

IS IT ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT?:
THE CREATION OF WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS,
THEIR IMPACT ON THE MEMORY OF THE WAR,
AND THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD TODAY

By

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Abstract: The Memory Boom of the last several decades has increased the creation of and the interest in public memory spaces. Memorials and monuments create physical places for the public to interact with history, but this is not a new phenomenon. World War I (WWI) was the first major conflict of the twentieth century and out of the war sprang a focus on war commemoration. World War I memorials were created in all of the countries involved in the conflict and each used specific imagery to represent their understanding and emotions toward the war.

The United States is unique in its form of war commemoration as it was the country that took part in the war the shortest length of time. However, many of the same commemorative practices and styles exist in the United States as well as other countries. By looking at the United States, Britain, and France as examples of Western European styles of commemoration, with a focus on the Western Front of the war, cross-cultural and international sharing of memorial styles can be found. German and Russian memorials are examples of countries oriented more to the Eastern Front and how the war affected these cultures.

By examining the construction and reason for creating these memorials, a better understanding of the place World War I has in the United States can be discerned. The United States is the only country out of those reviewed in this study that does not have a truly national WWI memorial. Commissions in the United States government are attempting to create such a memorial, but does such a memorial have a place in today's society? Comparing all of these countries and their memorial construction augments the historical and public understanding of the war. With the centennial of World War I, the place of these structures today has been questioned and is being studied. This work uses a comparison of memorials and countries to find the place these memorials have today.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: WORLD WAR I IN PUBLIC MEMORY AND MEMORIALS

World War I (WWI), fought from 1914 to 1918, was referred to as both “The Great War” and, in the United States “The War to End All Wars.” Though non-European countries were involved, it is largely considered a European conflict. In retrospect, we know that despite its name, it was not, nor could ever have possibly been the final war in Europe or anywhere else. The period is remembered primarily for the horrific trench warfare and the lost generation in Europe due to the staggering numbers of young men who died. The destruction that new technologies and weapons produced, the lives lost, and the shattered ideals and disillusionment following the war provide authors and historians a wealth of information to analyze and reconcile regarding all that had transpired. These written works give insight into the lost generation of WWI, as well as steps that were taken to cope with the loss and destruction in the aftermath of the war.

World War I in terms of memorialization rest in the transitional period between what is refer to as “Statue Mania” and the “Memorialization Mania” that later emerged. Because of the timeframe of the war, memorialization came in many different forms and concepts during and after the war.

The field of memorialization is complex and the terminology used in this research must first be defined. A monument is defined as statues or other physical structures that are commemorative or celebratory in nature. A memorial is defined as everything from monumental forms (statues, obelisks, columns, etc.) but also encompasses geographic spaces such as cemeteries, parks, landmarks, and public buildings. This is important because monuments can be memorials but memorials are not always monuments. Monuments also tend to draw on the traditional motifs of patriotism, especially depictions of being a good citizen and soldier. World War I memorials generally take on either the monumental forms, specifically statues, or public sites that have some form of utility for the local population.

The physical structures created as memorials tend to focus on the loss of life in the war and how the local community or the nation as a whole reacted to and dealt with this loss. The challenge that arises when studying memorials is viewing monuments and memorials as separate entities as there is a tendency to allow monuments to seep into the realm of memorials. This is because anything and ultimately anyone can be the subject of a memorial.¹ Monuments tend to focus on the perceived important players of history, or a historical event as something to be celebrated or remembered. Many authors also have the tendency to incorrectly use the terms of monument and memorial interchangeably. Simply stated memorials “are designed to recognize and preserve memories. They are typically understood as acts and gifts that honor particular people and historical events.”² Some authors also use the term living memorial. Memorials of this type focus on the utility of the memorial by creating a space or structure that is used by the public. Living

¹ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 7.

² Ibid.

memorials take the forms of hospitals, schools, parks, or other civic institutions that affect a community via direct, daily interaction.

“Statue Mania” was the first mode of public memory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. “Statue Mania” is the influx of the creation of statues as the main form of commemoration. The popularity of statues both in the United States and Europe became a new and permanent trend. These tended to focus on the great men of history and inspire the ideals of nationalism within the public.³ Though World War I memorials did not embrace “Statue Mania” to the extent that other historical events did, many communities in the 1920s spent money on “the ‘fighting doughboy’ memorials depicting rifle thrusting World War I infantrymen seemingly lifted from the European trenches of the western front.”⁴ What makes these even more interesting is that the common ‘fighting doughboy’ statue is a replica of Ernest Moore Viquesney’s *Spirit of the American Doughboy* statue. In comparison, “Memorial Mania” focused on remembering specific events or persons, and the community coming to terms with the trauma or conflict of the event. “Memorial Mania” created public spaces for commemoration and memorials that where not just statues but embodied many different forms of commemorative practices. Specifically, “memorials embody the feelings of particular publics at particular historical moments, and frame cultural narratives about self-identity and national purpose.”⁵

Memory is generally defined as how we, as a people, store and deal with the past. Thus, public memory is how the people, culture, or community remembers specific events. This is important because different groups of people remember events differently.

³ Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*, 20.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

Memorials commemorating the same event often take on diverse views and ultimately represent the event from a specific groups' perspective. The Memory Boom that has more recently become the focus of commemoration efforts designates this idea that in the past several decades there has been an increased interest in commemoration and the creation of public memory spaces.

Field of Memorialization

The field of memory studies and the focus on public memory is a relatively new phenomenon. Books and articles on memorialization do not generally focus on one event but rather the field as whole or specific case studies. The best way to track changes in the scholars' emphasis on memorialization is to look at the works chronologically as many of these studies build on one another. Though none specifically focus on World War I, the overarching themes, ideas, and concerns need to be understood before analyzing the studies on how WWI was remembered.

Kirk Savage's *Monument Wars* explores the idea of public memory through a discussion involving the creation of the National Mall in Washington D.C., and the memorial landscape of the city.⁶ Savage asserts that in the early American perception of monuments and memorials "skeptics thought, [they] were mere gestures by a powerful few rather than spontaneous outpourings of popular feelings."⁷ Generally, those in power had more control over the creation of public monuments and memorials. Monuments have always been subject to attacks, disputes, and political intrigues. Despite this, the creation of public spaces and monuments has continued to thrive.⁸ Savage draws on the

⁶ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009).

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

case study of the National Mall to illustrate the design of the central and cultural core for the capital, and how this interacts with the complex realities of American society and life. Discussing the politics of memorialization, and conflicts that arise allows one to view the historical problems that affect the National Mall and different groups attempting to claim space on the mall. Monuments embody the feelings and outlook of a culture at one point in time, created in, and cast in, the stone for future generations. Savage in his last chapter mentions that the creation of the World War II Memorial on the Washington Mall coincided with the September 11th terrorist attacks. These attacks resulted in increased security measures and with the prominence of military memorials on the Mall, the nation's cultural core now reflects a defensive posture.⁹ Ultimately, the current events and culture of the time at which one views a monument or memorial impacts how the viewer interprets the meaning of the structure. *Monument Wars* is a good beginning point in understanding the political conflicts surrounding the creation of public memory sites.

Erika Doss continues the trend of looking at the creation of public memory and public memory sites in her book *Memorial Mania*.¹⁰ Doss “traces how modern America’s obsession with commemoration developed and why it is so prevalent today.”¹¹ Through tracing this obsession, Doss argues that the prevalence of memorialization occurs when the public is seeking an outlet for expressing current emotions and cultural awareness specifically in the increased number of temporary memorials and the construction. As Doss pursues this trend as a whole, rather than following chronologically through the creation of different memorials, she looks at the overarching themes that affect the

⁹ Savage, *Monument War*, 297.

¹⁰ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010)

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

creation of memorials. Each chapter is titled after these themes grief, fear, and anger. Additionally, it explores case studies from different memorial projects that reflect these themes. Doss notes that more recent memorialization efforts deal with anxieties about who we are as a nation and what should be remembered. Minority groups are demanding recognition in public memory and public spaces. This is especially important when “statues [and memorials] played a vital role in championing collective national ideals, as did a widespread public culture of national anthems, holidays, festivals, and fairs.”¹² Doss also makes a point to look at the creation of temporary memorials within the phenomenon of large scale interests in creating memorials and living memorials, which are generally anything that creates a space for the community that is not solely dedicated to public remembrance. Through the case studies that include but are not limited to temporary memorials, terrorism memorials, and memorial culture, Doss sets the creation of memorials in historical context allowing the reader to better understand the changes of public memory. Public memory and memory sites started as places to commemorate events but have evolved to become places to work through the pain and loss of specific events.

Places of Public Memory does not track the field of public memory and public spaces as a whole, but rather uses different articles to explain the rhetoric, creation of memory, and the issue of space.¹³ As the introduction states “the argument of this collection...is that within the contemporary moment rhetoric, memory, and place form complex and important relations.”¹⁴ The editors and authors of this collection contend

¹² Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 25.

¹³ Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott, eds., *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2010).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

that understanding public memory and the place of public memory spaces can only happen when one understands the rhetorical character of each location. The meaning of rhetoric used in this collection is “the study of discourses, events, objects, and practice that attends to their character as meaningful, legible, partisan, and consequential.”¹⁵ As a way to further focus on rhetoric and its connection to memory and place, this collection is broken up in to three sections. Section one focuses primarily on rhetoric by studying politics, race, religion. Section two on memory and section three on place, specifically the myth of a location verses the reality. In each section, the multiple chapters examine a case study exploring a specific public memory place and track its history through the overarching theme for that section. Through these case studies, the reader is able to get a clear understanding of the relationship between rhetoric, memory and place. However, the context in respect to the whole field is lacking as the individual chapters generally do not connect to the larger field. When thinking about the creation of World War I memory, *Places of Public Memory* gives insight into how one should look at the rhetoric a place creates, its connection to the space that it resides within, and how viewers and the creators wanted the events to be remembered.

The book *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement* focuses on how memorials are designed, used, and their meanings.¹⁶ The authors note that the word “memorial increasingly came to replace the earlier term monument,” leading to the question of whether memorials and monuments are thought of as one and the same.¹⁷ Based on the field as a whole, memorials and monuments are connected but are not necessarily the

¹⁵ Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott, eds., *Places of Public Memory*, 2.

¹⁶ Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck, *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement: Design, Use and Meaning* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

same thing. Memorials can take on many forms, whereas monuments generally are more specific types of structures. At the same time, memorials can include motifs that are more commonly found on and in monuments. This argument stresses the idea that memorials and monuments at times are interchangeable terms. This book employs case studies, such as the Oklahoma City National Memorial and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, to look at the larger field of memorialization as a whole. However, unlike other studies which take full chapters to examine each location, this study examines different sites thematically so each site is discussed repeatedly throughout the book. This is an interesting take on the study of memorialization but it does have the tendency to feel like the narrative is jumping around in terms of location. This can become confusing to the reader. As the authors have noted “war memorials increasingly depicted ordinary soldiers, and not only decorated officers.”¹⁸ This is important to the study of the memory of WWI as most of the men who lost their lives were not officers but enlisted men. The book’s focus on the use of memorials is interesting because the authors agree that memorials are often not just public memory spaces but public spaces in general. In one chapter the authors state that “many people who engage with public memorials are actually on their way somewhere else.”¹⁹ This is important to keep in mind when considering the locations of WWI memorials today many of these memorials have become integrated into the community and are not recognized and since all of the people who held those common memories are deceased there is no one to pass these memories down directly.

¹⁸ Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck, *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement*, 35.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

By taking a general look at study of public memory, public spaces, and memorials, one integrates the ideas and memories of WWI into this field. As noted by these books focusing on public memory and memorialization, the memory of WWI began with the creation of statues for communities. As the trend to larger scale memorialization projects grew, so too did the memorials of WWI. They became more focused on the losses experienced by the nation instead of a particular community. Exploring next how the events of WWI are remembered will allow the two fields to come together and create the space where WWI public memories can be added to the larger study of public memory and public spaces. As noted by some authors, spaces that were dedicated solely to WWI have been changed to encompass both WWI and WWII, or as part of larger war memorials in general. These memorials and those that are solely dedicated to WWI need to be considered when discussing the place of these memorials today.

Reviewing specific works about the memory and remembrance of WWI allows readers and historians a better understanding on how the war has been commemorated. As the centennial of the end of the war is fast approaching, the conflict should be represented in the larger field of public memory. Looking at these studies chronologically, one can see how they build on one another and how changes in the field have evolved since the end of the war. The topic has changed in the last 50 years due to the contribution of significant and highly referenced books on the memory of WWI published since the 1970s.

