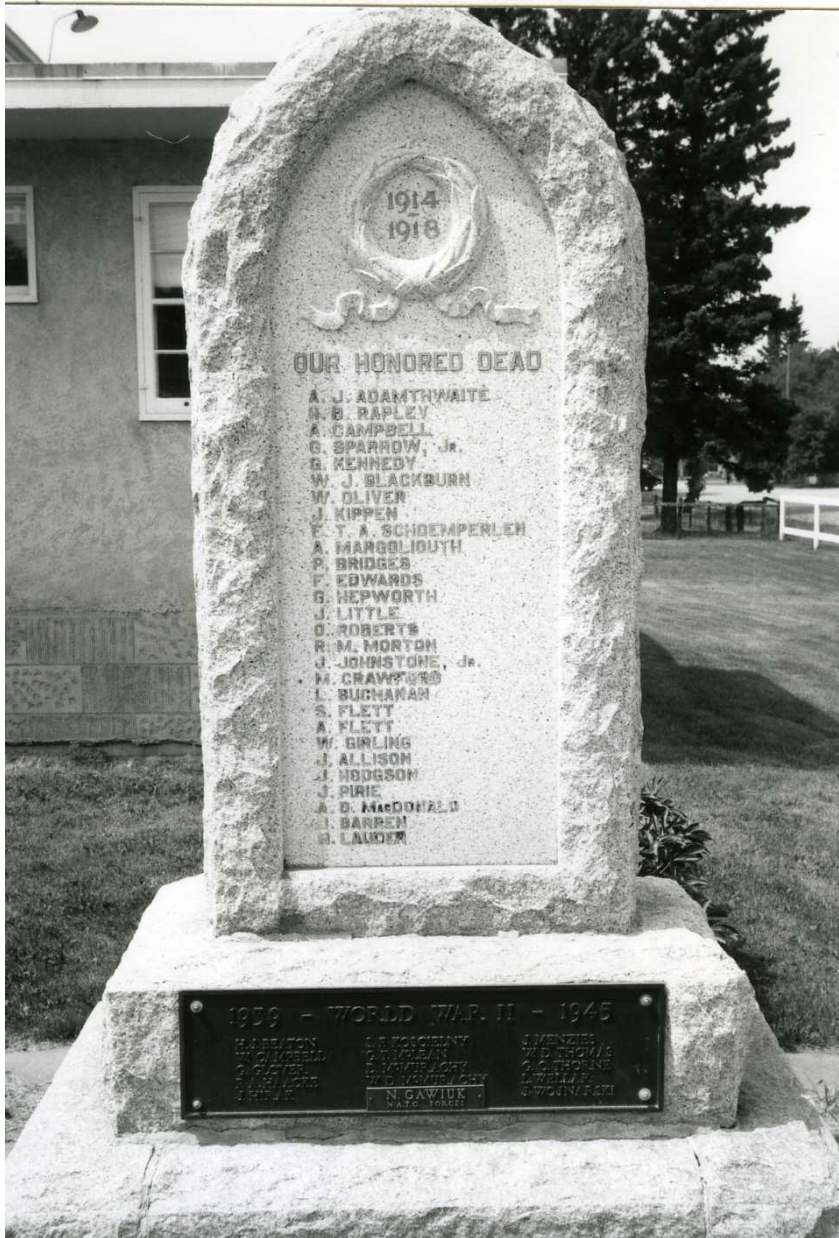
An ancient (New Kingdom) Egyptian stele in the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon suggests the kind of rich and intricate detail that could be organized for dramatic graphic communication, and reminds us of how long this basic shape has been in use for monuments.

Manitoba cemeteries of course are full of tablet grave markers, with a stone in St. John's Anglican Cathedral Cemetery in Winnipeg suggestive of the potential of its visual appeal, especially when carried out in marble. Marble provides a sculpting surface very amenable to carving, allowing for strong and subtle effects through fine details and shadows.



An amazingly detailed grave marker in St. John's Anglican Cathedral Cemetery, Winnipeg, which contains a variety of military motifs that suggest how memorials of the late 19th century treated martial themes.

In Manitoba, about 25 communities selected the tablet as the form for their war memorial. The examples noted here suggest the varieties of type. Visitors examining this type of memorial should consider how designers and craftsmen undertook graphic flourishes – on the main face but also around the edges. Also of interest is the way the names of the dead are placed and presented.



(Patrick Morican)

Strathclair

One of the most striking tablet-type memorials in Manitoba is at Strathclair, with its pointed Gothic top and inscriptions directly on the granite surface. The roughened outline of the monument and the delicate carving of the wreath and ribbons on the main face make this an especially fine specimen. The memorial was dedicated in 1925. It features 28 names from World War I, with an addition to provide for the names of 14 dead from World War II and one member of NATO Forces.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Oakville

A simple tablet form for the Oakville memorial is given a modest sense of grandeur with the pedimented top and elevation on two large stone blocks that form a pedestal. The bronze plaque affixed to the face contains the inscription, "To The Glorious Memory of The Men From This Community Who Gave Their Lives in the Cause of Freedom." Those men include 11 from World War I and 16 from World War II.



(Patrick Morican)

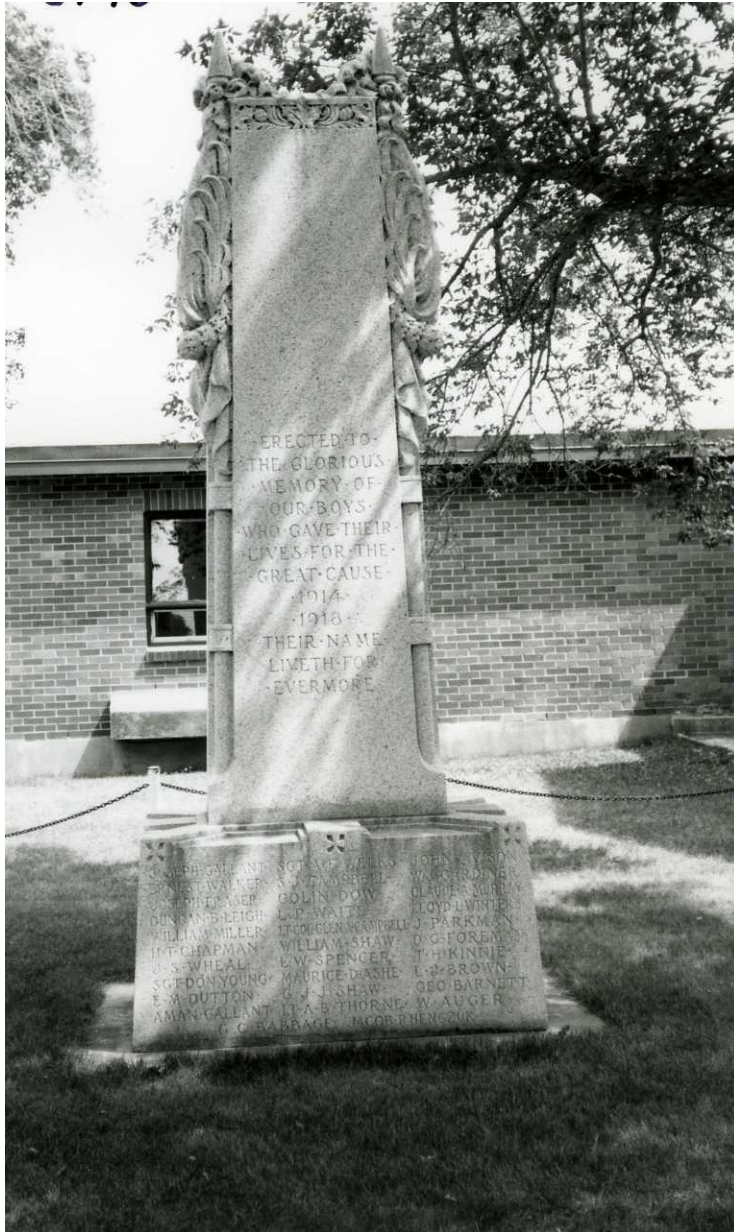
Sagkeeng First Nation/Fort Alexander

The placement of a cross atop a polished black granite tablet gives the Sagkeeng First Nation memorial a solemn sensibility. This handsome monument contains the names of two men lost in World War I, 20 lost in World War II and two from the Korean conflict of 1950-53.



