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# Designing Memory: The Junior Architects of the Imperial War Graves Commission and the Creation of a Spatial Memorial in the British War Cemeteries on the Western Front

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# Contents

## Abstract

The history of the Imperial and later Commonwealth War Graves Commission has been defined by the key personalities who formed and shaped its principles. Individuals such as Sir Fabian Ware, Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker have received a great deal of the limited attention that has been given to the organisation. Little consideration has been given to the design of the cemeteries beyond the principle of equal commemoration and virtually no consideration has been given to the role of the Junior Architects.

This thesis will explore the architectural project undertaken on the old Western Front, examining the design policies and approaches taken by the Commission and by the cadre of Junior Architects to create a much more nuanced memorial to the experience of serving in the First World War. It will show how the decision to employ a group of young architects, all of whom had served in the British Army during the war and had a direct connection with the landscape they were working within, enabled an understanding of the war time experience to be retained with the architectural treatment of the cemeteries.

Using the extant architecture of the Commission and supporting this with the original trench maps, cemetery plans and design notes, this thesis will show how role of the Junior Architect in the process was central to the creation of a memorial not only to the dead, but to the experience of war and to the spaces and places of the wartime landscape.

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## List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| ASC | Army Service Corps |
| AWM | Australian War Memorial |
| BRCS | British Red Cross Society |
| CBO | Corps Burial Officer |
| CWGC | Commonwealth War Graves Commission |
| DBO | Divisional Burial Officer |
| DGRE | Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquires |
| DOU | Drawing Office Unit |
| FAU | Friends' Ambulance Unit |
| GRU | Graves Registration Unit |
| HMSO | Her/His Majesty's Stationery Office |
| IWGC | Imperial War Graves Commission |
| JA | Junior Architect |
| LAC | Libraries and Archives Canada |
| LRB | London Rifle Brigade |
| PA | Principal Architect |
| RIBA | Royal Institute of British Architects |
| TNA | National Archives, UK |
| Toc H | Talbot House, Poperinghe |

## List of Illustrations

## Introduction

> Built structures, as well as mere remembered architectural images and metaphors, serve as significant memory devices in three different ways: first, they materialize and preserve the course of time and make it visible; second, they concretize remembrance by containing and projecting memories; and third, they stimulate and inspire us to reminisce and imagine.[1]

For over a century, since the Royal Charter of 1917 created the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC), the cemetery and memorial sites on the Western Front have been markers in the landscape for the actions and loss of the British army during the First World War. The decision taken to architecturally design each individual site was, in the words of the founder of the IWGC, "the greatest undertaking since the pyramids". [2] Indeed, the architectural historian, Gavin Stamp, says of the IWGC architectural project that it was "the greatest executed British work of monumental architecture of the twentieth century".[3]

Despite the significance in both societal and architectural terms of the IWGC project there has been no study to understand the architecture as a complex and nuanced memorial, and one that is tailored to each specific site of memory. Pallasmaa's quote that began this introduction, on the role of architecture as both a repository for remembrance and as a device to trigger memory within the participant, offers a

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[1] Juhani Pallasmaa, 'Space, Place, Memory and Imagination: The Temporal Dimension of Existential Space' in *Spatial Recall: Memory in Architecture and Landscape*, ed. Marc Treib (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 18.
[2] Fabian Ware, *Immortal Heritage: An Account of the Work and Policy of the Imperial War Graves Commission during twenty years 1917-1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937), p. 56.
[3] Gavin Stamp, *The Memorial To the Missing of the Somme* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2006), p. 185.

perspective of the IWGC architectural intervention in the landscape of the old Western Front that has, until now, been overlooked.

Writing in regards to the IWGC often focuses on the overarching ethos of the Commission or generally in terms of commemoration. The limited amount of scholarship that has been devoted to understanding the work of the commission has focused on its founder, Sir Fabian Ware and his desire for universal commemoration of all, regardless of military rank or social status. The other works look at the commemorative role of the commission in remembering the dead of the Great War.