Memory of World War I

Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* explores "the British experience on the Western Front from 1914 to 1918 and some of the literary means by

which it has been remembered, conventionalized, and mythologized.”²⁰ Through this study of the literature, created both during and in the aftermath of the war, readers acquire a greater understanding of the soldiers that survived the war and their lives afterward. Specifically, Fussell focuses on the irony embedded in the literature that was published directly before the war, as much of this literature seemingly could have been written during the war and juxtaposes the relative calm of the summer before the war with the hell that the war truly was. Because of this irony, there are similarities between what was created before and during the war which influences how readers of these works view and understand historical events. War experiences, the feelings of disillusionment, and expectations verses reality of war were popular topics. Fussell asserts that when studying wars “every war is ironic because every war is worse than expected.”²¹ This paradox impacts the creation of literature as soldiers were fighting close to home, and it was much more brutal than anyone could have imagined.

As many scholars have noted, WWI was fought initially using traditional methods, but rapidly evolved into trench warfare because of new technology. Traditional methods combined with new technology proved to be more dangerous than beneficial to the soldiers. The stories of the trenches make up the largest volume of WWI literature, with two separate genres emerging to tell the stories in their own ways. The war memoirs attempt to document the truth about the war, whereas the novels about the war are, as Fussell states, “exhibiting a generation of bright young men at war with their elders.”²² Fussell argues this specifically because it is the older people in power that started the war,

²⁰ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), xv.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

²² *Ibid.*, 119.

but the young men who put their lives in danger for the cause. Fussell uses several examples of literature, such as the different war poetry and iconic novels, to showcase the way the war is remembered and how authors present different perspectives based on their own understanding and experiences. Fussell has faced much criticism on his focus of only literature from specific groups while leaving out minorities and women. Though Fussell only concentrates on a selection of the literature, integrating more and different stories could create a new narrative and understanding that has been lost in the memory of WWI.²³ Literature itself, based on Fussell's observation, does not seem to have affected the creation of memorials. However, whatever motivation behind the creation of memorials, the transmission of memories through literature influences how the audience views memorials. The horrific trench warfare has been explored through literature to the extent that public perception of WWI focuses on those tactics. It is now part of popular culture, and in visiting memorials one expects to witness some of these concepts that became so popular due to literature and poetry.

Alex King in the book *Memorials of the Great War in Britain* specifically delves into the symbolism, creation, and remembrance through the memorials that were built in Britain both during and after the war.²⁴ King begins by stating "the majority of war memorials were... monuments of conventional type."²⁵ Since the ideas of traditional memorials through statues and symbolic meanings were the norm during and after the war, it is to be expected that the memorials would start out using these traditional forms.

²³ Claire M. Tylee, "The Great War in Modern Memory': What is Being Repressed?," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 23, no.3/4 (Fall-Winter 1995).

²⁴ Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

However, nontraditional memorials also have their place and are symbols just like traditional memorials. King notes that regardless of art form and type of monument representing the war experience proves difficult. Because memorials are ultimately for the public and are a communal experience, they cannot encompass a singular view of the



Figure 1. Whitehall Cenotaph. Image from [www1cemeteries.com](http://www.ww1cemeteries.com/british_cemeteries_memorials/cenotaph_london.htm).
http://www.ww1cemeteries.com/british_cemeteries_memorials/cenotaph_london.htm

war as each visitor will approach it with preconceived opinions resulting in individual interpretations.²⁶ In Britain, remembrance took on a unique national connection to memorialization on Armistice Day (November 11th). At 11 a.m., everyone was to observe two minutes of silence for those who died. This practice continued until the end of WWII. The observance of silence is interesting when considering the paths that led to the creation of memorials, as traditionally ceremonies begin as local events within smaller communities with

national memorial rituals coming later.

King goes into great detail on the politics and fundraising aspects surrounding the creation of memorials on the community level within Britain. As with many traumatic events during the war, memorialization was carried out through temporary memorials and

²⁶ King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain*, 5.

street shrines in the community. Politics and emotions arose when creating permanent memorials. The Whitehall Cenotaph is the most recognizable war memorial in Britain, created originally as a temporary memorial to the Glorious Dead for the Peace Day parade (see Figure 1). Later a permanent memorial was created. The Cenotaph specifically deals with the loss of life and became a place for public mourning. King's study of communities and memorials enables the reader to understand the degree to which political, emotional, and other issues impact the creation of memorials both on a community and national level. King does not include these memorials in the larger context of public memory and public spaces, but rather discusses the fact that memorials are for the public and that one cannot control the public's view of a memorial.

Janet S. K. Watson's *Fighting Different Wars* looks at varying aspects of WWI specifically the experience of the war and how memories of the war are shaped through these experiences.²⁷ Watson accomplishes this by focusing on the wartime position held by both men and women, the dichotomies between the idea that the war can be considered both work or service, and how experience and memory interact both in terms of the homefront and combat. Watson notes that "the popular image of the First World War intimately connects disillusionment with trench experience..." leaving little room for other memories and experiences in popular culture.²⁸ According to Watson, both soldiers and women who helped on the homefront viewed the war from different perspectives. Some perceived it as part of a service to their country. Others perceived the war as work, a job that they would perform and leave at the end of the shift. In the

²⁷ Janet S. K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory, and the First World War in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

popular images of the war “the ideal of service has proved stronger than the reality of work in stories of First World War soldiers.”²⁹ Regardless of how many people saw the war as work, the prevailing notion of war as service and duty to the country became the popular image. This concept of service versus work greatly impacted the female doctors and nurses employed in the war effort, which led to future professional opportunities for women.³⁰

Watson proceeds from discussing the roles of men and women in the war to dealing with how the war was remembered. When examining the memory of the war, Watson specifically concentrates on war literature, both fiction and memoir. The “books... [became] much more about life after the war than about the war itself. They were part of the construction of memory, not experience.”³¹ As Watson notes, the literature becomes less about war experiences, and more detailed regarding the emotions and aftermath of the war. These books ignore the actual experiences of the war and focused on what the memory of the war would become. World War I became a war not about its achievements but what it cost to end, both financially and emotionally, and in terms of blood. Watson analyzes war literatures’ influence on how war memory was shaped through the written word. However, since the book focuses on both the experience and memory of the war, Watson misses the large connection that these ideas bring to the public specifically in respect to places where the public engages the memory of the war.

²⁹ Watson, *Fighting Different Wars*, 57.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 187.

Jay Winter is one of the foremost scholars on the memory of WWI and its memorialization process. The book *Remembering War* focuses on the idea of the memory boom in the twentieth century and attempts to offer a full account of the remembrance of the First World War.³² Winter specifically uses this study to convey the memory and memorialization of WWI into a more complete context in respect to the larger field of historical memory. His introduction provides a brief background on the memory boom as well as defining the specific terms used throughout the book. Winter states “the primary focus of this study is on the ways groups of people...have imagined and remembered war and the victims of war in the twentieth century.”³³ This study not only examines how people remember war within the larger field of historical memory studies but also adds the context of other memorial movements to the understanding and history of WWI. This is accomplished by examining the different forms public memory takes.

Jay Winter’s other book is titled *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*.³⁴ Unlike, *Remembering War*, this study looks specifically at the memorialization process and how different groups use memorials to understand the implications and losses due to the war. Rather than focus on one specific country, Winter chooses to explore the way groups and communities across Europe have dealt with the memory of WWI. Part one focuses on the horrors of the war and the way people dealt with the aftermath. Part two considers the different cultural ideas and how those lost in the war were mourned. Winter states in the introduction that “the exploration of mourning and remembrance during and after the

³² Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (London: Yale University Press, 2006).

³³ *Ibid.*, 51.

³⁴ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Great War discloses striking convergences in the experience of loss and the search for meaning in all combatant countries.”³⁵ People on both sides of the war had to deal with the aftermath. It did not make a difference as to which side won or lost; everyone was affected by the loss of life and other casualties of war. In detailing the various memorials and methods of mourning, Winter does not separate the public from the private which are generally built for one family or close knit group. This adds some complications as memorials are generally meant for the public and are connected directly to public ideas, feelings, and memories. He focuses a great deal on the traditional aspects of memorialization, which does not seem to connect to the larger ideas of modern memory that has gone away from these traditional ideas, of which memorials and memorialization are generally a part. Winter does an excellent job of understanding the emotional issues behind the creation of memorials and how sites can be beneficial to the public. However, he misses the larger connections to the study of historical memory and does not attempt to connect these memorials to the larger issues surrounding the study of memorialization. Winter has also authored several articles on the memory of World War I, focusing on the term and ideas of shell-shock, now known as a form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and how the meaning behind specific terms can influence the culture of a society after the impact of the war.³⁶

Stefan Goebel takes another perspective when looking at how World War I was commemorated and remembered in his book *The Great War and Medieval Memory*.³⁷

³⁵ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 11.

³⁶ Jay Winter, “Shell-Shock and the Cultural History of the Great War,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 1 (January 2000).

³⁷ Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Goebel argues that after WWI both Great Britain and Germany used medieval ideals and images specifically relating the war to the Crusades.³⁸ Many of the memorials and monuments in Great Britain and Germany take traditional ideas of the medieval knights and orders in an attempt to convey emotions and understandings about the war. Comparing Great Britain, Germany, and their veterans, he discusses how integrated they were in the memorialization. Goebel states this book “is a study of medievalism in *public* war remembrance” as a way to look at some of the most prominent memorials and the memory of the public through the use of iconography, epigraphy, and the ceremonial role of the place.³⁹ In Great Britain, memorials and monuments often carried images of the Knights of the Round Table, medieval Saints, or warrior angels. In comparison, these same ideas in Germany were represented primarily by the Teutonic Knights and warrior Christian figures. In both cultures these medieval knights were created to link WWI with the cultural past, traditional forms of memorialization, and the glory of the Crusades. Each chapter of the book examines a specific aspect of medievalism in the war. Chapter one lays out the framework while chapter two through five deal with specific medievalist themes. Goebel tackles information that other authors have overlooked, specifically the idea that World War I was described in propaganda as a holy war, with each side claiming to be fighting with the Lord by their side. These images and use of cultural viewpoints in each country allowed the propaganda to connect the war directly with the crusades.⁴⁰ Goebel does not end his study in the 1920s but stretches it all the way to 1940. This allows the reader to see how specific ideals about the remembrance of WWI

³⁸ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 83.

feed into WWII. Though Goebel does not relate this study directly to the larger field of historical memory or public memory studies he does briefly look at the advent of the memory boom and how understanding the connections to medievalism in the remembrance of the war in Great Britain and Germany would impact the ideas of the memory boom in regards to the conflict's representation and memory.

The book *Unknown Soldiers: The American Expeditionary Forces in Memory & Remembrance* is an anthology of works on the American experience in the war and how the war is remembered in the United States.⁴¹ As the editor of this work states in the preface “the problem with the American memory of World War I is that there seems to be none.”⁴² The memory of the war in the United States has not been studied as much of its European counterpart, and memorialization actions are largely based on the length of the war for different countries. Each author discusses and addresses different aspects of the American memory of the war. This book is also divided into three parts, allowing each overarching theme to show its effect on how the war is remembered. Mark A. Snell, the editor of the book, starts by discussing the American Expeditionary Forces, their role in the war, and how they were remembered. At the end of the war, the American Expeditionary Forces were quickly disbanded meaning “the AEF now existed only as a memory.”⁴³ Snell also notes due to the distance between Europe and the United States American memorials to the war in Europe are rarely visited by Americans.⁴⁴ Every chapter looks at the different modes of memorialization and the history of American

⁴¹ Mark A. Snell, eds., *Unknown Soldiers: The American Expeditionary Forces in Memory and Remembrance* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2008.).

⁴² *Ibid.*, XV.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

action in the war. Snell, as the editor, attempts to bring together articles that both discuss the American forces in the war, their actions and history, as well as to explore how and why the First World War has been remembered in the view of the American public. However, this anthology does not connect to the larger historical memory field as it rarely mentions the study of public memory and could lend more information to how WWI is remembered in the United States.

Lisa M. Budreau's book *Bodies of War* "explains why the United States commemorated the war as it did and emphasizes the degree to which that cause was so remarkable."⁴⁵ This commemoration impacted American culture and politics in the aftermath of the First World War. Budreau has divided this study into three parts with each focusing on a specific theme: repatriation, remembrance, and return. Part one focuses on the fact that the American public wished to bring those who lost their lives in the war back home. It is understood that despite the government's best efforts, not everybody would be returned home. Part two considers all the ways the war was remembered and how that commemoration changed American views of the war and the specific remembrance of different groups. Budreau concentrates on veterans groups and women's organizations that "attempted to transform personal grief and doubt over the war's achievements into full allegiance to the state."⁴⁶ The organizations were attempting to find a way to understand the war and loss of life when many thought the sacrifice might have been in vain. In this section, Budreau discusses the political forces and political conflicts in the creation of war memorials and memorialization. Part three

⁴⁵ Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933* (New York: New York University Press, 2010): 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

focuses on the aftermath of the soldiers returning from the war and how they attempted to deal with their experiences and memories of the war. Budreau details how the war was commemorated and celebrated, but concludes that the attempt ultimately failed to keep the war in public memory. Budreau analyses letters, memoirs, and documents from the American Battle Monuments Commission and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and attempts to connect these sources to the memorialization of the war with the larger ideas of public memory. Budreau has also written articles about the Gold Star Mothers organization and the pilgrimage to the graves of those who were buried in Europe. These articles deal with the politics surrounding the creation of the memory of the war and the grief with which mothers who lost their sons dealt.⁴⁷

On the Battlefield of Memory by Steven Trout looks at the First World War and how it was remembered in the United States from the years 1919 to 1941.⁴⁸ Trout specifically acknowledges that the “remembrance of World War I carried unforeseen connections to World War II.”⁴⁹ Exploring the intensity in the American memorialization of the war and the war dead illustrates how much conflict and how unsettled the American memory of the war was. There was no definitive memory of the war that the whole of the American people could embrace. Often times, memorialization of war is less about the war itself and more about the people and society after the war and how culture changes. This study differs from others because Trout involves both the trauma experienced and how the war affected the beliefs of the American people and

⁴⁷ Lisa M. Budreau, “The Politics of Remembrance: The Gold Star Mothers’ Pilgrimage and America’s Fading Memory of the Great War,” *The Journal of Military History* 72, no. 2 (April 2008).