(Patrick Morican)
Camperville

The more recent tablet memorial at Camperville suggests the kind of highly-animated imagery possible with contemporary stone-etching technologies.



(Patrick Morican)

Gilbert Plains

This exquisite tablet memorial contains some of the finest stone carving on a Manitoba cenotaph. Spear and drapery motifs flank the main body of the monument, which is tall, and grandly dedicated to “the glorious memory of our boys who gave their lives for the greater cause.” The base of the memorial contains 32 names of the lost from the First World War, and a bronze plaque adds 23 from World War II. Battle sites are also noted: Ypres, The Somme, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Cambrai and Mons.



Winnipeg: St. Augustine United Church

The heavily-carved limestone tablet in front of St. Augustine United Church is a beautiful expression of design and craftsmanship. The elegant form is enlivened with a wealth of detail expertly cut from the stone. The main epitaph reads “To the Glory of God and in Sacred Memory of Those of This Church Who Laid Down their Lives in the World War” followed by 40 names inscribed for posterity.

Find the Memorial

Tablet/Stele memorials in Manitoba can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified on it.

Arborg

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/arborgveterans.shtml>

Beausejour

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Benito

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/benitowarmemorial.shtml>

Birch River

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/birchriverwarmemorial.shtml>

Boissevain

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/boissevainwarmemorial.shtml>

Camperville

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Deloraine

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Edrans

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/edranscemetery.shtml>

Elgin

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/elginwarmemorial.shtml>

Sagkeeng First Nation/Fort Alexander

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sagkeengwarmemorial.shtml>

Mafeking

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mafekingwarmemorial.shtml>

McCreary

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mccrearywarmemorial.shtml>

Melita

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/melitawarmemorial.shtml>

Oakville

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/oakvillewarmemorial.shtml>

Plumas

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/plumaswarmemorial.shtml>

Rorketon

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/lawrencewarmemorial.shtml>

Roseau River First Nation

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/roseauriverwarmemorial.shtml>

Sandy Lake

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sandylakewarmemorial.shtml>

Souris

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/souriswarmemorial.shtml>

St. Adolphe

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/ritchotwarmemorial.shtml>

St. Laurent

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stlaurentwarmemorial.shtml>

Ste Rose du Lac

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sterosedulacwarmemorial.shtml>

Steinbach

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Strathclair

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/strathclairwarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg

East Kildonan

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Elmwood

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Fort Garry

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Kildonan Park

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Monte Cassino

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Shaarey Zedek

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

St. James

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

St. James

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

St. Augustine Church

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

St. Johns Park

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

University of Manitoba

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Rivercrest

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Cairns

Many of the traditional monument forms used in Manitoba war memorials have as a vague originating reference the upright human body – as a tablet, an obelisk and obviously as a sculpted figure. Not quite so the cairn. This form has some complex cultural roots, harkening back to Neolithic burial sites and even to the majestic pyramids of Egypt, where the four sloped faces rising to a peak can be seen in miniature in so many cairn sites.

The word cairn comes from the Scottish Gaelic, càrn (plural càirn). The Gaelic càrn is essentially the same as the corresponding words in other native Celtic languages of Britain and Ireland, including the Welsh *carnedd*, the Irish *carn*, and the Cornish *karn*.

There are legends and folklore throughout the United Kingdom associated with cairns. In Scotland, it is traditional to carry a stone up from the bottom of a hill to place on a cairn at its top. In such a fashion, cairns would grow ever larger. An old Scottish Gaelic blessing is *Cuiridh mi clach air do chàrn*, "I'll put a stone on your cairn." In Highland folklore it is believed that before a battle each member of a Highland Clan would place a stone in a pile. Those who survived the battle returned and removed a stone from the pile. The stones that remained were built into a cairn to honour the dead.

Finally, we can all imagine an elemental grave site where stones are piled over a burial to mark the place and fend off questing predators.

It is these connections that give the cairn its simple and evocative power. At the same time, because the typical cairn is made up of a pile of stones, even where they are finely cut and fitted, (and thus not like the other common memorial types, which are of a single piece), it is suggestive of work and toil and even of reasoning – making such a pile stand and endure requires some knowledge of the physical properties of piled objects. Cairns suggest the possibility that they were built by local people, not installed by professionals. Even where it is a simple continuous form, covered for example in a concrete skim, the essential shape is still powerful.

About 30 Manitoba communities looked to the cairn as the basic form for their war memorials, and the variety of expressions possible with this supposedly simple form is impressive to see.

Visitors happening upon this type of memorial will find greater satisfaction in a review of design and craftsmanship if they look at the way the materials have been put together, and how names and thoughts are affixed.



This traditional Scottish cairn at Cairn Table near Muirkirk is a First World War Memorial built from stones taken from a nearby ancient cairn. (Neil Stewart)



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Balmoral

A grouping of three cairns at Balmoral Elementary School suggest the variety of expressions possible for the form – nearly as a block (left), with the traditional sloped sides (centre) and then as a low truncated form (right). All three are carried out with granite fieldstone construction and feature bronze plaques to contain the necessary text information: the loss of six local men from 1914-1918 and 11 from 1939-1945; the third monument is dedicated to local pioneers.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Clearwater

The Clearwater memorial is a textbook example of the cairn – tall, sloped sides and with a strong, rough surface composed of large granite stones. The inset plaques at the front note losses from the two World Wars and peacekeeping in Afghanistan, along with the stirring epitaph: “Their Mission Accomplished. Ours but Begun.”



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Grandview

The Grandview cairn is distinguished by the use of small rounded stones that give the memorial a highly tactile quality. This cairn replaced a marble tablet (still standing) which was put up by the Girls' Guild of Grandview "To our Soldier Heroes" after the First World War. The 26 names on that tablet—much-weathered—were cast in bronze after World War II along with those of the 23 men lost in that war.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Winnipegosis

The tall proportions and small capped element, as well as the carefully-faced granite stones used for the Winnipegosis war memorial, give this cairn an ancient quality.



(Patrick Morican)

Sperling

The Sperling cairn features carefully cut and placed stones, inset with white mortar that makes the composition even stronger, and more striking.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Baldur

At Baldur, the traditional cairn shape is given a delicate quality by the use of a concrete sheathing skim, and its positioning in a setting with flowering shrubs and plants. Two columns of names on the bronze plates include 26 from the First World War (including a nurse) and 15 from World War II. Three more names have subsequently been added to the list of the dead from World War I.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Rapid City

Featuring a cross, in this case juxtaposed with a sword (recalling the original Cross of Sacrifice used by the Imperial War Graves Commission), the Rapid City cairn was constructed by Mr. Harry Fulcher, and unveiled in 1929. The four steps leading up to it on all four sides confer an almost monumental quality. This memorial features inset tablets with 38 names of local men lost in the First World War and 21 lost in World War II.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Douglas

The Douglas cairn is one of the few memorials that feature a weapon – in this case a machine gun. The rough granite cobbles give the monument a striking texture. Inset panels on all four sides feature the names of 13 local men lost in World War I, and also several verses, which are unusual and contrasting choices. The full texts may be read in the Original Inventory or Learning Materials.