The architecture of the Commission has been equally lightly investigated. The research that has been carried out until now has focused on the senior architects, predominantly on Sir Edwin Lutyens. Discussions on the architecture produced are often set within the context of its public-facing representation of the ethos of the Commission.

Scholarship on memory and memorialisation in regards to the Great War has achieved greater depth, including the two key texts on the subject; Jay Winter's *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* and Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory*.[4] However, whilst both allude to the relationship between memory and memorial, much attention is either based on studies of memorials at home or on the role of the larger memorials to the missing. Other writing on the subject does likewise, focussing on memory or memorial, architect or architecture.

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[4] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory Sites, of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and
  Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

To date, there has been no study of the architecture of the IWGC in terms broader than those set out above. This thesis will address aspects of the commission's architecture and its function as a repository for memory that have hitherto been overlooked. It will do so by exploring the relationship between the architecture, the design process and the landscape of the former battlefields.

It will draw predominantly on the built and written archives of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission[5] to analyse the architectural and organisational intent of the architectural treatment of the cemeteries to support understanding of the war, and of the memory and ritual that surrounds the landscape of the former battlefields. By analysing the archival material, a large amount of which has been previously unused, this thesis will show that not only can the architecture be read in these terms, but that it was specifically designed to do so.

It will explore how the architecture of the cemeteries represents different forms of memorial; how the extant architecture, when viewed in an archaeological sense, can be seen to contain designed layers of memory. It will address the relationship between the former soldiers who worked in the design and siting of the cemeteries, their respective war experiences and how the two should no longer be considered mutually exclusive.

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[5] In March 1960 the IWGC formally became known as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. For details see Phillip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil* (London: Constable, 1967), p. 222.

Furthermore, it will look at the layers of memory contained within the designed aspects of the cemetery; the extant architecture, nomenclature and the spatial relationships both created and retained within landscapes. As part of this process, this thesis will discuss other elements of the Commission's wartime and post-war work that informed and shaped the design work, specifically evidence relating to the working principles of the design process, to show that the designed in layers of memory emerged from a distinct policy on the part of both the architects and the directors of the Commission.

This thesis proposes that the architecture of the IWGC should be viewed in a greater nuanced language than terms of remembrance and the dead. It will show the importance of the architecture in terms of the team of Junior Architects who designed them and the role of the cemeteries in preserving the memory, toponymy, geometry and, in some cases literal remnants of the battlefield. It will show that the current scholarship of the architecture of the Commission, that places the emphasis on the founding principles and the subsequent ethos and the commemoration of the dead, is limited in terms of both the level of design consideration that was involved with each site and the legacy of the IWGC architectural intervention on both physical and memory landscape.

**Scope**

The focus of this thesis will be the IWGC cemeteries of the old Western Front. There are many reasons for the study being, not so much limited, but shaped by the architectural intervention relating to the fighting in France and Belgium. First and foremost is the IWGC decision to create a specific architectural department to deal with the number of cemeteries to be designed on the Western Front. In other

former theatres of war, such as Gallipoli, Palestine and Italy, Principal Architects were chosen and the work carried out by a team from their respective practices. For example, the work at Palestine was undertaken by Sir John Burnett with the support of his partner Thomas Tait, who functioned in a similar role to the Junior Architects in France, but had not served in the armed forces during the war. On the Western Front such was the demand for designers an office was established and a cadre of young, ex-soldiers was chosen to undertake all the design work. This distinct difference between a fundamentally home-based design approach and an in-the-field design office creates a natural divide between the policies adopted in the creation of cemeteries in the varying theatres. In addition, the use of ex-soldiers creates a marked variation in the approaches used in other theatres. Finally, the sheer scale of the intervention along the old Western Front ensures that the diversity of and richness of example is far greater than in other theatres.