⁴⁸ Steven Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919-1941* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, xxxiii.

culture by studying the fractured nature of the war memory. Trout analyzes different types of memorials and monuments as a way of looking at the varied physical forms of memorialization.

The Great War in Russian Memory by Karen Petrone focuses on the experience of Russia during WWI.⁵⁰ This is a unique perspective of WWI since the Russian Revolution occurred during the war. Russia consequently exited the war in March 1917, even though the conflict continued until November 1918. Petrone's book is one of the few studies of the memory of WWI in Russian history, because this event has generally been considered unimportant and not impactful to the ideology of the Soviet Union. Petrone begins by acknowledging that even though WWI has not been a main part of Russian studies, the war was not forgotten by the people. One of the biggest implications regarding the study of memory of the war in Russia is that "along with excluding Russia from modern debates about World War I and memory, historians of both Europe and the Soviet Union have underestimated the extent to which Russian and Soviet memory interacted with contemporary Russian émigré and interwar European war memory."⁵¹ Petrone explores how the war is remembered in Russia, keeping in mind that the government disavowed the war. This is a ground breaking work on the memory of WWI in Russia, though it leaves out the larger connection of the ideas of the memory boom and how public memory has become such a considerable force in the last decade. This could be due to the fact the memory boom seems to have not been as prevalent in Russian as in the United States and Britain. Though both monuments and memorials are created at distinct moments and embody the ideas of those who created them, they still

⁵⁰ Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

exist in an ever changing world. Memorials, especially war memorials, educate the viewer regarding the society that existed both during the event and aftermath. But where do WWI memorials fit in today's world? What is the place of these memorials today? With the memory boom of the last several decades and the subsequent outpouring of memorialization efforts and public remembrance, this becomes even more important.

World War I has been examined as an event that impacted the history of the world and wars that followed. Some historians have argued that World War I and World War II (WWII) are not truly separate wars but one war with a pause between conflicts, or one that created the other. The studies included in this literature review examine the manner in which war has been remembered by analyzing memorials both in terms of who created them and from what perspective the memorial is showcased. However, considering the memory boom of recent years and the centennial of the end of World War I fast approaching, the way World War I has been remembered and memorialized has not yet been documented or explored to the fullest extent. The memory boom started in the early twentieth century and is generally defined as the increased interest in the creation of memory spaces for the public to use and personal interest in the past. Due to the increased interest in memory projects and memorializing our past, more attention is being directed to providing historically accurate places where the public can immerse themselves in historical events. The field of public memory and memorialization has changed over time, and the memorials and memory of World War I needs to be positioned in the larger context of this field.

To date, a federal memorial to WWI in the United States has not been erected. However, as a result of the upcoming centennial (2014-2018) there has been a new push

for the creation of a national memorial in Washington D.C.⁵² The Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri is also attached with the National World War I Museum created by Congress in 2006 but was not considered a national memorial until Congress passed a bill in December 2014 recognizing it as such. A proposal for a new memorial integrates the General John J. Pershing Memorial in Washington D.C.'s Pershing Park and one recognizing all those who fought in the war. A design contest for this memorial was held and a winner selected in January of 2016. A deadline of 2019 exists for the completion of the memorial, but construction has not yet begun.⁵³

The United States did not enter the war until near the end of the conflict, declaring war on Germany in April 1917, but not initially declaring war on all of the Central Powers. The United States acted as an independent power by not officially joining the Entente and by agreeing to work with them militarily but not diplomatically. In December, 1917 war was declared against the Austro-Hungarian Empire but not on the Central Powers as a whole. Based on these circumstances, the American memorialization efforts until fairly recently lacked the intense study that other countries experienced. The United States did not suffer the degree of personal loss many European countries encountered, however, America has preserved the history and personal stories of the participants despite the limited time spent fighting overseas. The American Expeditionary Force was involved in some of the more famous battles of the war including the Battle of Belleau Wood and the Second Battle of the Marne, both of which have been utilized in different contemporary portrayals of the war. Looking at the overarching themes of

⁵² "Congress Designates World War I Memorials," *Military History*, December 2014.

⁵³ Erik Andersen, "Washington to build new memorial to mark 100th anniversary of WWI's end," *PBS NEWSHOUR*, January 26, 2016. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/washington-to-build-new-memorial-to-mark-100th-anniversary-of-wwis-end/>

memorialization, putting the memorials of WWI in context to the larger field of memorialization, and comparing the United States perspective of the war with the European perspectives sheds light on the differences of memorialization in contemporary society and permits a space for understanding the place of these memorials today.

This literature review has tracked multiple works on the remembrance and memorialization of the First World War in different countries. Though these works rarely mention one another, they each build upon the understandings of how the war is being memorialized and what these efforts tell readers and historians about the society that created these public spaces. Collectively, these works show two different sides of the field. Public memory as a topic is widely studied, and the memory of WWI is studied but often separate from larger public memory discourse. Studies on public memory tend to focus on the construction of these places and the emotions involved, while studies on the memory of WWI deal with communities coming to terms with the aftermath of the war. By linking these two topics, a better understanding of the memory of the war and the place of war memorials can be created and examined. This context about the memorialization of the war lends itself to larger projects focusing on how these war memorials have changed and their place in today's society.

These studies also give insight to the politics and emotions that surround the process of memorialization and how society remembers specific events. Each country and community approaches memorial creations and war remembrances through their own unique perspectives. Though the memory of the war has been studied extensively, memorials themselves have not been focused on nor has there been a comparison study on how different countries created their war memorials with the United States as a focus.

Studying and comparing the memorials of WWI will allow historians to understand how the duration of each countries involvement in the war impacted the memorialization process. By comparing European counties to the United States, which was only involved for 585 days, scholars can gain a better understanding of the memorialization processes, politics, and the place of these memorials today. The goal of this study is to connect the United States memorialization of WWI to the larger study of WWI memorialization by comparing U.S. memorials to memorials created by other countries.

Chapter II

THE DISAPPEARING “SPIRIT OF THE AMERICA DOUGHBOY”: THE UNITED STATES WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS IN THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

World War I began in Europe on July 28, 1914, roughly a month after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Though the details of the events leading to the start of the war are complex, the many political and military alliances and secret agreements between the European countries led to all of Europe becoming embroiled in the war within a few short months. Even the tottering Ottoman Empire entered the conflict in hope of restoring its lost possessions and status. In the end, the conflict was largely responsible for the collapse of the continental empires of Europe, thereby allowing other countries to intervene in the Middle East and the Balkan remnants of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The United States declared neutrality in August of 1914. There was U.S. concern regarding submarine warfare and the probable sinking of American ships, but the United States held off entering the war. In January 1917, Germany stated that it would resume unrestricted submarine warfare regardless of neutrality declarations. In February 1917, the Zimmerman Telegram was released to the public which revealed that Germany promised assistance to Mexico in its efforts to regain North American territories if they joined the fight on the side of the Central Powers.

Though the American public still questioned whether the United States should become involved, the government fully issued a declaration of war after three American merchant ships were sunk in March. The United States officially declared war on Germany in April 1917, followed by declaring war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire in December.¹ By this point the male populations of many European countries had been devastated. American entrance into the war eventually led to the defeat of the Central Powers.

American troops did not arrive in Europe until the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918. World War I saw the creation of the Selective Service Act and was the first war to effectively implement the draft in United States history.² The draft was created to guarantee a sizable fighting force and included all American male citizens regardless of race or ethnicity. Also, one could volunteer to fight even if one was not an American citizen. As a result of this rule, more than 12,000 American Indians served in the United States military during WWI even though the majority of them were not citizens.³ Some of these men would go on to become the Choctaw Code Talkers and have their services called upon again during World War II. Though African American soldiers were in segregated units, American Indians served without this restriction. However, several all-Indian units existed. By this point in the war, the harshest battles between the belligerent countries had been fought and the American fighting forces took pressure off the British and French

¹ Woodrow Wilson, "Fifth Annual Message," December 4, 1917. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29558>.

² There was militia conscription during the Civil War on both sides. However, the system was not effective, and one could get out of serving by paying a fee or providing a substitute. It is considered by some to not be a draft in comparison to the Selective Service Act.

³ Susan Applegate Krouse, *North American Indians in the Great War* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 5.

forces. These fresh troops, not accustomed to the fighting in the trenches, required additional training from their allies, and needed time for a proper supply system to be established. Because the involvement of the United States in the war was so brief, American losses were nowhere near the magnitude of those suffered by the European countries. For this reason, U.S. participation in the war is often downplayed. However, the idea that World War I is America's forgotten war is false based on the emergence of cultural artifacts connected to the war in the interwar years.⁴

American memorials both at home and abroad are overlooked when discussing the memorialization efforts in the aftermath of the war. Though American forces were only involved in the war for about 18 months, or 585 days, the war itself influenced the types of memorials created and in many ways began the memorialization mania that swept the United States and Europe.⁵ Nine million people died in this global conflict. The overseas losses of the American Expeditionary Forces, calculated in 1919, totaled 80,178.⁶ Because of the varying definitions and authors' interpretations of casualties, the numbers for different countries, and specifically the United States, have changed and continue to change. For reference, the *World War I Memorial and Centennial Act of 2009* set the total American casualties, which includes those killed, missing, and wounded, at 375,000.⁷

⁴ Steven Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory: The First World War and American Remembrance, 1919-1941* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2010), 1.

⁵ Erin Blakemore, "This is the Winning Design for the New World War I Memorial," *Smithsonian.com*, last modified January 27, 2016, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/winning-design-new-world-war-i-memorial-180957949/>.

⁶ Lisa M. Budreau, *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2010), 18-19. Budreau is listing killed, wounded, and missing. For casualties rates I will be using different author information throughout as each author defines casualties or losses in the war differently.

⁷ World War I Memorial and Centennial Act of 2009, H. Res., 111th Cong., 1st sess. *Congressional Record* 164, daily ed. (November 5, 2009):H.R. 1849.

These statistics indicate that the effect of the war on the United States was significantly less than the effect and losses suffered by other nations.

During the fighting in Europe, the men who lost their lives were buried near where they fell, and there were some attempts to mark the graves. The men of the different battalions of the American Expeditionary Forces also marked the locations of specific battles in which they fought through the creation of temporary memorials during the war. It was not until the armistice that large scale memorials and monuments to the war were created and considered to be important. As Lisa M. Budreau states the “grand edifices were erected to the nation’s glory on distant battlefields instead of in the United States, where they might have served to remind the nation of its participation and the war’s cost.”⁸ The large scale and more impressive memorials to the war were created at locations outside of the United States. This contributed to the disinterest the public has felt towards the war in more recent years and has impacted the cultural memory of the war. Most of the initial impulses behind the creation of memorials were from small, communities that wanted to honor the local men who fought and those who lost their lives.

National Memorials to WWI are few in number. Some memorials essentially have evolved into national memorials, although this was not the original intention during their creation. It was not until 2014 that the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri was confirmed as a national memorial, even though it is connected to the National World War I Museum.⁹ Pershing Park in Washington D.C. with its memorial to General John J.

⁸ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 7.

⁹ World War I Memorial Act of 2014, H. Res., 113th Cong., 2d sess., *Congressional Record* 160, daily ed. (December 8, 2014): H.R. 4489.

Pershing, the leader of the American Expeditionary Forces, hosts a plaque that memorializes all of the men who fought. However, until the centennial of the war, there was no push to create a truly National Memorial for World War I. The first attempts at both a national and community memorials began as the war ended and grew in popular awareness, primarily in the 1920s and early 1930s.

The first United States memorials were created in the aftermaths of the battles in Europe in which American forces fought. Though considered memorials by many, most



Figure 2. Chateau- Thierry Monument in France from ABMC website.
https://abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/europe/chateau-thierry-monument#.WK80_LIL5s

of these creations only marked the location of the battle or commemorated the specific battalion that fought. These memorials were not created to remember the dead at the location. They are essentially monuments and not memorials.