One verse is a modified version of a speech about the Wars of the Roses, from Nicholas Rowe’s early-18th century play *Jane Shore*. Another, a poem by Canon Scott, printed in the *Carp, Ontario Review* in 1921, addresses a common source of debate around war memorials: should they honour only the dead, or all who served? The verse begins “Bestow not on the dead your praise/ They heed it not above” and goes on to insist that a debt of honour is owed to the wounded, not just to those who died.

Find the Memorial

Cairn memorials in Manitoba can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified on it.

Amaranth

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/amaranthunited.shtml>

Ashern

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/ashernpioneers.shtml>

Balmoral

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/balmoralcairns.shtml>

Bowsman

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/bowsmanwarmemorial.shtml>

Brandon

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/brandonwarmemorial.shtml>

Douglas

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/douglaswarmemorial.shtml>

Erikson

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/ericksonwarmemorial.shtml>

Grandview

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/grandviewwarmemorial.shtml>

Gimli

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/gimliwarmemorial.shtml>

Lundar

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Pine Falls

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Minto

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mintowarmemorial.shtml>

Moosehorn

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Oak River

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/oakriverwarmemorial.shtml>

Portage la Prairie

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/portagewarmemorial.shtml>

Rapid City

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/rapidcitywarmemorial.shtml>

Shilo

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/shilosundial.shtml>

Sanford

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sanfordwarmemorial.shtml>

San Clara

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sanclarawarmemorial.shtml>

Snowflake

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/snowflakecairn.shtml>

Sperling

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/sperlingwarmemorial.shtml>

St. Anne

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/steannewarmemorial.shtml>

Swan Lake

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Swan River

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/swanriverwarmemorial.shtml>

Waskada

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/waskadawarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg Beach

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipegbeachwarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipegosis

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipegosiswarmemorial.shtml>

Woodlands

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/woodlandswarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipegcenotaph.shtml>

Brooklands

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Fort Rouge Legion

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Weston Legion

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Obelisks

Elegant and sophisticated, the obelisk is a trusted memorial form. Its common appearance in Victorian-era cemeteries made it familiar as a symbol denoting a resting place for the dead. Its use by 26 Manitoba communities for war memorials, obviously intended as very special community landmarks, speaks to its enduring power.

The obelisk's reliable presence, so comfortable beside Christian crosses and tablet stones, belies its exotic origins. Representing a ray of light, the obelisk has its roots in ancient Egypt, around 2650 BC. These objects were originally called *tekhenu* by their builders. The Greeks who saw them used the Greek word *obeliskos* to describe them, and this word passed into Latin and then English. In technical terms, an obelisk is a tall, four-sided, narrow tapering monument which ends in a pyramid-like shape at the top. Ancient obelisks were often monolithic and enormous, whereas most modern obelisks are quite small in comparison. Manitoba's collection includes several examples that are not quite true obelisks, but rather creative modifications of the form.

Public interest in the obelisk grew rapidly in the early 19th century when Napoleon brought two back to Paris as war booty from Luxor, Egypt. One, set up in the Place de la Concorde, was of red granite, measured 23 metres (75 feet) in height and weighed more than 250 tonnes. As an exotic object of considerable mystery and powerful form, the obelisk was a hit. Its appearance in cemeteries in Great Britain required some fancy footwork, however, particularly in appeasing religious leaders of the 19th century, who were suspicious of foreign and non-Christian forms. The solution, in many cases, was the application of various Christian symbols to make this ancient, pagan form more at home in this new context.

Interested visitors examining one of Manitoba's fine collection of obelisk war memorials should take some time to consider key design attributes: Is it a classic of the type – tall and slender? Or did designers rework the basic form for other aesthetic goals? How did the designers and builders conceive of the obelisk's transition to the ground? This is often where some interesting and distinct design solutions can be discerned. What material was used? The classic is perhaps shimmering white marble; but materials like Manitoba limestone and polished granite also appear. And then consider how the names of the lost have been

included – carved into the stone itself on the shaft or on the base? Or situated on a plaque affixed to the memorial?



The Obelisk of Theodosius in the Hippodrome of Constantinople in Istanbul, Turkey. This Ancient Egyptian obelisk was created for Pharaoh Tutmoses III and was re-erected in Constantinople by the Roman emperor Theodosius I in the 4th century AD. (Gryffindor)

Step back and look at the memorial in its setting. Recall its ancient origins, and its contemporary meanings. It marks a spot, a special spot, and does so with quiet dignity. But consider too its original meaning – as a ray of light, which appears to emanate from below. Symbolically, this give the form the enduring power to convey hope and mystery.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Dropmore

This is a textbook example of the type: tall and slender, bright white and with dark lettering that contrasts with the material. A little detail at the base of the obelisk defines its clear Canadian heritage – a beaver chewing on a sapling.

The inscription begins, “For King and Country, 1914-1918” and then lists the 10 names of local men lost in the war. With each name is listed the man’s rank and regiment, and the date and battle site of his death.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Argyle

A handsome piece of sculptural design and craftsmanship, this memorial reworks the classic obelisk form with some martial imagery in the form of the crossed rifles towards the apex. Near the base is a large palm frond, which has long been symbolic of victory, of peace following victory, and—in Christian symbolism—of the spiritual victory of martyrs even in death.

The inscription reads “In Memory of our Honoured Dead” and then lists 15 names of the lost from the First World War. Three names of the dead from World War II have been added on the opposite side.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Birds Hill

The elegant and evocative memorial at Birds Hill combines the classic obelisk shape with a variety of finely-crafted details, like the curved pediments topping the tall base, and the carved wreath on the front surface. The monument is of local limestone, and weathering has made the carved names difficult to read. Two plaques, perhaps both put in place after World War II, supply that necessary information – 17 names from World War I and six from 1939-45.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Franklin

Even when it is small—and the Franklin obelisk is that—a memorial is an affecting reminder of sacrifice and loss. The diminutive size even seems to emphasize the sense of loss for this small community – five names inscribed for the First World War and two for World War II.

This obelisk stands in front of Franklin Memorial Hall, which is, in itself, a war memorial.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Rathwell

Rathwell has a classic polished red granite obelisk, typical of so many others in its shape and appointments. It is mounted on two rough-edged limestone steps, with the base of the monument curved to form a transition step to the plinth. This rises to a kind of cornice, which becomes the base of the obelisk itself. The overall effect is dramatic, made more so by the unusual use of red granite. The polished letters stand out against the lighter colour of the rough areas of stone.

With local fund-raising, the monument was inscribed and dedicated in 1921 to commemorate the fallen of the First World War. The Second World War dead were subsequently added. Part of the inscription reads: "They Nobly Did Their Duty."



(Patrick Morican)

Garson

The Garson memorial combines a stout obelisk with tapered support blocks that make for an unusual design and presence. The monument is made from Manitoba limestone, also called Tyndall stone.

The front has seven names and an inscription from Lawrence Binyon's 1914 poem "For the Fallen." One stanza is familiar in Canada as the Act of Remembrance. Here, only the final lines are used (with a change from the original "will" to "shall"): "At the Going Down of the Sun and in the Morning we Shall Remember Them." On the side, probably added later, are the 5 names of the fallen of World War II: "They Dared to Die that We Might Live."

Find the Memorial

Obelisk memorials in Manitoba can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified it.

