

God" over unidentified graves, the Commission had to give effect to the desire of relatives (to which moving reference had been made in the House of Commons on the occasion mentioned above) that the Missing Dead should be permanently commemorated, individually and by name, as near as possible to the places where they fell. The "Missing" Memorials were the result. The first of these to be erected, and still to many the best known, was the Menin Gate at Ypres, which records the names of 54,896 officers and men who were killed in the Ypres salient. The history of the origin and development of these memorials is interesting.

In the year 1919 an influential National Battlefields Memorial Committee was appointed by the United Kingdom Government to advise on the erection of Battle Memorials on the Western Front. Representatives of the Dominions served on this Committee.\* In its report it indicated the site of the Menin Gate and the neighbourhood of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre as suitable localities for two such memorials. Among its other recommendations was the placing of tablets in some of the cathedrals in the area in which British troops operated.

The United Kingdom Government decided, however, that the large memorials required for the commemoration of the missing would in themselves most suitably record the feats of arms in which those whose names they bore had participated, and it agreed that the Commission should design these memorials to meet the dual requirements so far as the United Kingdom was concerned. The plans of the Dominion Governments for their Battle Memorials were by then well advanced, some being actually in the course of erection. New Zealand, in particular, being able from the records of her more compact forces to commemorate her missing in the

\* For list of Members see Appendix D.

cemeteries themselves, proceeded independently from the outset; but all the others decided to join the United Kingdom in recording on the Menin Gate the names of their missing who had fallen in Belgian territory.

In commemorating those who had fallen in France this joint action was not pursued; South Africa alone, having completed her impressive memorial in Delville Wood on which the names of the missing were not recorded, continued to associate herself with the United Kingdom and the names of the missing of both countries appear everywhere side by side. The others decided to commemorate their missing on their own Battle Memorials. Canada, Australia, Newfoundland and India selected as their sites, Vimy, Villers-Bretonneux, Beaumont-Hamel and Neuve-Chapelle respectively. All their memorials have been completed with the exception of the Australian memorial at Villers-Bretonneux; this will be finished in 1938, when the erection on the battlefields of memorials to the Empire's Dead of the Great War will have been completed.\*

The memorials to the sailors who died in the Great War, and of whom only a minority had any grave but the sea, may be classed among the "Missing" Memorials.

In 1920, the Admiralty appointed a Naval Memorials Committee to advise the Commission on the most suitable form of monument to the 25,567 ranks and ratings who had lost their lives at sea. This Committee decided on three monuments at the three manning ports, Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth, and recommended that they should take the form of a sea-mark or leading-mark near the foreshore, thus combining the memorial with a beacon to

\* The Commission, being satisfied that when the names were engraved on these memorials they would present an adequate commemoration, decided to make a grant to each of the Governments concerned of a sum calculated on the basis of the cost incurred in commemorating the rest of the missing in France and Belgium.

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