As Lisa M. Budreau states “at the time preservation of the memory and deeds mattered more than the prospect of future deterioration, the eventual rusting of the war relics...or the minor details of property ownership.”¹⁰ These locations and memorials were created in the moment without consideration of their future or maintenance. Many of these places were overseen after the war by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), created by Congress with the purpose to construct and maintain monuments and

¹⁰ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 134.

memorials for American citizens and veterans, giving the people a place to visit.¹¹

Memorials in Europe were erected and have been maintained on “all of the major and some of the minor battlefields of the war in which U.S. soldiers participated. . . .”¹² The intent of this commission and the memorials they created was to keep the memory of the war alive, particularly the memory of the American involvement. These memorials and the cemeteries were maintained by the United States federal government, and are rarely visited by Americans vacationing in Europe (see Figure 2).

In the United States, the construction of memorials did not start until after the war. These memorials initially followed closely in the traditional style and ideas of those created for the Civil War. However, as many artists and politicians noted, many of these Civil War memorials were already in the process of falling apart as there was no system in place for their maintenance. Magazines and publications from art intuitions, and artists, highly criticized the American taste in memorials and art works, particularly in terms of soldier statues, claiming “our battle-fields are marred and disfigured more by the statues and memorial figures than they ever were by shot or shell.”¹³ During and after the Civil War, many memorial cemeteries were created as the last resting place for the men who died, and as a place for the public to mourn. While locations like this were created for WWI, the political ramifications and issues were much more complicated.

The ABMC was created for the construction of monuments and memorials, and to protect and care for the graves of the soldiers that would be buried in Europe after the

¹¹ Commission to Erect Suitable Memorials Commemorating the Services of the American Soldier in Europe, H. Res., 67th Cong., 2d sess., (March 6, 1922): Document No. 197.

¹² Mark A. Snell, eds., *Unknown Soldiers: The American Expeditionary Forces in Memory & Remembrance* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2008), 18.

¹³ James Barnes, “Soldier Monuments,” *Art and Progress*, 1, no. 7 (May 1910): 185.

Graves Registration Service (GRS) located the bodies and reinterred them. In some ways, this encouraged travel between the United States and Europe as many families pilgrimage to visit these locations.¹⁴ Though concentrating on memorial grave sites, monumental memorial structures were also common aspects of these sites. These were constructed on land gifted to the United States for their war dead. Standards were adopted to insure the graves were uniform, projected the unity of soldiers, and showcased the fact that all people died for the cause of freedom regardless of color or creed. Though initially the United States government had no intention to repatriate the war dead home, by the end of the war some politicians had promised to bring back the sons and husbands lost. This was complicated by the fact that neither Great Britain nor France would be repatriating any of their dead at this time. Because of this promise, the GRS sent questionnaires to each family in order to abide by their wishes in respect to returning home the bodies of their loved ones or allowing them to be interred in Europe in solidarity with other nations. Ultimately, more than 30,000 bodies were repatriated to the United States and buried in home plots all across the United States.¹⁵ Numerous others were never identified due to the limited forensic information, evidence, and unsuccessful attempts at connecting these unknown with their families. Those bodies remained buried in national cemeteries in Europe under U.S. jurisdiction.

The creation of memorials in the United States started out as local community attempts at memorialization and led to the need for a physical location where the soldiers of the community could be honored. Memorials often included lists of the dead from the

¹⁴ Budreau, *Bodies of War*, 187.

¹⁵ Lisa M. Budreau, "The Politics of Remembrance: The Gold Star Mothers' Pilgrimage and Americas' Fading Memory of the Great War," *The Journal of Military History*, 72, no. 2 (April 2008): 372.

community, honor rolls being the most common, or as statues that followed the more traditional aspects of monuments, generally depicting some form of a Fighting Doughboy



Figure 3. "Spirit of the American Doughboy" statue by Ernest Moore Viquesney. Photo from The E.M. Viquesney Doughboy Database. <http://doughboysearcher.weebly.com/the-pressed-copper-doughboys.html>

statue. All of these structures sought to preserve the ideal of American culture, nationalism, and the impact of a military presence in the everyday lives of Americans. The prevalence of these statues suggests that there was an “eagerness among many community leaders and veterans to remember the First World War as a national cause.”¹⁶

There are approximately 400 sculptures of WWI soldiers throughout the United States which comprise the majority of the WWI Memorials and Monuments throughout the

country.¹⁷ The “Spirit of the American Doughboy” statue created by Ernest Moore Viquesney had many inexpensive copies manufactured and was purchased by communities throughout the United States (see Figure 3).¹⁸ Though each

community imparted their own feelings and beliefs on these statues, based on the design of the soldier it seems to represent the might of the United States military and our ability to defeat our enemies. Other community projects often included the creation of public honor rolls and statues. Buildings for the community were also accepted as memorials.

The American Federation of Arts created a check list that provided guidelines as to what constituted a war memorial. It was also instrumental in gathering committees of

¹⁶ Mark A. Snell, eds., *Unknown Soldiers*, 44.

¹⁷ Jennifer Wingate, *Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America's World War I Memorials* (Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2013), 1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

artists and advisors to oversee the construction of memorials and to assure that the memorial expressed in a “satisfactory manner feelings of honor, sacrifice and patriotism.”¹⁹ The Federation of Arts suggested that all different types of memorials were acceptable, but buildings that are “largely utilitarian cannot altogether satisfy the desire for a commemorative work of art.”²⁰ The one type of memorial that the Federation of Arts disparaged was portrait statues. Portrait statues depicted either a specific person or soldiers that represent the military as a whole. The Federation of Arts argued such statues should be the last option as “a portrait statue which is also a work of art is not an impossibility, but it is such a rarity that committees should exhaust other possibilities...”²¹ Considering how many portrait statues of World War I soldiers exist suggests that this determination by the Federation of Arts was not given much attention by community groups creating memorials. Many of these memorial sites are currently in some state of disrepair as communities have forgotten them. Damage has occurred, or they have been integrated into other memorials with the passage of time.

The memorials built in the United States after the war took on two major focuses; local community commemoration and national commemoration. Many statues and memorials were built across the United States as places to mourn, represent the dead, celebrate the end of the war, and to deal with the loss created by the war. Memorials generally attempt to deal with the loss to a community or how the country feels about a specific event, in this case WWI. The major difference the American World War I memorials have in comparison to the war memorials of other nations, and American

¹⁹ “War Memorials,” *The American Magazine of Art* 10, no.5 (March 1919), 180.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 181.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 182.

memorials in general, is the fact that they represent 375,000 American casualties. Even this count has been disputed depending on what criteria is used to define the term casualties. By the time the Expeditionary Forces landed in Europe, some of the worst of the fighting was already over. American men fought in the trenches but not to the same extent as the troops of many of the other countries. Because of this, the American experience in the war is markedly different in these aspects compared to other countries. However, the public/collective memory and understanding of the Great War is all about the trenches, men rushing over the top to attack combatants on the other side of no-man's land, and the use of new technologies that devastated the traditional military tactics that both the Allied and Central power were still using at the beginning of the war. The cultural memory of WWI was shaped primarily by the art and literature created both



Figure 4. Google Earth photo of The WWI Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, MO. Photo from Google Maps.

during and after the war by American soldiers, and soldiers from other nations. Because of this influence, the cultural memory of the war is not solely the American memory of the war. Every memorial and monument was created with specific ideas and beliefs in mind. Even if one memorial

is a replica of another, the meaning behind the memorial for that specific group or community would be unique to their perspective.

The Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri was completed in 1926 and is now associated with the National World War I Museum. The Liberty Memorial was built

initially to remember the men of Kanas City who had been lost in the war. It was funded through the community which raised more than \$2.5 million in 10 days. The location marks where five commanders of the Allied forces-General Jacques of Belgium, General Diaz of Italy, Admiral Beatty of Great Britain, General Pershing commander of the AEF, and Marshal Foch of France-met on November 1, 1921 and agreed that it should be the site of a memorial.²² This was the first and only times in history that all five of these commanders were in the same location, at the same time, and spoke together.

After the Memorial was created, the Liberty Memorial Association (LMA) continued to collect artifacts, information, and memorabilia of the war from all nations involved. Because of this initiative, the memorial and the land around it was given to LMA in 2004 for the creation of the National WWI Museum for the United States. The museum proper opened to the public in 2006 as a place to understand and research the war.²³ Though considered by many to be a national WWI memorial, it was not officially designated so until 2014 by order of Congress.²⁴ As the centennial of the war began in 2014, the museum became the home to many different historical discussions and has attempted to represent all the sides of the war.

In terms of iconography, the memorial is very impactful, built in the Egyptian Revival style with the large Liberty Memorial Tower comprising the main portion of the memorial (see Figure 4). Four Guardian Spirits sit on top overlooking the memorial. Each represents a different virtue: Honor, Courage, Patriotism, and Sacrifice. At the South

²² "Museum and Memorial," The National WWI Memorial and Museum, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/museum-and-memorial>.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ World War I Memorial Act of 2014, H. Res., 113th Cong., 2d sess., *Congressional Record* 160,daily ed. (December 8, 2014): H.R. 4489.

entrance of the memorial rests two Assyrian Sphinxes shielding their eyes. These represent Memory and the Future, which face east and west respectfully attempting to hide from both the past and the future. The Memory Hall contains all the names of the men from Kansas City who lost their lives in the war. The Exhibit Hall also houses the museum. Flanking the entrances of the Memory Hall and Exhibit Hall are Cinerary Urns with the emblems of all of the branches of service that served in the war. The Great Frieze located to the north of the memorial is an art relief that tracks the passage of time from war to peace. Finally, comprising the last part of the memorial is the Dedication Wall contains bronze busts of the five allied commanders that dedicated the memorial.²⁵



Figure 5. Statue of General John J. Pershing in Pershing Park Washing D.C. Photo is from the National Parks Service website. <https://www.nps.gov/nama/planyourvisit/National-World-War-I-Memorial.htm>

Much of the Liberty Memorial is allegorical and requires a basic understanding of the war to truly appreciate what it is attempting to convey, unlike statues of soldiers which are clear in what they represent and the feelings that they evoke.

Pershing Park in Washington

D.C. is home to another site and

memorial that is considered a national memorial, though initially not created with that intention.²⁶ The park contains the memorial statue of General John J. Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, and includes a memorial plaque to all

²⁵ “Elements of the Museum and Memorial,” The National WWI Museum and Memorial, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/museum-and-memorial/elements-museum-and-memorial>.

²⁶ On the National Parks Service website Pershing Park is listed as the National World War I Memorial.

the men who fought in WWI (see Figure 5).²⁷ Although not created as an official national WWI memorial, it is considered the WWI National Memorial in the Capital. The park itself does not have any direct connection to the traditional motifs of memorial statues and the common motifs of the military, but there is a large area with a fountain and seating for visitors to reflect on their time at the park. The main feature of the park consists of the statue of Pershing. The park and statue, dedicated in 1981, recognize the military might of the country and focuses not on the loss of the war but the strong men who won the war for the American people and continued to make the world safe for



Figure 6. Photo of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Photo from the Society of the Honor Guard website. <https://tombguard.org/gallery/>

democracy.²⁸ However, at the time of the dedication, WWI failed to capture the interest of most Americans and there have been few

visitors to the park.²⁹ This is

because these ideas and motifs of the statue do not portray the reality of the war in the same manner of the other memorials. Regardless of the reason for the memorial, none of these sites have truly showcased the reality of the war and the ultimate horrors experienced by the soldiers who fought.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery was for a long time one of the only locations built specifically as a national memorial and mourning site erected in the aftermath of the war (see Figure 6). The body of one

²⁷ Mark A. Snell, eds., *Unknown Soldiers*, 7.

²⁸ "National World War I Memorial," The National Parks Service, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/nama/playourvisit/National-World-War-I-Memorial.htm>.

²⁹ Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory*, 20.

unknown soldier was repatriated to the United States and buried with the highest honors on November 11, 1921. He represents all the men who lost their lives, whose remains could not be identified, and the men whose families decided to inter them in the memorial cemeteries in Europe.³⁰ This Unknown Soldier received the highest military honors of the allied nations including the Belgium Croix de Guerre, English Victoria Cross, French Medaille Militaire and Croix de Guerre, Italian Gold Medal for Bravery, Romanian Virtutes Militara, the Czechoslovakian War Cross, and finally the Polish Virtuti Militari.³¹

This tomb is unlike any other American WWI memorials in Europe or the United States. In 1921, when it was created, only a simplistic marble crypt existed, but in 1931, a large elaborate sarcophagus was added. Though the burial of the unknown was a way to express gratitude to all the men who lost their lives, the sarcophagus is the more interesting portion of this memorial, as it represents the feelings about the war. The sarcophagus displays six inverted wreaths to represent both mourning and the six military campaigns in which the AEF participated. An art relief on one side represents Peace, Victory, and Valor. Finally, inscribed on the sarcophagus are the words “Here Rests In Honored Glory An American Soldier Known But to God.”³² It is through these additions to the Tomb that the dead of the war are honored, mourned, and remembered at this location. Today, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier also inters unknown soldiers from

³⁰ Trout, *On the Battlefield of Memory*, 21.