Altona

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/alonawarmemorial.shtml>

Argyle

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/brantargylecemetery.shtml>

Birds Hill

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/birdshillwarmemorial.shtml>

Birtle

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/birtlewarmemorial.shtml>

Cartwright

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/cartwrightwarmemorial.shtml>

Clanwilliam

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/clanwilliamwarmemorial.shtml>

Crystal City

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/crystalcitywarmemorial.shtml>

Dropmore

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/dropmorewarmemorial.shtml>

Elkhorn

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/elkhornwarmemorial.shtml>

Elm Creek

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/elmcreekwarmemorial.shtml>

Franklin

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/franklinmemorialhall.shtml>

Garson

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/garsonwarmemorial.shtml>

Gilbert Plains

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/gilbertplainswarmemorial.shtml>

Glenboro

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/glenborowarmemorial.shtml>

Griswold

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/griswoldwarmemorial.shtml>

Langruth

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Miami

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/miamiwarmemorial.shtml>

Minitonas

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/minitonaswarmemorial.shtml>

Morden

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mordenwarmemorial.shtml>

Morris

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/morriswarmemorial.shtml>

Ninette

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/ninettewarmemorial.shtml>

Pilot Mound

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/pilotmoundwarmemorial.shtml>

Rathwell

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/rathwellwarmemorial.shtml>

Shellmouth

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/shellmouthwarmemorial.shtml>

Steinbach

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Teulon

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/teulonwarmemorial.shtml>

Treesbank

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/treesbankcairns.shtml>

Tyndall

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/tyndallwarmemorial.shtml>

Wawanesa

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/wawanesawarmemorial.shtml>

Westbourne

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/westbournewarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg

St. James Bruce Park

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stjamescenotaph.shtml>

Transcona Park Circle

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/parkcirclecenotaph.shtml>

Cenotaphs

Meaning “empty tomb,” a cenotaph is by definition a monument to individuals buried elsewhere; often, but by no means always, it will include a list of names. Technically, then, nearly all of Manitoba’s war memorials are cenotaphs.

But the term can be more specifically used for a very distinctive memorial design, which looks to an original in London. It is tall, solid, and stately. Even when it is not large, a cenotaph has a feeling of grandeur. It is an architectural form unto itself.

The form originally appeared as a temporary monument of wood and plaster, designed by Sir Edward Lutyens (and apparently taking just six hours to complete), which was a focus of the Allied Victory Parade in London at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The memorial proved so popular that it was quickly rendered in stone. This original cenotaph is a design *tour-de-force*, simple in its basic form but with careful proportions and details that give it amazing power and dignity. It is undecorated save for a carved wreath and the words “The Glorious Dead,” as well as three cloth flags on either side. At the pinnacle there is the form of a tomb or casket.

Lutyens was a major English architect, and well known in this context for his work on one of the primary war memorials to the Missing of Europe’s battlefields, at Thiepval in Belgium, and for the Imperial War Graves Commission. His design was used by the Commission for the Stone of Remembrance, which was used particularly for large war cemeteries, and of which the only example in North America is at Brookside Cemetery in Winnipeg.

In Manitoba, our collection of ten community cenotaphs follows the Lutyens model more or less closely, whether the memorial is small or large. They are tall (or at least appear tall) and grand, with four broad sides that contain names and dates and a variety of other texts.

Visitors contemplating one of Manitoba’s cenotaphs should consider the range of overall design explorations and detail flourishes that are often carried out with refinement and care.



Sir Edwin Lutyens's cenotaph in London influenced the design of many other war memorials in Britain and the British sectors of the Western Front, as well as those in other Commonwealth nations. (Godot13)



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Flin Flon

The Flin Flon Cenotaph, unveiled in 1959, is one of Manitoba's finest examples of this kind of memorial, a grand presence overlooking the community from one of the city's high points. 87 names appear on the bronze plaque. With its powerful verticality, simple but elegant form, expert stonework, and beautifully carved details, the memorial is a sculptural highlight of the North.



Stonewall

Designed by a prominent Winnipeg architect, Gilbert Parfitt, the Stonewall Cenotaph was unveiled on October 7, 1922. Bearing the names of 102 of the lost from the First World War, with 73 from World War II added later, this exquisite tower of Manitoba limestone is a triumph of design. The tall form, the elegant proportions, the carefully-considered edge features, and of course the many details, including lions-head fountains and receiving urns, define a memorial that is at once beautiful and respectful. Parfitt used lions again—this time in bronze—on the Winnipeg cenotaph six years later.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Winnipeg

Winnipeg's Cenotaph, just north of the Legislative Building on Memorial Boulevard, is an ongoing location for remembrance. Unveiled on November 7, 1928, the memorial has a colourful history, with at least two designers involved before the final choice of Winnipeg architect Gilbert Parfitt allowed the memorial to be developed. The powerful tapered form of grey granite is expertly designed in all its features, and equally expertly constructed, ensuring that this significant memorial is honorable, down to its last detail. The names of those it memorializes are too numerous to be listed; incised on its sides are the names of prominent battle sites.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Virден

The Virден cenotaph is an excellent example of the kind of modestly-sized memorials that can often be found in smaller Manitoba centres. The tall, handsome form typical of the type is here, enriched by the creative use of a rough stone base – as if the cenotaph were emerging from that element. A real sword buried in the base suggests an end to conflict and death, underlined by the words “deep buried lies the sword.” Sadly, however, to the names of 70 young men from the Virден area who were lost in 1914-18 are added a stone plaque with another 35 who were taken in 1939-45.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Hartney

The Hartney memorial is a good example of a small cenotaph, and reveals how even at this modest size, the forms and appointments give this kind of monument its power and grace. The broad bulk of the main soft grey granite form, set on several steps for greater height, is capped with a dentilled cornice, as well as various decorative relief sculptures – a maple leaf, a sword and a wreath. The names of 22 lost local men and boys are engraved on the front of the monument, while a plaque on the back adds 15 names from World War II.

Find the Memorial

Cenotaphs in Manitoba can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified on it.

Birtle

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/birtlewarmemorial.shtml>

Eriksdale

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/eriksdalewarmemorial.shtml>

Flin Flon

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/flinflonwarmemorial.shtml>

Gilbert Plains

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/gilbertplainswarmemorial.shtml>

Hartney

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/hartneywarmemorial.shtml>

Miniota

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/miniotawarmemorial.shtml>

Selkirk

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/selkirkwarmemorial.shtml>

Stonewall

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stonewallwarmemorial.shtml>

Stony Mountain

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stonymountainveterans.shtml>

Virden

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/virdenwarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/winnipegcenotaph.shtml>

Statues

Perhaps the most affecting war memorial designs are those that feature a sculpted figure.

These monuments are rich in historical allusions, coming to us via the millennia-old history of figural sculpture. Their design, pose, facial expressions, details, and craftsmanship can all be traced through their sculptural antecedents. They are often deeply moving, providing the very physical presence of an individual soldier, perhaps carved in shimmering white marble or cast in glowing bronze, and rendered in vivid detail. Most often, they are placed well above eye level, and thus beyond a viewer's touch. Many gaze resolutely into the distance.

Such memorials deserve our attention and prolonged exploration. Many of the Manitoba examples—there are 36 such memorials in this province—are individually impressive, but they are also interesting as a collection.

Manitoba has several special and majestic examples, tours de force of sculptural design. We also have a few naive and particularly affecting examples, likely carried out by a novice sculptor. In addition, we find a large collection of fine sculpted figures that are so similar in pose and detail that they appear to have sprung from a single mind, and a single hand. A review of the section of this study entitled "The Making of a Memorial" will confirm this observation – that many Manitoba communities found the necessary sculptural results from the workshops of Carrara, Italy, where artisanal sculptors were producing scores of these kinds of figures for memorials all over the world.

Anyone exploring these striking memorials will benefit from reviewing this section of the study with reference to "The Making of a Memorial," which is mainly focused on the production of statuary monuments.