This is a study of design and designers, of the architects, their creations and the factors that shaped them both. This thesis is not a study of the Anglo-European relations engendered by the IWGC project, nor will it seek to explore questions of the inherent Imperial nature of the approach to the war graves project. To undertake such a focussed study it is necessary, albeit unfortunate, that other fascinating questions about the work of the IWGC cannot be considered. These areas include, but are not limited to, the aspect of 'equality of sacrifice', the relationship between the IWGC memorials and those of other nations, and those related to the diplomatic and political aspects of the project, with a specific emphasis on the land acquisition. The principal factor that determines the scope has been the dearth of writing on the IWGC or other nations' design projects. To date there has

been no specific study of the cemeteries of the Great War beyond typological studies that focus on the works of the Principal Architects of the IWGC. There have been no detailed studies of the architectural and design approaches adopted by other nations in their memorialising of the war. Indeed, I hope that this focussed study of the IWGC design approach and the role of the ex-service Junior Architects in the creation of the whole memorial, will serve to enable future comparative studies of the respective war cemeteries.

This thesis will explore the layers of memory retained by the architecture of the IWGC cemeteries. Specifically, it will look for narratives of memory beyond those that are solely focussed on the commemoration of the dead. That is not to say that the dead will not be considered, but the principal focus will be on other aspects of memory and memorialisation. In particular it will mean a shift away from considerations of the architectural furniture associated with the IWGC and instead consider the architectural design of individual sites. It will do this with the intention of exploring and answering the following research questions:

1. How did the design process of the IWGC cemeteries on the old Western Front serve to retain aspects of memory and experience of the Great War alongside the commemoration of the dead?

2. How does the extant architecture of the IWGC shape and facilitate an understanding of the physical and memory landscapes of the Great War?

To answer these questions, the thesis will be formed of three sections, each looking at distinct layers of memory related to the human and landscape relationships with the IWGC architectural treatment and intervention.

First, it will explore the influence of the Junior Architects on the extant architecture. It will show their role in the creation of the cemeteries and explore the personal narratives of memory they captured in the process. It will also investigate how important experience and memory were in the creation of the war cemeteries, from the acquisition of land through to completion.

In the second section, this thesis will explore the designed aspects of memory retention within the extant physical architecture of the IWGC cemetery sites. This will include how the cemeteries were designed to retain aspects of the physical landscape of the old Western Front, as well as geometric and spatial alignments within the cemetery precinct.

The final section will identify relationships between the architecture and the landscape beyond the cemetery walls. This exploration will include the role of retaining the nomenclature of the Western Front and the interrelationship between individual memorial sites to create an inferred battlefield memorial. Both aspects will show how the IWGC intervention in the landscape creates a broader landscape memorial that is invisible yet accessible through the architecture.

These layers allow for an interpretation of the human relationships and memories related to the IWGC architecture, and also the connection with the landscapes within which the architecture is located. In addition to enabling the nuance of

memory contained within the designs, the three sections will give a greater understanding of the organisational and design intent of these places, beyond housing the dead of the Great War. The investigation of these layers of memory will provide the evidence to show how the sites of the IWGC preserve a broader narrative of memory than simply one of death.

## Methodology

The First World War is regarded as the first great war of letters. With belligerent armies fielding large, primarily volunteer, forces the levels of education with combatants were higher than in any other previous war. This association between the war and the written word, alongside the traditional empirical approach to historical study, has created a reading of the war that whilst providing breadth of resource ultimately gives a one-dimensional understanding of the history and memory of the war. At a distance of over one hundred years, the memory of the war is now becoming history. Whilst the war produced much paper work, in the form of diaries, memoirs, official war diaries, battalion histories and a whole host of other printed media, the memorialisation did not. The principal material culture of the memorialisation of the First World War is the architecture.

There has been a range of scholarship undertaken to understand the role of the memorial within remembrance rituals and the broader memorial landscape. These studies, such as Alex King's work on British war memorial, Antoine Prost's work on French memorials and Jay Winter's study of a specific village memorial in Cambridgeshire, have a single aspect in common; they all attempt to place them as

the centre of a distinct series of memorial rituals.[6] The architecture becomes a prism through which to explore another aspect of memorialisation and remembrance, not a subject in and of itself.