³¹ “World War I Unknown: Burial,” The Society of the Honor Guard: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://tombguard.org/tomb-of-the-unknown-soldier/wwi-unknown/>.

³² “World War I Unknown: Internment,” The Society of the Honor Guard: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://tombguard.org/tomb-of-the-unknown-soldier/wwi-unknown/>.

WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. It is now considered a place to honor all those lost in American wars.

With the the centennial of the war approaching, the World War I Centennial Commission was created to find ways to remember, discuss, and commemorate the war today. Some of these projects include the 100 cities/100 memorials campaign which is encouraging cities across the United States to find, recognize, and restore the existing memorials in their towns.³³ Art historian Mark Levitch has created the World War I

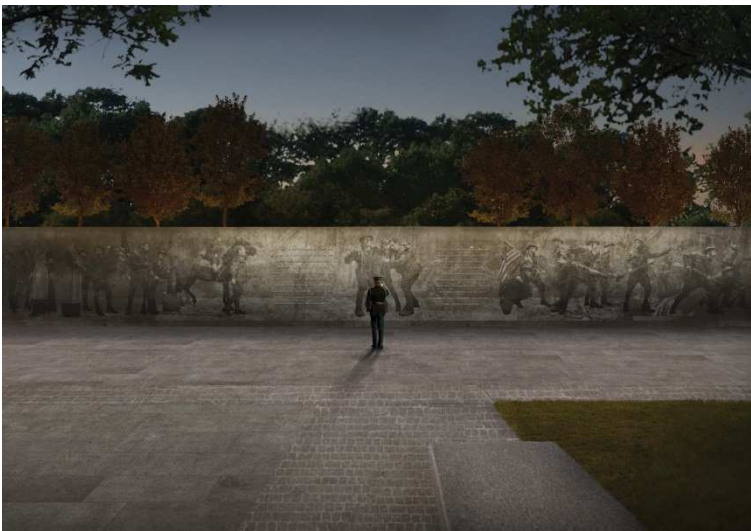


Figure 7. Rendering of "The Weight of Sacrifice" WWI memorial. Image from World War I centennial website. <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/stage-ii-design-development/the-weight-of-sacrifice.html>

Memorial Inventory Project, an online database that is attempting to locate, catalogue, and photograph the more than 10,000 memorials to WWI throughout the United States.

This group's goal is to find all the memorials through the help of local historical groups and

people interested in the project.³⁴ Though initially the Commission was created to just find ways to celebrate the centennial of the war, the Commission has also petitioned for the creation of a true national memorial by adding a memorial dedicated to all of the soldiers in Pershing Park. A design, called "The Weight of Sacrifice," was selected, but as of January 2017 construction has not started (see Figure 7). The design includes a

³³ "Interview Robert J. Dalessandro World War I Centennial," *Military History*, November 2016, 15.

³⁴ Christopher Klein, "The Hunt for Forgotten World War I Memorials," *History in the Headlines*, accessed February 24, 2017, <http://www.history.com/news/the-hunt-for-forgotten-world-war-i-monuments>.

statue of several soldiers in the center of the park with a relief wall surrounding. The relief wall incorporates different battle scenes from all United States military groups, as well as quotes from different commanders of the war, politicians, and writers.³⁵ This potential new memorial has drawn some controversy, with critics quick to point out that Washington D.C., besides already being full of monuments and memorials, already hosts memorials to WWI. However, none of the existing memorials to WWI are national in context, or at least, were not built for that purpose. Another criticism argues that the design for the memorial, while including some aspects of the current Pershing Park, mainly the statue of General Pershing, would destroy the rest of the park. Others want the park with its garden and fountain to be added to the National Register of Historic Places because the park was designed by M. Paul Friedberg, an American landscape architect. The National Park Service (NPS) maintains the park, but for the last several years the fountain in the park has been broken and drained of water.³⁶ The integrity of the NPS could be compromised with this addition as it could lead to other attempts to change aspects of other memorials and locations. Ultimately, Pershing Park in its current form is essentially a hidden place. A National WWI Memorial could restore this site, increasing visitation rates, and bring the area into the modern mainstream of historical monuments in the nation's capital.

³⁵ Erin Blakemore, "This is the Winning Design for the New World War I Memorial," *Smithsonian.com*, January 27, 2016, accessed February 24, 2017, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/winning-design-new-world-war-i-memorial-180957949/>; Philip Kennicott, "America is chock-full of World War I Memorials, so why build another one?," *Washington Post*, January 23, 2016, accessed February 24, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/america-is-chock-full-of-world-war-i-memorials-so-why-build-another-one/2016/01/21/f1d09e66-be1a-11e5-83d4-42e3bceea902_story.html?utm_term=.a4874dabd944.

³⁶ Amanda Whiting, "Here's How the World War I Memorial Will Change Pershing Park," *Washingtonian*, January 29, 2016, accessed February 25, 2017, <https://www.washingtonian.com/2016/01/29/pershing-park-world-war-1-wwi-memorial/>.

The war was a hundred years ago and most of the memorials to it were built shortly afterwards. This recent push for a national memorial for the war clearly demonstrates that these memorials do impact society and culture today. The memorials that have been discussed illustrate that these spaces attempt to grapple with the loss caused by the war and what created the American twentieth century, at least culturally. Though WWII is often more focused on in terms of US involvement, decisions made during and after WWI created the political climate that ultimately led to WWII. Memorials themselves were designed as places to reflect, remember, mourn, and after the passage of time, honor the actions of the men who fought.

Chapter III
WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS AND MEMORY
IN GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE

Unlike the United States, Great Britain and France were involved in WWI from its beginning. They were the principle Western members of the Entente Powers, with Russia as its Eastern member for most of the war. The most horrific battles took place on the Western Front in France (no actual battles took place on British soil). Due to the nature of trench warfare on the Western Front, the war is memorialized in Britain and France in very specific ways in respect to the loss of life, and the mourning experienced by communities and entire nations. For both the British and the French, the worst battles and casualties occurred during the early years of the war, particularly the Battles of the Somme and the First Battle of the Marne. Britain lost about 1 million men and France about 1.5 million men by the wars' end, and consequently relied on U.S. troops to bolster their forces in the latter years of the conflict. As a result, memorials were created to honor and remember both the men who survived and those who were lost.

The memorials in Great Britain and France incorporated traditional motifs, religious traditions, as well as new concepts in the creation of memorials and monuments, all in an attempt to come to terms with the destruction and loss created by the war. The United States did not have an extensive tradition of commemoration methods in place to deal with such a broad conflict. Thus, many European motifs were carried over and integrated into memorials created in America, such as allegorical forms of memorials.

However, many of the specific European religious motifs and traditions of Britain and France are unique to these communities. Since the nations of Europe are much older than the United States politically and culturally, many more ways existed to interpret the war-time losses using different commemoration methods.¹ Based on information synthesized and written about the connection between American and European memorials, there seems to be a greater connection between the United States and Great Britain. This is due largely to the fact that the U.S. were former British colonies and thus have a shared heritage. This chapter focuses heavily on the memorials found in Great Britain. However, due to the nature of the war and where the fighting on the Western Front took place, French memorials also receive attention. They are an important influence on how historians and the public perceive World War I.

The British understanding of the war revolves around two distinct groups: those whom experienced the war first-hand at the front fighting in the trenches, along with their memories; and those involved in the war on the homefront and their consequently different memories.² A dichotomy exists between those who saw the war as a service to their county and others who saw the war as a job. The idea of service is largely what has been commemorated via the creation of memorials and the popular memory of the war. However, those who experienced the war as a job, entering the war-time production jobs and changing careers for the duration of the war, had very different experiences and perceptions of the war, and therefore very different memories.³ In terms of memorials,

¹ Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance, and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 9.

² Janet S. K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory and the First World War in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-5.

³ *Ibid.*, 20.

these latter ideas are not well represented. The war memorials of Great Britain are connected to specific places and were created over the course of three distinct times and events. These are the homefront before 1918, churches and civic areas created after the war, and war cemeteries.⁴

The memorials of the war in Great Britain originated, as most do, in local communities before the government and state determined the best way to honor the soldiers and deal with the loss of life at the national level. In Great Britain, local committees exerted the most control over the creation of the first war memorials. Because of this, local politics played a greater role and resulted in conflicts as to what should be created and what form these memorial should take.⁵ In particular, ex-service men felt that it was their duty to ensure their fellow service men were honored and commemorated properly. Committees had to deal with the local community's feelings and beliefs about memorials, such as "there must be no serious objection to it from any significant section of local opinion, and, more constructively, it must be of a kind which would arouse the support of the public from whom the funds for it had to be collected."⁶ The bereaved also held great interest in the commemoration of their lost sons and husbands. Though many of these interest groups attempted to influence and connect to the commemoration of the dead, issues and difficulties arose over the proper manner to represent the experience of the war.⁷

⁴ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 79.

⁵ Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford: Berg, 1998), 65.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

In Great Britain, the creation of memorials also resulted in a national cult of mourning as they were built into the 1930s. The memorials created the idea, and carried a sense of, indebtedness to the fallen because their sacrifice permitted ‘normal life’ to



Figure 8. Photo of the Whitehall Cenotaph. Image form [www1cemeteries.com](http://www.ww1cemeteries.com/british_cemeteries_memorials/cenotaph_london.htm).
http://www.ww1cemeteries.com/british_cemeteries_memorials/cenotaph_london.htm

continue.⁸ Local commemorations started during the war as street shrines with religious connections and generally included an honor roll that either listed all soldiers or only the lost soldiers from a community. On occasion, these street shrines were devoted to a single family or person.⁹ Street shrines were made out of more temporary materials and were intended to last till the end of the war or a more permanent memorial could be

erected. Generally, the iconography on many of the memorials included crosses, torches, and statues of soldiers. The memorialization of the soldier dead embraced the idea that their actions should be respected regardless of one’s feelings in respect to the country’s involvement in the war. In particular, victory is represented as an ethical figure with a Christian connotation, instead of linking to the military and military ideals of what victory entailed.

In terms of the national memorials in Great Britain, many were erected throughout Great Britain as a whole, on the Western Front battlefields, and throughout

⁸ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 95.

⁹ King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain*, 51-52.

the Commonwealth. The memorials in London and on the Western Front invoke the national ideals of the British Empire more than other ones. The discussion here will focus on these. In Great Britain, one of the most famous memorials, if not the most famous, is the Whitehall Cenotaph (see Figure 8). It was originally created as a temporary memorial, only to be used during the Peace Day Parade in 1919.¹⁰ A cenotaph is essentially an empty tomb that commemorates the dead, generally in the aftermath of a war.¹¹ The first structure of the Whitehall Cenotaph was made out of plaster and wood to resemble stone. It carried flags, wreathes, and an inscription with the dates of the war. The principle inscription read “The Glorious Dead.” Though created to be a place of mourning and part



Figure 9. Adanac Military Cemetery, Miraumont. Image from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. <http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/18300/ADANAC%20MILITARY%20CEMETERY,%20MIRAUMONT>.

of the Peace Day Celebration and Parade, so many people felt a connection to the Cenotaph that it became a place for public mourning and public grief over the war. This outpouring of public sentiment and enthusiasm for the Cenotaph, resulted in a permanent version being ordered and constructed.¹² The impact of the

Whitehall Cenotaph led to other local communities constructing their own versions to honor their dead. Cenotaphs thus became integrated into other memorials and were used throughout Great Britain as a form of commemoration and memorials to the fallen.

¹⁰ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 103.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹² King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain*, 142-143.

As did most countries that had men who died on the Western Front, both Great Britain and France created National Memorial Cemeteries after the end of the war (see Figure 9). For Great Britain, none of the military dead were repatriated to be reburied in their home communities due to the expenses and the idea that all soldiers are equal regardless of designation so “with some exceptions, none was to return home.”¹³ This originally began as a method to stop people from disinterring and repatriating bodies during the war. Such a practice would create conflict both in terms of non-military personnel on the battlefields of the war, as well as conflating issues of locating the deceased at the end of the conflict. The dead were buried quickly on the battlefields and



Figure 10. Cross of Sacrifice. From the Kinnethmont website. http://www.kinnethmont.co.uk/1914-1918_files/harry-smith-berlin/harry-smith-berlin.htm.

graves were not always correctly marked or locations accurately recorded. In 1915, the French government agreed to create collection of military cemeteries with the intention to look after the burial of all Allied soldiers. However, in 1916 Britain took over their own

commemorative work.¹⁴ The Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) was created in late 1915 and charged with designing and constructing national memorial cemeteries and the monuments that would be placed in them. This commission is now called the

¹³ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). It eventually gained control and maintenance over all of the memorial cemeteries in the British Commonwealth.¹⁵

Due to the nature of Great Britain's widespread Christian faith, crosses were common elements in memorials and cemeteries. For example, the Cross of Sacrifice was commissioned by the IWGC as part of a memorial in one of the national cemeteries and is a symbol that has become greatly connected to WWI (see Figure 10).¹⁶ The Cross of Sacrifice "embodies, in many respects, the ideals of simplicity and expressive functionalism...and could be regarded as having a particularly modern character." Most of the memorials at the cemeteries embody simplicity and an attempt to give expression to events that should be mourned. At the same time, it celebrates the actions of those who sacrificed their lives.