"The Response," Canada's National War Memorial in Ottawa—unveiled in 1939 even as the next great war was threatening—demonstrates the kind of dramatic and powerful expression possible with figural sculpture, in this case carried out by British sculptor Vernon March and completed after his death in 1930 by his brothers and sister. (D. Gordon E. Robertson)

An exploration of Manitoba's figural war memorials profits from a review of some additional information about military uniforms and accoutrements, and a bit on sculptural and design qualities. (Information in this section is derived mainly from Paul Reed's "Old Front Line" website.)

When war broke out in August of 1914, the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) was formed, which by 1918 comprised more than 260 numbered battalions, as well as support units such as a Medical Corps, Engineers and Artillery. The basic Canadian uniform was very similar to the 1902 pattern Service Dress worn by British soldiers, but with a few basic modifications: nine buttons instead of seven, pointed cuff ends on the tunic sleeves, and detachable shoulder straps. The latter were coloured according to service: dark blue for infantry, green for rifle regiments, red for artillery and yellow for cavalry. This Canadian 1903 pattern uniform, issued to the original CEF, was worn in the field well into 1916.



View of the standard uniform worn by Canadians 1914-15, in this specific case for a Lance Corporal, 1st (Canadian) Division 1915. In 1916, the trench helmet was introduced for combat use. (Paul Reed's "Old Front Line" website)

In addition to this basic uniform, soldiers were issued with some form of personal load-carrying equipment, generally known as webbing (after the material most often used in its manufacture). Canadian soldiers were issued with a variety of different equipment, manufactured from cotton webbing but also, when cotton became scarce, made from leather in a similar pattern. When the CEF

was formed there was hardly enough equipment to go around, so a variety of patterns of personal kit were in use. These included a Canadian version of the 1908 pattern, as well as Oliver and Mills Burrowes 1913 patterns. Photographs suggest that men in the same unit might use any of several patterns at the same time, some of it borrowed from the British. Leather equipment was found to be inferior in combat situations, and was replaced by cotton webbing wherever possible.



Webbing in Mills-Burrowes WE13 Pattern, worn over the standard-issue uniform and used for carrying vital equipment needed for battle and survival.

The main weapon in use at this time was the Canadian Ross Rifle, which quickly became infamous. It was very accurate on the training ranges in Valcartier, but it proved highly problematic under war conditions. It often jammed in the mud, and many Canadian soldiers were killed when it fired unexpectedly as they were trying to kick open the bolt to extract a round. Its shortcomings in open battle became very apparent during the Second Battle of Ypres (April 1915), when

many Canadian soldiers abandoned their Ross rifles for Lee Enfield rifles retrieved from the bodies of their fallen British comrades. By the battles of the Somme in 1916, Lee Enfields had replaced the Ross for combat purposes, with the latter being relegated to training purposes. Some snipers continued to use the Ross, as it was extremely accurate under favourable conditions.

These few basic pieces of information are useful to keep in mind as we examine the figural sculptures on Manitoba's memorials. Some wear a greatcoat and many more wear the basic uniform, while others have a full set of webbing as if kitted out directly for battle. Observe whether the figure wears a helmet or a peaked cap; knowing that the helmet became battle issue in 1916, any figure pictured in either a helmet or a peaked cap and webbing must surely have been imagined as wearing battle dress. We might generally expect webbing and helmets to go together, as they do on the figure at Carberry. However, we must also keep in mind that there may be inconsistencies in dress (as we know there are inaccuracies) because many of the sculptures were made elsewhere.



The determined gaze of the figure on the Carberry war memorial, an excellent example of an Italian marble figure. He is at rest but alert and ready for action. And, perhaps most strikingly as we look at these figures now and remember the terrible losses, he looks so very young and full of promise.



This full view of the war memorial at Manitou—with the figure raised well above the viewer on quite an elaborate pedestal—is a good example showing how many such monuments were assembled locally using an imported statue. In this case we see a grey granite shaft, heavily etched with words and names, raised on broad limestone steps. The top of the shaft is tapered and roughened for a more dramatic transition to the marble figure itself. Stones to the dead of World War II have been added at either side, and the whole thing may have been raised on two extra concrete steps at the same time. It is a powerful expression of the depth of loss experienced by Manitoba's communities. (Gordon Goldsborough Manitoba Historical Society)

The following review of this special artistic legacy features all of the major sculptural works in Manitoba – several in Winnipeg and unique examples in Dauphin, St. Claude, Neepawa and St. Pierre Jolys. A rare type used at Russell and Killarney is explored via the Russell example. First, the larger collection of 25 memorials with common sculptural attributes is explored via a good representative example of each of five types – for the soldier at ease (which clearly are from one source), for two slight variations of that type (which appear to come from different Italian sources), for the soldier at attention and finally the soldier in a remorseful pose.

All of Manitoba's sculpted memorials are worth visiting. Each will offer viewers a rewarding and moving experience. Get up close, and examine the convincing rendering of hands, caps or rifles. Consider how individuality is captured through different expressions, and even details like attention to hair styles. Examine the myriad details – like canteens, buttons and puttees (the cloth used to wrap the lower leg for support and protection), and how the uniform cloth is rendered to raise the level of realism. And then step back, and look at the whole. Look at the unique qualities of the pedestals, which are often also of considerable interest. Consider the pose and the gaze of the figure, and ponder the weight of meaning – courage, loss, death, hope, and, much less often – glory.



Reston

The Reston memorial is a good example of the most common pose selected for the small-town marble-sculpted statues; and seen with exactly the same design and detail at six other sites, in Arden, Gladstone, Holland, Kelwood, Portage la Prairie and Rivers.

The soldier's gaze is slightly to the left. He is serious and calm, but intent on things and thoughts far away. He stands slightly at ease, with hands clasped over the barrel of his rifle. The fine carving exercised for his uniform, cap and accoutrements like the canteen are all expertly done.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society; Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Margaret

A collection of six marble sculptures reprise the basic pose seen in the previous entry, but with variations that suggest they are all from different Italian workshops. The example at Margaret is typical, and suggests the main differences – a gaze that is nearly straight ahead, and with arms and hands holding the rifle in a less relaxed manner. The other examples that are akin are at Boissevain, Hamiota, Manitou, Roblin and Treherne.



Carberry

A small set of three sculptures employs a stance in which a soldier is at ease, with his rifle held at the side, as seen here at Carberry. Each of this collection—which also includes Roland and Rossburn—is otherwise unique in other aspects of stance and detail work. The Carberry example is noteworthy as one of the few of the small-town sculptural memorials where the figure is helmeted; most other examples feature a cap. The sculptor in this case also took great care with a variety of other details, not the least of which is the solemn and resolute gaze.



Foxwarren

Four small-town marble statues feature the soldier with rifle at the side, but in a pose more at attention. Besides the example at Foxwarren, the other statues are at Binscarth, Newdale and Dugald (which was recently moved from its original location in Oak Bank). Aside from the basic pose, each of the statues is unique in all other aspects; for example, the Foxwarren figure is kitted out for battle, with a helmet and webbing. A fifth example that might have been grouped with this type, at Morden, is featured in the section “Architectural,” given its position in a grander memorial design.



Emerson

A fifth small-town figural type, used for the memorials at Emerson and MacGregor, features a soldier caught at a moment of resignation and reflection – in a pose with his head resting on his hand, which in turn rests on the rifle. This figure, which is seen in larger figural groupings at St. Claude and St. Pierre-Jolys, is also set apart by the fact that, rather than originating in a generic Italian workshop, it was designed by the St. Boniface sculptor Nicholas Piroton (though it was very probably sculpted in Italy), and was copied in bronze in Ganonoque, Ontario. The Emerson and MacGregor soldiers feature helmets and, unusually, great coats.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society; Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Russell

This is probably Manitoba's sole example of the work of Toronto sculptor Emanuel Hahn. The original bronze stands in Westville, NS, and others were carved in granite by artisans at the Thomson Monument Company, for which Hahn was the chief designer. They, together with several other designs by Hahn, stand in towns and villages across the country. The sombre figure of a soldier mourns his fallen comrades at a hastily-prepared battlefield grave, head bared and helmet slung over his shoulder. The monument is engraved with 83 names from World War I, with 14 more added after 1945. "Those whom this monument commemorates were numbered among those who at the call of King and country left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom," it states, exhorting: "Let those that come after see to it that their names be not forgotten."