More recent moves within the study of history have begun to recognise the value of non-written history. The recognition that traditional forms of historical research have been based on sources that privilege a specific interpretation of events and objects is not a new one. The History Workshop Movement begun in the 1960s to consider a bottom-up approach to history – a history of the little people, not the ruling elite.[7] This used the workshop as a space in which history and memory could be gathered as it was experienced, not as a political exercise in shaping future understanding. It was a history without the ulterior motive of influencing future policymaking. In more recent times the Canadian government have sought to recognise the variation in the pedagogy of First Nation tribes over the imposed traditional forms of learning. Contained within this is the First Nation approach to both gathering and imparting history and retaining a sense of personal and collective memory beyond the written word. Much of this is done through other mediums, predominantly story telling. In this way the folk history of the First Nation culture is retained in a form that most readily reflects the culture from which it comes.

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[6] Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford: Berg 1998), Antoine Prost, *In The Wake of War: 'Les Anciens Combattants' and French Society 1914-1939* (Oxford: Berg, 1992), and Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
[7] History Workshop. 2019. 'About History Workshop Online' <http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/about-us/> [Accessed 14 March 2019].

The area of folk history is of particular interest to consider, both the History Workshop Movement and the Canadian First Nation example attempt to capture the history of people and place, through oral testimony and visual record 'history' is captured as anecdote and experience. For the cultures that are studied the written word is not often the predominant way of communicating, as such, much of the history is left uncaptured by traditional historical approaches.

For Nicholas Saunders anthropology is the perfect subject through which to engage all the varying media within which history is contained.[8] Saunders has been at the forefront of studies relating to memory and the material culture of the First World War. However, Saunders' approach is limited in terms of this study as it often looks at an object in isolation, considering the object as an accidental container of memory. The memory of an object in this respect is attached not inherent; it is only there with a connection to an experience, person or place. The memory attached to an experience or place is at a distance to its location. In this respect the object becomes a portal, a conduit for memory, able to transport the individual to the site of the original event. The memory is located elsewhere, the object enables the owner to rediscover it. This thesis will consider how the cemeteries of the IWGC, the principal material culture of remembrance of the old Western Front, allow the varying layers of memory attached to both the site and the landscape to be interpreted in-situ.

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[8] Nicholas Saunders, 'Material Culture and Conflict; The Great War 1914-2003' in *Matters of Conflict: Material Culture, memory and the First World War*, ed. Nicholas J. Saunders (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 7.

A note within the Junior Architect Wilfrid Von Berg's file states that the contents of the folder were destroyed in 1962.[9] The move of the administrative headquarters from central London to a new building in Maidenhead, along with the general principle that the Commission was a maintenance organisation, saw a cull of the paper archive. A large, but unknown, amount of the written archive at the CWGC was, as a result, permanently lost. The remaining written architectural files are sporadic at best. The nature of the archive is a reflection of the considered status of the CWGC for much of its existence as a maintenance organisation. Documents were considered for their value in keeping the organisation functioning rather than documenting its history. As a result, much of the remaining written architectural archive is related to more recent alterations with very little historic information retained. It is in this context, however, that the extant architecture takes on an important documentary role. The architecture functions not only as the repository for the British war dead of the Great War, but also as a material archive to the design decisions and processes of the individual architects and the Commission as a whole. To explore the relationship between the architecture of the war cemeteries and the wartime landscape, this thesis will seek to build a body of evidence using the small remaining written archive within the CWGC and an analysis of the architecture in-situ. This analysis will use contemporary trench maps and aerial photographs of the Great War, along with the architectural plans to establish the connection between the three layers.