Figure 11. Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. Image from the Westminster Abbey website. <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/our-history/people/unknown-warrior>.

Once again, as several other nations had done, Great Britain repatriated one body that represented all of the unknown soldiers who lost their lives for their country. The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior was created as a place for public mourning, to represent all those who had been lost, and to honor the men who were listed as missing in action or who could

not be identified. The Tomb of the

¹⁵ "History of the CWGC," Commonwealth War Grave Commission, accessed on March 3, 2017, <http://www.cwgc.org/about-us/history-of-cwgc.aspx>.

¹⁶ King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain*, 151 and 154.

Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey was established in November 1920 (see Figure 11).¹⁷ It is an integral part of Armistice Day celebrations and is a place members of the government commemorate the dead and demonstrate their support and remembrance of the war.

In terms of commemoration, one aspect that is fairly unique to Great Britain involves the idea that WWI represented the last crusade. A large number of memorials and monuments to the war draw on very traditional motifs that have been used for hundreds of years to commemorate conflicts, soldiers, and military commanders in Great Britain.¹⁸ Some of these more common and traditional motifs harken back to medieval ideals and symbols used in many different types of art. For example, many medieval knights, and specifically the Knights of the Round Table, were used to represent the soldiers who fought in the war. Christian allegories and angels also were common motifs. Traditional allegories to victory, liberty, and freedom were mostly portrayed as women in memorials and monumental forms. Through these ideas “the conflict was represented as either a sacred mission or a war of defense or both; and the agents of remembrance...sometimes switched freely from one pole to the other.”¹⁹ This connected World War I with the Crusades. Depending on the country, the people who discussed and write about the crusades called them sacred missions or a war of defense. Another form of memorials in Great Britain were athletic fields. Prior to the war, sports was the only way to showcase the martial spirit and competitive acts in a legal and supported way.²⁰

¹⁷ Tom Lawson, “‘The Free-Masonry of Sorrow’?: *English National Identities and the Memorialization of the Great War in Britain, 1919-1931*,” *History and Memory* 20, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2008), 97.

¹⁸ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 1.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 217.

Many of the war memorials in Great Britain remain in use in celebrations to impart cultural understanding to new members of communities. To commemorate the centennial of the war, many ceremonies took place all across Great Britain. For the centennial of the Battle of the Somme, large scale remembrances occurred including placing of wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, other ceremonies, moments of silence, and gun salutes.²¹ One of the differences in the creation of memorials in Great Britain in comparison to other countries concerns utilitarian memorials, spaces and buildings commonly used by the community. Typically no issues arose with constructing a place that is both useful and a memorial.²² However, more traditional memorial forms often dominated the memorial landscape and are the places most people recognize. Many of the WWI memorials throughout Great Britain, especially London, have continued to



Figure 12. Monument to the Missing of the Battle of the Somme. From the great war website. <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/somme/memorial-thiepval.htm>.

be maintained as memorial spaces.

As the years have passed, these spaces become part of everyday life and the community. Many have forgotten that these spaces are memorials and are becoming hidden in the day-to-day lives of people in these communities.

Many of the French memorials

to World War I are similar to those in Great Britain. Some on the Western Front are joint

²¹ Sophie Long, "Battle of the Somme: Royals at Somme centenary commemoration," BBC, accessed on March 3, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36674451>.

²² Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 66-68.

memorials to both British and French soldiers. One memorial that specifically honors both British and French soldiers is the Monument to the Missing of the Battle of the Somme at Thiepval (see Figure 12). The Monument structure allows visitors to walk into it. At the center, is a single, simple sarcophagus. Standing at this spot, a visitor can see two small cemeteries, one French and one British. Though called a monument due to the structure of the building, it is a memorial that represents all of the missing dead from the



Figure 13. Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in France. Image from the Arc de Triomphe website. <http://www.arcdetriompheparis.com/history/the-unknown-soldier>.

Battle of the Somme, the single most costly battle of the war on the Western Front, British and French casualties were estimated at over 600,000.²³ Other French memorials assume similar forms as British memorials, yet do not always share the same connotations and ideas. One of the major differences between the French and British memorialization efforts concerns the fact that most of the fighting on the Western Front was in France. Therefore, the French dead could be taken back to their communities

for burial, leading to far more complex problems in the creation of French war cemeteries. Often times civilian cemeteries were used for military burials. A final decision on how the war dead would be handled was not determined until after the end of the conflict. Due to the devastation to the land caused by the war, the people called on their governments to bring the dead back home to be buried in their local communities. In 1920, the French government finally agreed to allow those who had been identified to be

²³ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 105-106.

returned home. By permitting this repatriation of the dead, the size of the national French military cemeteries shrank in comparison to those of other countries. However, French military cemeteries were still created both to bury and honor the dead soldiers.²⁴

In November 1920, France created a Tomb of an Unknown Soldier (in French *La tombe du soldat inconnu*) beneath the *Arc de Triomphe* (Triumphant Arch of the Star) located in Paris (see Figure 13).²⁵ As in Great Britain, this was intended as a way to represent and honor all those who had been lost in the war and those who had not been identified. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was created both to help the French people mourn the loss of life and to connect the French experience of the war with the other Allied countries.

In France, the term used to designate war memorials is *monument aux mort* which literally translates to monuments of the dead. War memorials in France incorporate this funerary term, and focus on the suffering and sacrifice that the soldiers endured and accepted during the war.²⁶ The difference in terms has several connections to the different cultural understandings of public remembrance and memorials in both countries. All memorials in France had to be monuments. The French culture would not consider, nor tolerate, a civic building or utilitarian place as a proper memorial. French memorials are only for the dead. They do not represent nor honor any of the men who survived the war. This may be due to the fact that the French army had no volunteers, unlike the armies of Great Britain and the United States. Also, the French army mutinied in 1917, and it defended itself but did not initiate any attacks. Because of all of these cultural

²⁴ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 23-24.

²⁵ Lawson, "The Free-Masonry of Sorrow?," 97.

²⁶ K.S. Inglis, "The Homecoming: The War Memorial Movement in Cambridge, England," *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (1992), 585-586.

differences, and in terms of actions during the war, French memorial monuments, though in many ways similar to memorials in other countries, do not take on as many connotations nor carry as many meanings. Based on newspaper and magazine articles France reportedly “decreed that ten years shall elapse before war memorials may be undertaken; and in all Paris there is but one piece of temporary war sculpture.”²⁷

The memorial that best represents the differences in how France perceived and created its memorials is the Trench of the Bayonets (see Figure 14). This memorial was built to remember the 3rd company of the 137th French Infantry Regiment killed in June 1916. Following the battle, a trench apparently was completely filled in with only bayonets protruding from the ground where the soldiers had been buried alive. A more likely explanation is an artillery bombardment killed the 3rd company and German soldiers marked where they died with bayonets. However, the myth persisted and the site became a symbol for the forces at Verdun to never surrender. In 1917, it was determined that the site should be preserved.

The American banker George F. Rand

donated 50,000 francs in 1919 to preserve and build a memorial. To preserve both the location and the emotions invoked by the site, the memorial constructed was a very simplistic concrete building designed to protect the protruding rifles and bayonets.²⁸ It



Figure 14. Trench of the Bayonets memorial. Image from Travel France Online.

<https://travelfranceonline.com/bayonet-trench-in-douaumont-verdun-wwi/>.

²⁷ Charles Moore, “Concerning War Memorials the Problem and How it is Being Solved: A Report of Progress,” *The American Magazine of Art* 10, no.11 (September 1919), 426.

²⁸ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 99-102.

contains no traditional, modern, or allegorical images or art, as the memorial was designed only to protect the site and allow it to speak for itself rather than attempting to impart any additional meaning. “The Trench of the Bayonet is a war memorial of a special kind: a tomb frozen in time and preserved not *by*, but *from* art.”²⁹ However, constructing this memorial required flat ground so the assumed original site is about 30 meters away from the memorial itself. Due to the artillery bombardments and the destruction battles caused to the landscape, the actual location became lost over time and only the general area was known.

The World War I Memorials of both Great Britain and France allowed the people of these countries to mourn and honor the dead, to come to an understanding of the war, and served as a place for the survivors to visit and remember. In Great Britain, the attitude of the army, people, and government, and the connections to the war, led to a special ceremony to be held each year. On Armistice Day, November 11th, at 11 a.m., a two minute silence was observed. This ceremony was conducted faithfully from the end of WWI until the end of WWII. The memory of WWI impacted the culture of Great Britain, and consequently many of the memorials are maintained in good condition and still functional today. In France, a memorial was only for the dead; because of this, how the war was memorialized is different. France felt the brunt of the war, losing far more men than the other Allies and witnessing the destruction of their country.

Though 100 years have passed since the beginning of the Great War, these memorials still impact the public’s understanding of the war. In many ways World War I shaped the future of Western Europe. Memorials imparted changes and attitudes to the

²⁹ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 102.

public in subtle and unseen ways. By integrating into everyday life the memory of the war is unknowingly passed on. Memorials and monuments initially shape understandings of war as the image of the war in public consciousness. These memorials create a space for the war to be remembered and for memorial ceremonies to take place. They also create a space that furthers the understanding on how wars and historical actions continue to impact society today.

Chapter IV

GERMAN WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS AND CONNECTIONS TO RUSSIA

Germany's involvement in WWI impacted its future and in many ways led to World War II. Germany was an ally of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The German government and military agreed to support whatever the Austro-Hungarian Empire decided in terms of war and the response to a Serbian assassin killing Arch Duke Franz Ferdinand. Some historians have stated that it was Germany's "blank check" that caused World War I to become so contentious. However, it is hard to say that any one nation was completely responsible for the war, as multiple nations had opportunities to deescalate the situation but none were taken. At the end of the war, the Versailles Treaty blamed Germany for the war, destroyed Germany's military power, and required it to pay reparations to the Allied nations. In this political climate, the war memorials in Germany were conceived; the turmoil of the post-war events impacted how these memorials were created.

The memorials built in Germany both during and after the war reflect very traditional motifs, primarily religious themes and the Teutonic Knights. Since many of the memorials were built after the end of the war, most German memorials reflect the heroism and the manliness of the soldier.

Like many countries, although the government did not control how the memorials to the war were constructed or what they looked like, concern existed that there should be some basic aesthetic standards. A commission was created to help aid and guide in the construction of the memorials. Invoking the memory of the medieval Teutonic Knights contributed to the concept that the German Army had not been defeated in the field. Even after the failure of the 1918 offensives, the army returned home as a cohesive unit. Ultimately, many soldiers attributed the loss of the war to the government's inability to control the homefront. In 1918, after the collapse of the Hindenburg line, the Austro-Hungarian Empire agreed to an armistice. Shortly after, Germany also agreed to a cease fire as they were dealing with internal issues and revolution. Because of these recriminations, both in the military and in some powerful families, the German memorials to WWI are more militaristic and nationalistic in comparison to those created in other countries.¹

In Germany, during the war, memorials were created much like in other countries. However, these early German memorials reveal fewer religious themes than those of the Entente powers. Memorials are both commemoration of memories and people, but they also are a political act, "...it could not be neutral, and war memorials carried political messages from the earliest days of the war."² German memorials commonly took the form of the iron-nail structure that celebrated events or military commanders. These memorials and landmarks were wooden objects or plaques upon which an image was

¹ Keegan, *The First World War*, 149.; Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 74.

² Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 82.

created by hammering nails into the surface over the course of up to a year.³ Everyone regardless of age or gender participated in their creation. One paid a small fee to add a nail. The money raised went to charitable and other organizations. The Iron Cross was the most common memorial constructed because it was not contested by groups with opposing views of the war. Iron-nail memorials are called both war memorials and war landmarks though, no historian has truly made a distinction between the two. This might be due to the translation of the German terms into English.⁴

Iron-nail memorials proved one way of mobilizing the entire population and turned the commemoration into war time propaganda. These memorials created a space where the homefront and the military intersected in public as the iron-nail memorials often represented support for the military and the war. While all countries commemorated the war during the duration of the fighting, no other country besides Germany created memorials that blatantly functioned as propaganda. All memorials can be used as propaganda, but most do not have these overt political intentions placed upon them initially. Iron-nail memorials are distinctive to Germany.