Killarney has a very similar memorial (right), supplied by Hooper Marble and Granite from Winnipeg and carved from marble in Italy. It is one of a number of copies or near-copies of Hahn's work that appear in several towns and cities across the country.



Dauphin

Uniquely in Manitoba, the Dauphin memorial features a solitary female figure; other female figures appear in Winnipeg, as an angel guiding a dead soldier to the heavens (at the CPR memorial), and in St. Pierre-Jolys, as the warrior-saint Joan of Arc. The Dauphin figure, “Miss Canada in Mourning,” is said to have been sculpted by one Signor Rumbollo of Italy. The figure is tall, proud, in classical drapery, and clearly bereft, gazing downwards and clasping her elegant hands in grief. Perhaps she is contemplating the awful list below her of 82 names of young men lost in the Great War, as well as another 80 from World War II. One name from the Korean War is also included.

The cenotaph-like base of the monument, another exceptional piece of design, was designed by a local artist, Herbert Payton, and the whole assemblage, at a cost of \$5,500, was put up by Guinn and Simpson Memorials of Portage la Prairie. The monument was unveiled with great ceremony in 1924, attended by the Lieutenant Governor Sir James Aikins and Premier John Bracken.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society; Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Neepawa

A completely unique sculptural figure in Manitoba appears atop the handsome pedestal at the Neepawa war memorial. With his great coat fluttering in the wind, and with close attention to details—including the solemn facial expression—this is a major piece of monument design. Being cast in bronze, it must have been an enormous undertaking of fundraising and organization for the town.

As at many memorials, the base contains the names of battles in which local men lost their lives—Amiens, Sanctuary Wood, Arras, Somme, Festubert, St. Eloi, Givenchy, Vimy Ridge, Ypres and Passchendaele—and then 122 names of the dead of the Great War. A nearby marker notes the loss of 76 local men from World War II and three from the Korean War.



St. Claude

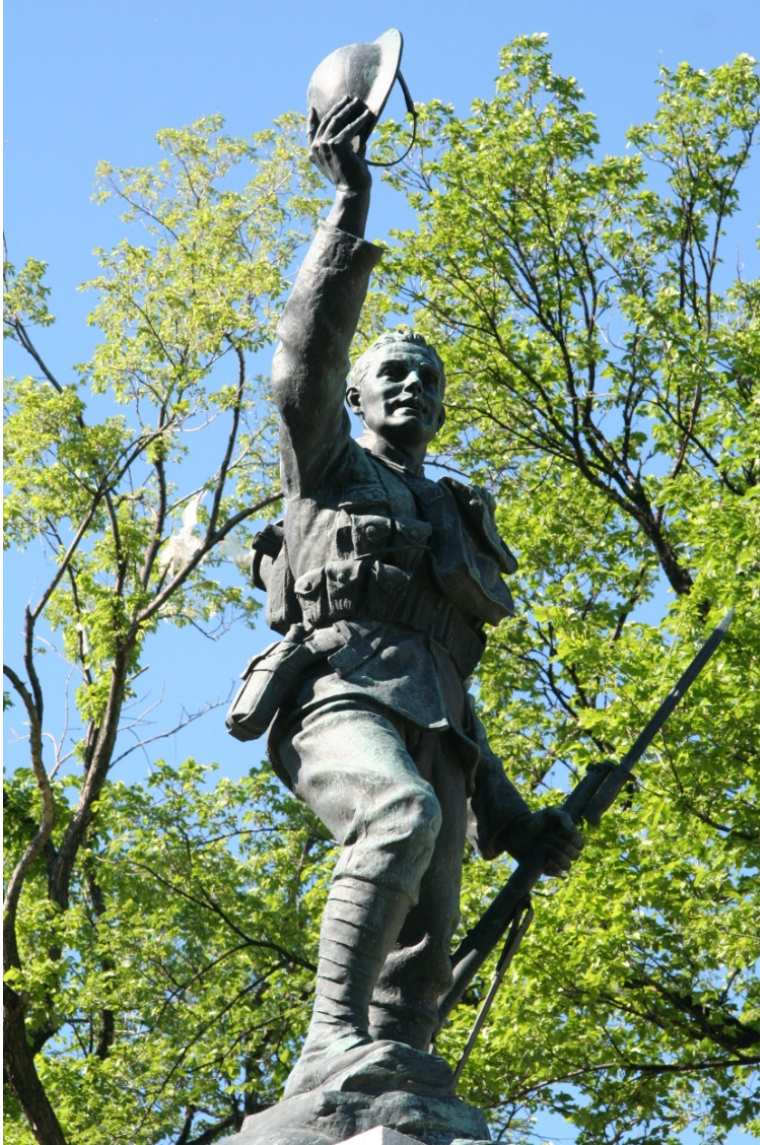
Dedicated in 1921 and recently restored, this grand monument in the small community of St. Claude is one of a handful of memorials that honour French and Franco-Manitoban efforts in World War I—particularly acknowledging the fact that, of the 94 local residents who fought, 76 did so as part of the French army. Besides the fine sculpted soldiers (one Canadian and one French) carried out by St. Boniface sculptor Nicolas Piroton) and the exquisite base design—with its curved brackets and elaborate architectural form—this example is notable for the prominent positioning of a bust of the French Marshal Ferdinand Foch. Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in 1918, Foch is credited with halting German advances at the Second Battle of the Marne, and with the military strategy that ended the war.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

St. Pierre-Jolys

The familiar Nicholas Piroton soldier at St. Claude (and at other sites), with head resting on hand in a pose of resignation, is reprised at this major Franco-Manitoban memorial. The French hero theme is reinforced here with the inclusion of Joan of Arc, the French national hero, visionary and warrior saint, who in the 15th century led French military forces in many successes against the English, and who was burned at the stake upon her capture by the English on 30 May 1431. It is not certain that the Joan of Arc statue on this memorial was also by Piroton, but it is likely to be so.



Winnipeg, Next of Kin Monument

Unveiled in 1923, this monument is dedicated to the memory of the more than 1,600 soldiers from Greater Winnipeg (within eight miles of Portage and Main) who lost their lives in the war. Mrs. Hilliard (Marguerite) Taylor's highly realistic sculpture is a tour-de-force of form and detail. Ms Taylor observed that the figure illustrates a specific moment: "the time peace was declared, when the victorious soldier threw his rifle into his left hand and triumphantly whirled his tin hat in the air." The base was designed by Colonel J.N. Semmens, a prominent and prolific local architect and himself a veteran of some of Europe's bloodiest battlefields. The stonework was by Wyatt and Ireland of Winnipeg, while the bronze plaques, with their lists of names, were cast by Henry Birks and Son.