The study will use fieldwork to identify connections between the wartime landscape and the architecture. Using a GPS mapping platform called Linesman, a system that

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[9] CWGC, 1/1/7/B/56 Von Berg, Captain W.C. – Cemetery Design Approval Documents.

has georectified the original trench maps, the field work will highlight where battlefield geometry is retained within the architecture. The accuracy of the trench maps, or more specifically the combination of accuracy of trench map and the process of georectification, requires that field analysis is undertaken. Each location has multiple trench maps produced at various stages of the war. As Professor Keith Lilley's work identifies, the accuracy of these trench maps is generally high, but that there are also pockets of inaccuracy that are directly impacted by battle activity in an area.[10] Lilley also identifies that this variance in trigonometric accuracy means that there is not a general improvement throughout the war, but accuracy increases and decreases as a result of war activity. For the purposes of this study it has been possible to test the level of variance of the trench maps within the GPS system by visiting locations on the former Western Front that have retained original trench lines. To establish a margin for landscape interpretation within the maps and in the field the sites at Newfoundland Memorial Park, Beaumont Hamel; Delville Wood, Longueval; and Sheffield Memorial Park, Serre, prove the general accuracy of trench maps, but highlight a slight geometric variance. This results in the GPS system reading a 2 to 3 metre variance in the trench map than on the ground. The combination of geometric and geolocation inaccuracies requires that each site is visited individually for an interpretation of the architecture in the modern landscape and how this relates to the Great War landscape.

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[10] Some of this research is covered in Keith Lilley, 'Commemorative cartographies, citizen cartographers and WW1 community engagement' in *Commemorative Spaces of the First World War*, eds. James Wallis and David C. Harvey (London: Routledge, 2019).

There are 959 CWGC architecturally treated cemeteries along the old Western Front.[11] The intent of this section is to explore the connection between the architecture of the cemeteries and the landscape of the Great War. In this respect, the vast majority of cemeteries are connected by common geographical identities, such as the name of the village they are situated within or the road they sit beside. However, there are approximately 130 cemeteries that have retained the original battlefield nomenclature within their titles. These 130 have been identified by an analysis of the complete list of cemeteries. Using the work of Peter Chasseaud, the identified cemeteries have been cross-referenced with trench maps to establish their association with the Great War landscape.[12]

It is possible that some cemeteries with non-battlefield specific titles also relate to geometries of the battlefield, likewise with those cemeteries that bear a regimental title. For the purposes of this study, the cemeteries with trench nomenclature within their title provide an ample sample from which to build a body of evidence.

Establishing a connection between the cemeteries and the Great War landscape will help to further explore the intent of the architect in retaining these geometries. To a lesser extent, the additional layer of aerial photography and an analysis of the wartime cemeteries contained within, will show alterations in access and circulation. This study will draw on the work undertaken by Dr. Birger Stichelbaut to map key features of the landscape evident within the aerial photography.[13] By analysing

[11] CWGC, *Cemeteries and Memorials in Belgium and Northern France*, 2nd Edition (Clermont-Ferrand: Michelin, 2008).
[12] Peter Chasseaud, *Rats Alley: Trench Names of the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2006).
[13] Birger Stichelbaut and Piet Chielens, *The Great War Seen From the Air: In Flanders Fields, 1914-1918* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

changes in the original wartime cemeteries it will be possible to highlight how interwar design decisions sought to capture both aspects of site history and, by extension, features of the Great War landscape.

**Sources**

Owing to the sporadic nature of the CWGC written archive it will be essential to use a number of other repositories to build a fuller picture of both the work of the IWGC and the experiences and memories reflected and retained within the architecture.

To understand the experiences and roles of the Junior Architects the CWGC written archive will provide the core information that will be added to by War Diaries, Regimental Journals and private papers. These will be sourced from The National Archives (TNA), the Imperial War Museum (IWM), National Army Museum (NAM), Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and local archives. Unfortunately, in spite of tracing and contacting families, it has not been possible to unearth any private papers of the junior architects in question. Until now, the only recorded comments on the IWGC project by one of the Junior Architects remain the two letters from Wilfrid Von Berg that a referred to within the thesis.