Many German memorials had an external character that evoked the timeless aesthetics dealing with the ideas of protection of the fatherland or homeland (*Heimat*), “...urban communities favored the fatherland whereas rural society put the emphasis on *Heimat*.”⁵ Castles in particular became connected with this idea of protection. The castle analogy allowed memorials to either be constructed at castles, or existing castles and

³ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 52-54.; Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 82-83.

⁴ Iron-nail memorials or war landmarks in German is *Kriegswahzwichen zum Benageln*.

⁵ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 100. *Heimat* focuses more on a region or community than a nation and is often translated as home or homeland but not in the national sense.

fortresses to become part of commemoration practices. German war cemeteries either included such structures or were built to resemble fortified towers, citadels, or castles.⁶ Other common memorials are statues of soldiers looking like medieval warriors, or in styles similar to medieval warriors. These were usually constructed in the concept of the Iron Roland, a statue of a knight with the sword drawn. Modernized versions became common motifs in war commemorations. These historical images from the regional cultural memory and past connected the war, and death from the war, to the history of the nation giving it greater significance. This conveyed that the soldiers had not died in vain but protected their country, just as the historical figures had done in the past.⁷

Tombs of the Unknown Soldier and war cemeteries are memorials motifs common to most of the countries that fought on the Western Front. In Germany, these two types of memorials are strikingly different from their French, British, and American counterparts. This is largely because, while there were discussions regarding the creation of a national WWI memorial in Germany, one was never constructed, designated, or dedicated until after the Nazi's gained power. In 1924, twenty unidentified German soldiers from the Eastern Front were buried under a large metal cross at Tannenberg, essentially becoming a Tomb of the Unknown for those who served in the East, but not as a national tomb such as in other countries.⁸

Another memorial unique to Germany was the war cemetery on the Western Front. Most of these German cemeteries are in Belgium, unlike other countries having most of their cemeteries in France. This resulted from the poor German-French relations

⁶ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 168-170.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

after the war. Also, Germany did have a German War Graves Commission, but it was a volunteer organization, not a government one. This limited the commission's impact on how cemeteries were created.⁹ The Langemark cemetery in Belgium is one of the more significant World War I German Cemeteries due to the fact that 44,294 German soldiers are buried there. Most are buried in a mass grave with a plaque listing all the names of the dead.¹⁰

Cemeteries also exist in Berlin, but most of them are rarely visited. Contained within the Tempelhof cemetery in Berlin is another war memorial that showcases the



Figure 15. Memorial Konigin augusta Gade-Grenadier-Regiment Nr. 4. Image from Traces of WWI website. <http://en.tracesofwar.com/article/81628/Memorial-K%F6nigin-Augusta-Garde-Grenadier-Regiment-Nr-4.htm>.

emotions and beliefs about the war (see Figure 15). Not far from the graves rests a large memorial statue of a dead soldier under a shroud. On the chest are the soldier's helmet and sword, and one fist extends outside the shroud. Written on the memorial are the words

“We died so Germany can live, so let us live through you.”¹¹ This memorial, while

⁹ Stefan Goebel, “War Memorials (Germany),” 1914-1918 Online, last modified May 7, 2015, accessed March 7, 2017, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_memorials_germany.

¹⁰Vanessa Mock, “The German soldiers that history forgot,” DW, October 4, 2014, accessed March 7, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/the-german-soldiers-that-history-forgot/a-6218386>.

¹¹ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 261.; Stephen Evans, “World War One: Germany is different and mostly forgets,” BBC, July 3, 2014, accessed March 7, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-28079136>. In German “Wir starben, auf dass deutschland lebe, so lasset uns leben in Euch.”

commemorating the loss of life, also incorporates the idea that the war was lost due to a lack of resolve from the German government and the people on the homefront.¹²

The German memorials to World War I followed two distinct patterns. The first, built during the war and just after, generally focused on the military and the heroics of the soldiers. Later memorials concentrated more on the mourning of loved ones and how to deal with the grief that the war caused. Unlike other countries-where some memorials integrated these two concepts, allowing places that both honored and supported the military while also creating a place to mourn, German memorials do not allow both of these emotions to fill the same space.

One of the more powerful German memorials honoring the grief and loss of family members is a statue of grieving parents who lost their son in 1914 (see Figure 16).

It is found in the Roggevelde German War Cemetery in Belgium. The Grieving Parents by Kathe Kollwitz reflects not only the grief that she felt over the loss of her son Peter, but also the grief of all parents that lost someone to the war.¹³ This memorial both conveys the pain the family felt



Figure 16. The Grieving Parents by Kathe Kollwitz. Image from Getty images.

and the guilt that some experienced over encouraging their sons to go to war. Both the male and female figures of the statue are in mourning, attempting to console themselves.

¹² Evans, "World War One: Germany is different and mostly forgets," <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-28079136>.

¹³ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 108-115. Die Eltren in German.

However, the female figure is hunched over, alluding to the maternal bond of mothers. It also appears to represent a mother protecting her loved ones. This memorial embodies loss and grief through physical representations that became more common in the later interwar years.

The most important German World War I Memorial was the Tannenberg Memorial built in East Prussia (today Poland). The entire Tannenberg Myth is one of the



Figure 17. Tannenberg Memorial. Image from Getty images.

essential concepts of the construction of German World War I memorials and the political connections that the memorials hold. During the Great War, Germany won the Battle of Tannenberg, allowing German forces, politicians, and historians to

connect this battle with the Third Crusade, in which Teutonic Order lost a 1410 battle at the same site. The Tannenberg Mythos created the idea that the German army could push back invaders and regain the glory of the Crusades.¹⁴ The Tannenberg Memorial, completed in 1927, was a monument, memorial, mausoleum, museum, and meeting place that allowed for all different types of war commemoration (see Figure 17). In the center, twenty unknown soldiers from the Eastern Front were buried. Though in many ways a memorial that could have been national in scope, it was not created as a national war memorial.¹⁵

¹⁴ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 127-129.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

No national commemoration for the German war dead existed “until 1931, when the Neue Wache (New Guardhouse) in the center of Berlin was dedicated as the ‘Memorial to the Fallen of the World War.’”¹⁶ Though this is the national World War I memorial, it is not as well-known as the Tannenberg Memorial and Tannenberg seems to have a greater connection with the public. In 1935, Hitler declared the Tannenberg Memorial as a Reich memorial, the same year Hindenburg and his wife were buried there.¹⁷ Due to the very militaristic nature of the memorial and the connection to the Nazi regime, in 1945 Hindenburg’s body was removed and the memorial destroyed before the Soviet army overran the area. At the end of WWII, Allied Forces deemed that Nazi memorials, monuments, and anything that spoke to the militaristic nature of Germany were to be destroyed.¹⁸

Due to the nature of the Tannenberg Memorial and the political statement of the might of the German military that such a memorial created on the Eastern Front, a brief discussion of the Russian/Soviet memorials and its memory of the war should be explored to fully understand WWI war commemoration. The Russian Empire entered WWI as part of the Triple Entente Nations. Russia was often seen as the protector of the Slavic peoples, and protection of the Slavic Serbs from the aggression of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was one impetus for it to go to war in July of 1914. In 1917, the Russian Revolution forced Tsar Nicolas II to abdicate the throne, essentially removing Russia from the Great War. The Bolshevik leaders signed the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany in 1918. The Russian Civil War which lasted from 1917-1922 effectively ended

¹⁶ Sean A. Forner, “War Commemoration and the Republic in Crisis: Weimar Germany and the Neue Wache,” *Central European History* 35, no. 4 (2002), 548.

¹⁷ Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 130.

¹⁸ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 9.

any form of WWI commemoration in the country. Moreover, WWI was considered an Imperialist War by the Soviet leadership, so the memory of WWI had no place in the Soviet Union.¹⁹ Memorials to the War would not be created by the Soviet Union and communities focused on commemorating Soviet heroes.

However, the memory of WWI was not entirely forgotten in the country even if memorials were not constructed. The Moscow City Fraternal Cemetery (All-Russian War Cemetery) was created during WWI as a memorial and cemetery for the Russian soldiers who fought and died in the war. Over time, this cemetery became forgotten, fell into ruin, and was finally destroyed by the Soviets. Only a small portion of the original cemetery remains today. The one monument that still stands is to Sergei Aleksandrovich Shlikhter. It proclaims him a victim of the Imperial War which fits better with the Soviet perspective on the conflict.²⁰ During the war soldiers built memorials in combat zones to mark graves or sites of specific battles, but none of these are recognized today and many are now gone.²¹

War memorials in Russia, in the early years of the war, followed the same patterns as did the rest of Europe, but the internal political struggles forced the end of WWI memorialization efforts. There are several sites that commemorate Russian participation in WWI. However, these were not created by the Soviet government and lie outside of the former Soviet Union. Rather, Russian emigres created them. Though these groups had no support from the Russian government or real political sanction, they

¹⁹ Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 1-8.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

²¹ Aaron Cohen, "Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen (Russian Empire)," 1914-1918 Online, last modified October 8, 2014, accessed March 7, 2017, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/commemoration_cult_of_the_fallen_russian_empire.

commemorated the war in a manner similar to other European countries.²² A Russian Expeditionary Forces military cemetery and Russian memorial church exists in Champagne, France. However, there is little information about how this cemetery and memorial came into being.²³ The Soviet Union constructed a Tomb of the Unknown in 1967. Unlike other countries that created this type of memorial for WWI and then later wars, this Soviet one only commemorated those who died in WWII.²⁴

After the fall of the Soviet Union, new memorials to World War I and other wars



Figure 18. Monument to the Heroes of the First World War. From HistoryToday. <http://www.historytoday.com/paul-dukes/remembering-russia%E2%80%99s-great-war>

emerged. Where the All-Russian War Cemetery stood in Moscow now stands the Memorial Park Complex of the Heroes of the First World War which opened in 2004.²⁵ This new complex connects the war and the soldiers back

to the Russian Orthodox Church and the future of the country. Though some debates continue on who should be commemorated at this location, it represents the country's

²² Aaron Cohen, "Oh, That! Myth, Memory, and World War I in the Russian Emigration and the Soviet Union," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 1 (Spring 2003), 71.

²³ Cohen, "Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen (Russian Empire)," 1914-1918 Online, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/commemoration_cult_of_the_fallen_russian_empire.

²⁴ Nataliya Danilova, *The Politics of War Commemoration in the UK and Russia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 150.

²⁵ Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory*, 293-300.

attempt to reconcile a world war, a revolution, and a civil war all at the same site. A new national memorial in Moscow to the Fallen of World War I was unveiled in 2014.

Though the German and Russian war experience, and the way that each country commemorated the war, were different, the memorials illustrate the political and psychological ideas that each country held. Today, war memorials give the public a place to gather and a place to understand their history. For Germany, WWI led directly to WWII, and commemorations reflect this by showcasing the militaristic and heroic nature of the German army. In addition, several memorials try to reconcile the militaristic nature of war and how war is perceived with the grief of losing one's family. To Russia, WWI was an imperialist, capitalist war not to be celebrated or commemorated in any manner. However, since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian people have looked to their past to come to terms with the country's history and to understand how these events shaped the country. World War One and its legacy shaped the twentieth century in terms of war, military, government, culture, and globalization and it impacted the world in unexpected and unprecedented ways.

Chapter V

MEMORIALS IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCOPE

As seen through the study of each of these countries, the memorials of World War I demonstrate connections across international borders in terms of theme and style. The creation of memorials is driven both by communities and nations. However, when comparing memorials of different countries, it becomes clear that the national styles are not independent from other nations and historians need to consider the importance of these connections. The memorials of the United States, Britain, France, Germany, and the Soviet Union share some similarities, yet their differences make them unique. As the United States was involved in WWI the shortest length of time, the memorials of the other countries have stronger connections and more similarities.

Memorials in the United States tend to focus more heavily on the soldiers and their actions, whereas memorials in Britain and France deal more with the loss of life and the grieving process. The defeat of Germany brought governmental changes to the structure of the country. This resulted in memorials being created that harkened back to traditional forms and ideas of the military, and primarily the militaristic nature of the war, with very few memorials dealing with the mourning process.

The failed Tsarist Russian state and the communist Soviet Union that replaced it is the one country that did not commemorate or memorialize the Great War. As Russia left the war in 1917, the armistice and Armistice Day practices of the other belligerents did not have an impact in the east. The Soviet Union did not perceive World War I as important to Soviet ideals and beliefs system thus, commemoration of World War I did not occur until after the fall of the Soviet Union. As a result of these diverse wartime experiences, a comparison between all of the major combatant countries (The United States, Britain, France, Russia, and Germany) and their different forms of memorialization is necessary to better understand the memory boom of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Ultimately, we need to understand how these memorials impact the public today and to see what place memorials to World War I occupy a hundred years after the event.