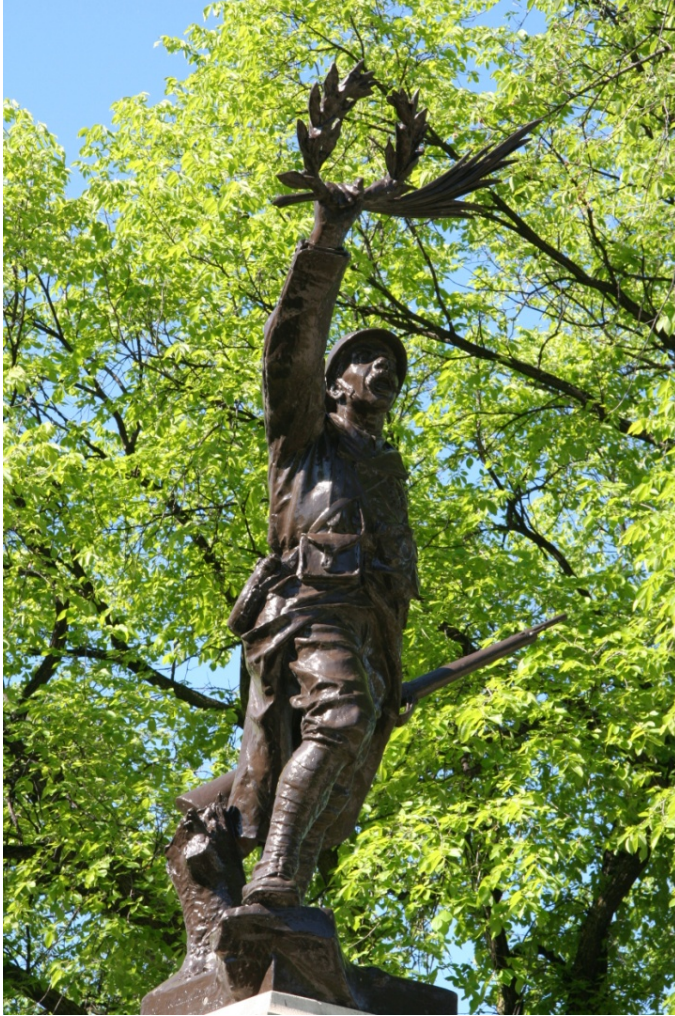


(right: Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Winnipeg, Canadian Pacific Railway Employees

Montrealer Coeur de Lion MacCarthy produced this memorial for the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to honour its 1,115 employees lost in the war. Three were cast, the others for Montreal and Vancouver. The Winnipeg monument was unveiled at the CPR Station in 1922, and now stands at Deer Lodge Centre. The sculptural vision is assured, the dramatic composition at once elegant and perhaps even reassuring for those attempting to banish awful visions of death in the Flanders mud.

The depiction of a dead soldier on a war memorial is extremely rare in Canada. We might contrast the relative optimism of this one—made when some people still called it “the war to end all wars”—with the figure of a soldier face down in the mud on Winnipeg’s Belgian monument, unveiled in 1938 even as the storm clouds were gathering once again.



Winnipeg, "Le Poilu," St. Boniface Cathedral

"Le Poilu" is a word for French soldiers during the First World War, an equivalent to the English "Tommies." This 1920 memorial, located in the west end of St. Boniface Cathedral Cemetery, is a grand gesture with an interesting history. The bronze figure, sculpted by Eugène Benet and reportedly given to St. Boniface by the French government, was used on hundreds of French memorials. Nicolas Piroton designed the base and did final preparations on the bronze cast, with A C. LeGrand as builders. Dedicated to Francophones of Western Canada who died in the First World War (with WWII added later), the design is heroic and hopeful: the figure leans forward, clutching a garland and a palm—symbols of victory and peace—and calls out, as loudly as he can, to anyone who will listen.



Winnipeg, Belgian Monument

This is the only memorial in Manitoba that dares to show a real moment of war – with a battle-weary Belgian soldier standing over the prone and dead body of a comrade. It is heartbreakingly real. Winnipeg sculptor Hubert A. Garnier brought his considerable artistic skills to bear on this commission, and the result is a major landmark in St. Boniface – situated on a small site in the centre of Provencher Boulevard south of the Belgian Club.

The statues were carried out with stone from Haddington Island, British Columbia, which is renowned for its grey andesite, considered to be that province's finest building stone because, though hard, it is relatively easily profiled and carved. The rest of the monument was completed at the Gillies Quarries in Winnipeg. The memorial was unveiled on 1 October 1938, and restored and rededicated on 17 September 1995.



Winnipeg, Bank of Montreal Employees

The Bank of Montreal lost some 230 employees in the First World War. Seeking to commemorate the sacrifice made by their workers, the bank arranged an international competition for a monument. The winning design was by James Earle Fraser, an American. The bronze soldier was cast in the image of Captain Wynn Bagnall, a bank employee who had served in the war and was awarded the Military Cross. The unveiling was not universally applauded, as veterans were disappointed by Fraser's use of an American uniform, characterized particularly by its voluminous double-breasted overcoat and tall laced boots. The Memorial is nevertheless of exceptional sculptural quality, and with its situation since 1923 at the corner of Portage and Main, in front of the Bank of Montreal, it is a beloved landmark. The impressive amount of detail, captured so vividly and realistically, makes this one of Manitoba's prime examples of the level of ability that attended late 19th and early 20th century figurative sculptural works.

Find the Memorial

Sculpted figural memorials in Manitoba can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified on it.

Arden

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/lansdownewarmemorial.shtml>

Binscarth

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/binscarthwarmemorial.shtml>

Boissevain

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/boissevainwarmemorial.shtml>

Carberry

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/carberrywarmemorial.shtml>

Dauphin

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/dauphinwarmemorial.shtml>

Dugald (Oakbank)

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Emerson

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/emersonwarmemorial.shtml>

Foxwarren

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/foxwarrenwarmemorial.shtml>

Gladstone

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/gladstonewarmemorial.shtml>

Hamiota

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/hamiotawarmemorial.shtml>

Holland

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/hollandwarmemorial.shtml>

Kelwood

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/kelwoodwarmemorial.shtml>

Killarney

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/killarneywarmemorial.shtml>

MacGregor

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/macgregorwarmemorial.shtml>

Manitou

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/manitouwarmemorial.shtml>

Margaret

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/margaretcemetery.shtml>

Morden

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mordenwarmemorial.shtml>

Newdale

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/newdalepostoffice.shtml>

Neepawa

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/neepawawarmemorial.shtml>

Portage la Prairie

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/portagewarmemorial.shtml>

Reston

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/restonwarmemorial.shtml>

Roblin

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/roblinwarmemorial.shtml>

Rivers

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/riverswarmemorial.shtml>

Roland

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/rolandwarmemorial.shtml>

Rossburn

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/rossburnwarmemorial.shtml>

Russell

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/russellwarmemorial.shtml>

St. Claude

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stclaudewarmemorial.shtml>

St. Pierre-Jolys

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stpierrejolyswarmemorial.shtml>

Treherne

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/trehernewarmemorial.shtml>

Winnipeg

Bank of Montreal

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/bankofmontrealwarmonument.shtml>

Deer Lodge

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Next of Kin

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/nextofkin.shtml>

Commonwealth Women

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/womenveterans.shtml>

St. Boniface – Belgian

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/stbonifacewarmemorial.shtml>

St Boniface – Cathedral

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Architectural

A number of Manitoba war memorials have architectural aspirations. Some are, quite literally, buildings, but others have qualities of design and appearance that make them appear as building-like forms, or at least as elements of buildings – columns, walls, or arches.

The use of a building has a long history in funerary traditions, including of course the pyramids of ancient Egypt. In Victorian times, during the 19th century, it was fairly common for wealthy families to create grand mausoleums, based on Greek and Roman temple designs. These often exquisite buildings, replete with fine classical details and carried out in marble or other stone, were a highlight in many large cemeteries. Examples in Manitoba are mainly found in Winnipeg, where some especially notable mausoleums are located in Elmwood and St. Mary's cemeteries.

This kind of formal ambition was also directed at some war memorial creations, and the design attentions make these memorials unique – that is, there is often no other example quite the same in Manitoba. The samples selected on the following pages, and analyzed individually according to their specific design qualities, are a testament to the creativity and ingenuity of the monument designers and builders.