To uncover the layer of memory related to the relationship between the architecture and the landscape of the Great War the study will use the trench map archive of the Linesman system and also, where possible, make use of the aerial photography collections of the IWM and In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres. The primary archival resource, however, will be the extant architecture of the CWGC along with associated drawings and plans, and where possible, photographs of pre-

architecturally treated and newly treated cemeteries. This will be supplemented by the CWGC Historical Information files. These files were collated in the immediate post war years to gather some history of each site. It is unclear who was responsible for their collation, but it seems likely that much of the information within them came from the respective Corps and Divisional burial officers involved and Graves Registration officials. All the historic information is held on the CWGC database of cemeteries and memorials and is available via the Commission website.

The layer of memory that will explore the IWGC design policy will draw evidence from a number of published primary sources related to veteran's groups and other pilgrimage organisations. These resources, including journals, memoirs and guidebooks will provide a combination of visual and written sources. The visual sources will draw on the photographic albums and 'then and now' style photographs of interwar battlefield tours stored at the British Library, IWM, NAM and other local archives. Where possible, these published primary sources will be supplemented with other written sources, such as private papers, to be found in the IWM, NAM and local archives.

## Literature Survey

### Historical Context

In the last twenty years scholarship on the Great War has seen a wholesale reappraisal of nearly every aspect of the conflict. Historians such as Gary Sheffield, John Bourne and a whole gamut of other military historians have sought to place the war into a broader context. This reassessment by military historians has covered the aspects from the tactical and strategic innovations to challenging assumptions about the social make-up of army units.

Sheffield, in his landmark revisionist study *Forgotten Victory*, identifies the 1960s as a key point in current public understanding of the war.[14] Titles from that era have become synonymous with the public perception of the Great War, most notably Alan Clark's *The Donkeys*.[15] Sheffield goes on to cite books such as Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* as key examples of an "approach based on empathy and emotion (that) collides head on with the archive-based 'scientific' approach on the writing of history".[16] Throughout his text Sheffield lays out an understanding and history of the Great War that seeks to use primary sources and evidence-based research to argue for a new understanding of the war, its personalities and the combatant forces. In doing so he is very aware of the engrained mentality of the British public – and large swathes of academia, for that matter – stating that:

> 'I am well aware that by advancing a contrary view, I am not merely engaging in academic debate: I am picking at a scar on the British national psyche that is still raw.'[17]

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[14] Gary Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory,* paperback edn (London: Headline, 2002).
[15] Alan Clark, *The Donkeys* (London: Hutchinson, 1961).
[16] Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory*, P. xxi.
[17] Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory*. P. xviii.

The scar that Sheffield refers to is linked heavily with the casualty figures: nearly a million war dead is difficult to quantify, let alone justify. It has, however, been the single most important factor that has dominated any historical approach to the Great War. Far from being seen as an historical event it was viewed throughout much of the remaining eighty years of the twentieth century as a cultural one. Many of the popular texts relating to the Great War were written from a non-historical point of view, choosing to focus on many and various cultural aspects. Indeed, it is from this period that the emergence of the war poets as a key narrative of the conflict also emerged.

The focus of Sheffield's study is not greatly interested in the narrative of memory attached to the war cemeteries as anything other than a shorthand motif for loss. His focus is, understandably, in the context of his historiographical discussion, on the war itself and how the overtly cultural approach has overlooked an historical, balanced understanding of the ins and outs of the conflict. It is within this context, however - that of the 1960s and a view of the war that is heavily associated with, to use Sheffield's term, "emotional baggage" - that the single most influential text on our understanding of the Imperial War Graves Commission appears.[18]

The publication of Philip Longworth's *Unending Vigil*, the official history of the newly titled Commonwealth War Graves Commission, coincides exactly with this period of history-making that Sheffield decides, yet it has not undergone the same level of investigation. It has, in point of fact, undergone virtually no investigation since it was first published. It remains to this day the only real attempt at a history of the

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[18] Ibid.

Commission and yet in so many ways all it provides is the briefest of overviews. It is, perhaps, understandable that the topic of the cemeteries and the obvious link they have with the 'scar' has been left alone. It is also understandable that, in terms of the 1960s view of the Great War, the cemeteries as a response are one of the few redeeming factors of the government's approach to the war dead and a damning indictment of the upper echelons of the military.