The memorials of the United States took on one major distinct form that no other country replicated: the Doughboy Statue. The American Doughboy and the Doughboy Statues are unique for their realistic representation of soldiers fighting in the trenches (see Figure 3).¹ Though there has been some criticism of how realistic these statues are, the meaning of the statue and any political statements connected to it are very clear. These memorials attempted to showcase the strength and military might of the United States. Most WWI statues in the United States follow this theme. Unlike memorial statues in other countries, those in the United States did not look to the past for influence, nor were

¹ Jennifer Wingate, *Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America's World War I Memorials* (Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2013), 7-9.

they allegorical. Any memorial having allegorical elements took the form of large monumental structures such as the Liberty Memorial (see Figure 4).

The Liberty Memorial in Kansas City is the best American representation of international sharing in terms of memorial styles. It has allegorical statues on the tower representing Honor, Courage, Patriotism, and Sacrifice. Another element consists of Assyrian sphinxes at the base which represents the past and future. This memorial is unique because the more common American forms of memorialization are mostly absent and ideas found in European memorials dominate this landscape. Although there is an honor roll at the memorial, it is not as prominent as the other features and there are no statues of American military forces.²

Between the United States, Britain, and France there are two types of memorials that are similar and take on the same form-Tombs of Unknown Soldiers and military cemeteries with memorials on the Western Front. The Tombs of the Unknown Soldiers are all very similar in construction and are located at prominent military or religious sites in each country (see Figures 6, 11, and 13). The United States, Britain, and France each interned one unknown soldier to represent all of the men, those missing in action or unidentified, and those killed. Each of these sites embraces political traditions unique to the individual country and directly connects to how the military burials for the armed forces were handled. The United States repatriated over 30,000 men to be buried in their communities. So, for Americans, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier became a place to mourn primarily for families of those not found or those who chose not to bring the

² "Elements of the Museum and Memorial," The National WWI Museum and Memorial, accessed February 24, 2017, <https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/museum-and-memorial/elements-museum-and-memorial>.

bodies of their loved ones home. In Britain, no bodies were repatriated, so the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior became the central, national place in Britain to mourn the loss of the soldiers. France is a slightly different case, as memorials and monuments were only built for the dead and not to honor veterans. While many of the fallen were returned to their communities, most remained interred on the battlefield. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in France is the place to mourn those who were lost, but it does not carry the major political implications of the British memorial. In Germany, at the Tannenberg Memorial, several unknown soldiers were buried but the memorial was not constructed primarily as a tomb for the unknown. Finally, Russia did not build a Tomb of the Unknown until after WWII, so there is no direct connection to WWI.

The United States, Britain, France, and Germany have war cemeteries on the Western Front. All of them are very uniform in structure with row upon row of individual graves. They recognize and honor those who sacrificed their lives. There are no essential differences between the cemeteries of the United States, Britain, and France. However, the Germany cemeteries, and a lone Russian cemetery, display major differences. The German Langemark cemetery in Belgium contains 44, 294 German burials. Most are in a mass grave which contains a plaque listing all of the names of the dead.³ No other WWI cemetery seems to be a mass grave, particularly one as large as the German Langemark cemetery. It is not clear why there is a mass grave at this site and why it contains only German dead. Perhaps animosity between the French and Germans at the end of the war is to blame, but that is only speculation. Though there was a Russian war cemetery created, very little information on it exists. It was overseen by the French government and

³ Vanessa Mock, "The German soldiers that history forgot," DW, October 4, 2014, accessed March 7, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/the-german-soldiers-that-history-forgot/a-6218386>.

primarily visited by the Russian emigres'. There is no connection between this cemetery and the Soviet Union. There appears to have been no Soviet government input into the construction of the cemetery. This makes the Russian cemetery different from the other Western Front cemeteries. Many countries created commissions to oversee the design and maintenance of these memorials.⁴ These commissions still exist today.

British memorials were created to honor the veterans who fought in the war as well as honor those who died. British memorials specifically tended to follow the traditions of older memorials by representing soldiers as Knights of the Round Table and drawing on religious connections. While other countries used medieval themes, the British memorials uniquely pulled from medieval traditions that also have connections to the British royal family and Christianity. The Whitehall Cenotaph is the most famous British memorial and one of the most unique (see Figure 1 and 8). No other country created a cenotaph as a national memorial for World War I. The Monument to the Missing of the Battle of the Somme at Thiepval is a combined British and French memorial monument (see Figure 12). This memorial follows the French concept of war memorials in that it only commemorates the dead.

War memorials, or war monuments in France, were constructed to honor only those who had given their lives. This is extremely clear in the Trench of the Bayonets memorial structure (see Figure 14). The story of the Trench is more myth than reality, but it is within this myth that the attitude of the French emerges. The story posits that the soldiers were buried alive as they would not leave the trench during battle to save

⁴ Aaron Cohen, "Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen (Russian Empire)," 1914-1918 Online, last modified October 8, 2014, accessed March 7, 2017, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/commemoration_cult_of_the_fallen_russian_empire.

themselves. The memorial's structure was to protect the trench from the elements and to create a space for the public to visit and reflect on the war. No other country has built any memorial or monument in a similar style, preserving a physical piece of a battlefield.

German war memorials share some commonalities with British memorials. Both pull from traditional medieval ideas and themes, for example. These memorials took different forms, primarily in the construction of the iron-nail memorials and the Iron Roland's which are unique to Germany. Where Britain used the motif of the Knights of the Round Table, Germany incorporated themes from the Teutonic Knights. Many of the statues of soldiers and commanders were dressed as Teutonic Knights. The Tannenberg Myth drew on the battles of the knights and was connected to the WWI battle.⁵ The Tannenberg Memorial was built in what is today Poland, on the Eastern Front of the war (see Figure 17). The creation and meaning of the Tannenberg Memorial is very specific to Germany and the ideals of the German state. The large fortress-like structure enabled the memorial to function as many different things and still be a memorial. More utilitarian than most German WWI memorials, it was designed as a political statement to the countries of Eastern Europe, touting the might of the German army. The Tannenberg Memorial was so important that Hitler designated it a national memorial. Later, he ordered it destroyed to prevent Soviet troops from desecrating it as they advanced at the end of the Second World War.

Some, but very few, German memorials confronted the issues of loss and the death of soldiers. In contrast to other countries, Germany did not create a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The only burials of unknowns occurred at Tannenberg, and that

⁵ Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 127-129.

memorial was constructed to convey a political and military message. The memorials that dealt with the loss of German soldiers were memorial statues built in cemeteries and integrated into the space of mourning. The memorials that best represent this are the Memorial Königin Augusta Gade-Grenadier-Regiment Nr. 4 and the Grieving Parents statue (see Figures 15 and 16). The first is of a dead soldier proclaiming that it is acceptable for a soldier to die in order to insure the continued health of Germany, thereby representing the noble sacrifice for the country. The Grieving Parents, on the other hand, addresses the loss of family and how a family or community deals with such grief. The German WWI memorials do not share many similarities with the memorials of other countries. However, they illustrate how the war and its ramifications have impacted the creation of memorials and war commemoration as a whole.

Russian war memorials are the most difficult to compare to those of other countries. The All-Russian War Cemetery was the only WWI memorial in Russia constructed before the advent of the Soviet Union, and it was destroyed during the Soviet era.⁶ The memorials and statues being constructed today are similar to the American Doughboy statues as they represent in a realistic fashion the soldiers of the war. The other major commonality between Russian and United States war commemoration is that, as the centennial of the war approached, there was renewed focus on the war, memorials, and the construction of new memorials and monuments. The Soviet Union memorials and the Russian experience in World War One has not been studied thoroughly. As more information emerges, a more comprehensive study comparing Russian memorialization

⁶ Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 293.

and war commemoration efforts on the Eastern Front would provide further insight into how historical events influence the creation of memorials and monuments.

Not all of these countries share similarities in the construction in World War I memorials, but by comparing them one can see where specific ideas and themes have crossed international borders. The memory boom of the last several years impacts the creation of memorials and monuments today. By looking at the past and analyzing the reasons different countries constructed their memorials, we gain a better understanding of how and why events are commemorated and what forces influence the commemoration process.

World War I memorials in particular illustrate that there are multiple reasons for constructing memorials that impact the commemoration process. Without the political controversies in the United States far more soldiers would have been buried overseas. The creation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers would be much more prominent in WWI commemoration practices, based on how Tombs were perceived in other countries. The duration of the war had the largest impact on the commemoration. In France and Britain, where more men died, the memorials focus on the national grief whereas in America with fewer deaths, most memorials celebrate the military. German memorials focus more on military aspects as some would argue the army was not defeated. Finally, Russian memorial are impacted by the Russian Civil War and the creation of the Soviet Union which stopped the creation of WWI memorials.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION: WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS THEIR PRESENT AND FUTURE

Looking at the World War I memorials from different countries allows us to understand how these memorials were created, how similar ideas and concepts were shared across international borders, and how these memorials have been used over time. However, two questions still remain: what is the place of these memorials today and do they even have a place? Based on how some of these memorials have been forgotten and fallen into disrepair, the obvious answer seems to be that there is not a place in the public mindset for these memorials. However, a look at Western popular culture reflects that the memory of World War I is still with us and its idioms are used daily. Add to this the interest sparked by the centennial and the possibility of a new memorial in Washington D.C., and it becomes clear that these memorials do have a place in the culture of each country.

World War II has overshadowed World War I, both in the history that is taught and in popular culture. However, the wars are so interconnected in terms of cause and effect, and World War I set the standard on how modern wars were documented; it is no wonder that popular culture borrows so much from it. Figures of speech like ‘no man’s land,’ ‘over the top,’ and ‘in the trenches’ are used in everyday conversations even though the speaker may not understand the connection to World War I or what the original term even meant.

These sayings have been integrated into our speech and lives, and have taken on different meanings than the original context.¹ Movies and video games are another way the war is represented in our popular culture. These mediums may take liberties with the source material and do not always depict the war accurately, but movies like *War Horse* and games like *Battlefield 1* are becoming more realistic and can be a way to impart information about the war to people who otherwise would not have an interest.²

Centennial events across many countries also have rekindled a growing interest in WWI and its memorials. In fact, attempts are being made to locate and restore many of them. The centennial might have been the push needed to start a larger movement of people working with these memorials, yet they have always had a place in the community. The problem for most memorials is that since they were built for communities and not on a national scale, context has tended to escape the larger public. Many people when thinking about memorials and monuments visualize the national sites, like the Lincoln Memorial or the Washington Monument, something large and incredibly grand.³ In the United States, there is no National World War I Memorial of this scale. How countries create memorials and the scale of them demonstrates the importance, or lack thereof, of the event in that country. Memorials and monuments built on a national scale have the support of the national government, are tourist attractions, and must be maintained as they represent the nation as a whole.

¹ Cross Cuts, "A War to End All Innocence: The Enduring Impact of World War I," *New York Times*, June 20, 2014, accessed March 11, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/22/arts/the-enduring-impact-of-world-war-i.html?_r=1.

² Wes Fenlon, "We showed Battlefield 1 to a World War I historian," PC Gamer, July 20, 2016, accessed March 11, 2017, <http://www.pcgamer.com/we-showed-battlefield-1-to-a-world-war-i-historian/>.

³ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 6-7.

Community memorials, on the other hand, might not be well maintained but have a bigger presence in the community. These memorials are integral parts of Memorial Day celebrations and community events. They can be used as a place to relax, reflect, mourn, and learn about history. The public might not recognize these places as memorials as they have become integrated into and used by the community for other purposes. For students of history and art, memorials and monuments serve as mirrors into a different time and place that allow us to reconstruct the original ideas about war, the community, and the aftermath of the events. In many ways memorials speak more about the communities' reactions and feelings about the war than the war itself.⁴

In the United States there is no national WWI memorial at which one can pay respects or learn about the war. Because of this and the numerous community monument and memorials, there is no one way to visit or understand the war. Finding and visiting these local memorials can often be more meaningful than visiting national memorials. National memorials must integrate all the experiences and feelings about the war into one space so they can be accepted by the majority of the public.⁵ Plans to construct a National World War I memorial in Washington D.C. indicates that these memorials do have a place today, even 100 years after the war. Though there are arguments that another memorial is not needed, a national WWI memorial in Washington D.C. would naturally bring more attention both to the war and the memorials already in existence.

⁴ David Glassberg, "Remembering War," in *Sense of History: the Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 26-27.

⁵ Philip Kennicott, "Memorials to World War I may be less obvious, but more meaningful," *Washington Post*, August 8, 2016, accessed March 11, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/memorials-to-world-war-i-may-be-less-obvious-but-more-meaningful/2014/08/07/f1b934c0-19ba-11e4-9e3b-7f2f110c6265_story.html?utm_term=.ef35196ad9ca.

The new National World War I memorial could provide a place to tell the stories of the war; stories that were too painful to face at the end of the war. History is often messy. WWI was brutal and destructive, but it opened the door for discussions on women's rights, African-American and minority rights, and especially on how the nation treated its veterans. World War I Memorials were used by their communities at the time they were constructed, and today allow the public to interact and dialogue with the past. World War I is embedded in our public memory and the memorials give the people a space to interact with that memory.

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VITA

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