These kinds of memorials can be very personal in their design and construction, and so are interesting to contemplate. Visitors to these sites should consider how forms were conceived for their memorable shapes (this is usually best done from a distance), how materials were put together for novel or arresting effects, and then how the memorial aspects were addressed.



A mausoleum at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Winnipeg.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Carman

The Memorial Hall, an elegant Georgian Revival-style building, is a fine example of a structure that integrates important historical events with daily community life. The hall is both a monument to area residents who served in the military during the First World War, including 83 who died in battles at Vimy Ridge and Mons, and a multi-purpose public building. Its commemorative role is evident in the artefacts located on its grounds, its exterior detailing and the interior memorial room, which contains commemorative statuary, wreaths and memorabilia of the war. The building remains a landmark and valued public facility in the Carman/Dufferin district.



Darlingford

In 1921 Darlingford and the surrounding district commemorated their military efforts by constructing this small Gothic-inspired memorial building and park. It is the only free-standing memorial building in Manitoba with the sole function of commemorating the war dead. Inside the memorial, two black marble tablets bear the names of the 199 local veterans and victims of World Wars I and II.

The tranquil setting of the memorial and park evokes a spirit of hope and remembrance in stark contrast with the battlefields of Europe. It was the inspiration of Ferris Bolton, a pioneer farmer and politician from Darlingford, who lost three sons in France in 1917.

The memorial was designed by Arthur A. Stoughton, the first head of the School of Architecture, University of Manitoba. The Morden Experimental Farm designed and landscaped the park. Dr. W.R. Leslie, the Farm's superintendent, tended the park for many years.



Women's Tribute Memorial Lodge, Winnipeg

The Women's Tribute Memorial Lodge was developed as a veteran's memorial with funds raised by the women of Manitoba. The Lodge was conceived as a symbol of gratitude and remembrance for those who served in the First World War. Constructed in 1931, the building was not just a monument, but a living memorial containing an auditorium, games room and a special space called the Room of Silence. These facilities were used by the veterans from the Great War to help them continue with their lives, and as a commemorative space to remember all those that had served their province and country.

Designed by prominent Manitoba architects George W. Northwood and Cyril W. U. Chivers, both of whom had served in the First World War, the Women's Tribute Memorial Lodge also is a rare Manitoba example of the Art Deco style of architecture. With its basic cubic form, crisp edges and effective geometric decoration, it is a fine example of the style.



(Patrick Morican)

Alexander

Alexander's war memorial is one of the most striking sculptural accomplishments in the province. Perhaps conceived as a combination of a cairn and an obelisk, the powerful form is composed of four huge granite blocks, with an elegant transitional piece outlined with delicate curves – and the years 1914-1918 inscribed. The memorial is at once rugged, elemental, and beautiful.

At its base are inscribed the words: "Let Those Who Come After See to it that Their Names Be Not Forgotten." The names (18 from the First World War; two from the Second) appear on a bronze plaque. Perhaps this was recast after 1945, as the memorial otherwise appears to date from the inter-war period.



Basswood

The Basswood memorial (1922 or earlier) is an amazing piece of design. The huge stone, turned upright, with rusticated edges but a finely shaved main face, is at once elemental and mysterious. With its roughly-chipped point, it recalls the great standing stones of past ages. But there is more, for incised into the planar face is a dramatic cleft that contains a finely-carved sheathed sword with a bronze dove bursting from the cleft just at its hilt, "For Peace Everlasting." The names of the 17 local men lost in the war are inscribed in large letters to cover most of the monument's face. An additional slab stands in front, with six names from World War II.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Bowsman

The Bowsman monument is shaped very much like a familiar building form, but rendered somewhat exotic by its placement on the ground – it is really a small dome with a classical lantern and cross rising to the sky. The memorial gains even greater distinction through the contrasting use of concrete for the rectangular elements and a finishing of cobblestones on the curved elements.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Forrest

The monument at Forrest is a popular gravemarker type that was, oddly, used for only a handful of war memorials – the simple and evocative column. This example gains additional dignity through its elevation on a broad stepped base. The use of an urn shape at the apex of the column was also a common design feature for this type of memorial. Texts are inscribed on the column shaft, and include nine names from World War I and two from World War II.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Griswold

This unusual and imaginative memorial uses the obelisk form as the apex of a large and complex design. Twisted 90 degrees from its traditional presentation, the obelisk gains a more dramatic presence. The use of what appear to be mortar shells and a monolithic bunker-like base make this one of Manitoba's most interesting memorials.

The inscriptions, which feature 25 names from World War I and six from World War II, are also set in a distinctive format, on the memorial's base.





Morden

The Town of Morden/R.M. of Stanley's 1921 memorial is not strictly architectural, but the striking assemblage of stock elements—a carved figure, an obelisk, a plinth and stepped base—certainly make for a powerful piece of design. Local gravestone manufacturers S. Scott and A.G. Selley are credited as architects, with the sculptor being the Western Stone Company of St. Boniface. Nicolas Pirotton worked for that company for a time, which has perhaps given rise to the story that he was the sculptor, but by the time this memorial was made, he was already running his own monument works; the attribution is therefore unlikely. The monument features 45 names from World War I and 35 from World War II – as the memorial advises: “Our Glorious Dead.”



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Teulon

This unusual monument combines a very tactile obelisk form of rough stone with a broad base. The monument features 14 names from the dead of World War I and 17 from World War II.



(Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

Roseisle

The Roseisle monument presents an entirely familiar building element – a brick wall—abstracted by the use of pillars at the edges and elegantly curved transitional elements. The memorial features 62 names of local men lost in World War I, 69 from World War II and four lost in the Korean War of 1950-53.

The wall hardly then seems large or broad enough for 135 mostly young men gone, forever. Hopefully the epitaph is correct: “Together We Will Remember.”



St. Andrews

The freestanding arch leading into the cemetery at St. Andrews-on-the-Red Anglican Church is also a war memorial, inscribed with the fragment "Greater Love Hath No Man Than This." A quotation from John 15:13, which appears quite commonly on war memorials, the line continues "that a man lay down his life for his friends." The monument features a total of 56 names, commemorating the local dead of the World Wars and Korea. The arch is a striking piece of design, with fine relief sculptures on the square-column elements and on the spring and haunch stones. The keystone, topped by a carved torch, also includes a sculpted soldier's portrait.

Find the Memorial

Manitoba Memorials that have architectural qualities can be found in the following communities. Each entry includes a link to the Manitoba Historical Society page which includes an image and exact locational details for each memorial, and, where available, information on the soldiers identified on it.

Buildings

Carman

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/carmanwarmemorial.shtml>

Darlingford

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/darlingfordmemorialpark.shtml>

Winnipeg: Deer Lodge

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Sculptural

Alexander

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/alexanderwarmemorial.shtml>

Basswood

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/basswoodwarmemorial.shtml>

Bowsman

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/bowsmanwarmemorial.shtml>

Forrest

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/forrestwarmemorial.shtml>

Architectural

Dominion City

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/dominioncitywarmemorial.shtml>

Griswold

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/griswoldwarmemorial.shtml>

Lac du Bonnet

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/lacdubonnetwarmemorial.shtml>

Morden

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/mordenwarmemorial.shtml>

Teulon

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/teulonwarmemorial.shtml>

Roseisle

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/roseislewarmemorial.shtml>

Arches

Deloraine

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Plumas

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/plumaswarmemorial.shtml>

St. Andrews

Manitoba Historical Society Page in Development

Waskada

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/waskadawarmemorial.shtml>

Crosses

Camp Morton

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/lakesidewarmemorial.shtml>

Oak Lake

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/oaklakewarmemorial.shtml>

Pipestone

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/pipestonewarmemorial.shtml>

Rapid City

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/rapidcitywarmemorial.shtml>