It stands to reason, then, that engaging with the war cemeteries – where it is not quite so simple to remove the dead from the analysis – has been left alone by modern scholarship and reappraisal of the Great War and its aftermath. Yet, it is this very reason that makes Longworth's official history and the CWGC a fascinating topic that must be reassessed. Modern scholars have refused to accept the texts of the 1960s as grounds for an understanding of the war, this study will consider the work of Philip Longworth as the definitive history of the Commission in the same way.

This thesis will set out to challenge two key assertions, assertions that have shaped and continue to shape academic and public perceptions of the war cemeteries. Firstly, it will seek to properly place the role of the Junior Architects in the design and creation of the war cemeteries, moving them from being a footnote in the official history to a prominent factor in why the cemeteries look the way they do. Secondly, it will challenge the position laid out by historians such as Jay Winter that the cemeteries, in the context of war memory, can only be considered as sites of mourning.

To gain a broader understanding of the creation of the war cemeteries this thesis will, as the 'revisionist' historians of the British army did, return to the sources, or at least what is left of them. This highlights another drawback when addressing any issue related to the IWGC, the paucity of archive that remains after a purge that coincided with the change of headquarters from central London to Maidenhead in 1972. However, whilst the archival sources are somewhat reduced the architectural archive is still very much complete and maintained. The combination of these two main sources of information allow for a much more detailed analysis of the cemeteries.

## Remembrance, Memory and the Great War

Of all the subjects related to this study, that of remembrance has had the most scholarship and popular history devoted to it. The concept of remembrance is not only one readily associated with but also shaped by association with the Great War. Indeed, Geoff Dyer remarked that "the war, it begins to seem, had been fought in order that it might be remembered".[19]

Much of this scholarship has looked at the formal response to the war and how it is officially remembered through civic memorials and acts of remembrance. The most notable of which are Adrian Gregory's exploration of the official acts of Armistice Day and Dan Todman's study into how the Great War is remembered.[20] Todman's study which explores representations of the war in cultural terms – remembrance by

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[19] Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 15.
[20] Daniel Todman, *The Great War: Myth & Memory* (London: Continuum, 2005), and Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919-1946* (Oxford: Berg, 1994).

extension – and, as such, can be considered a retort to Fussell's earlier work in a similar vein.[21]

Both Todman and Fussell sought to identify aspects of the war that were direct acts of remembrance, such as the poetry of the time and other cultural response. Memory and remembrance of the First World War has been studied through many and various prisms, from the visual arts to literature to music and beyond. This section, then, will focus on the scholarship relating to architecture and the remembrance and memory of the war.[22]

Dyer's own journey of remembrance is deeply personal and captures the balance between remembrance and experience. His response to the landscape, the memorials and his considerations of the war capture the less formal side of remembrance. A key theme to Dyer's exploration of the meaning of remembrance is that of loneliness. Indeed, the closing few pages of the account he focuses on the idea of isolation, exaltation and meaninglessness as a way for him to understand the pilgrimage he has undergone and the landscape that surrounds him.

In recent years, the most influential study of the memorial sites of the Great War has been Professor Jay Winter's *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning*.[23] In their introductory chapter to *Landscapes of the First World War*, Daly, Salvante and Wilcox identify it as a "foundational text for First World War memory studies […] which

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[21] Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*.
[22] See: Trudi Tate and Kate Kennedy (eds.) *The Silent Morning: Culture and Memory After the Armistice* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2013); Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); and Maggie Andrews (ed.) *Lest We Forget: Remembrance and Commemoration* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011).
[23] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*.

examined the importance of physical spaces, such as cemeteries, in cultural readings of the war".[24] Such is the primacy of Winter's text that in the context of this literature survey it is necessary to revisit it in a number of themes. This seminal work on the act of collective remembrance of the war identifies that much of the architectural response to the war was rooted in traditionalism, rather than Modernism. For Winter the memorials and cemeteries of the old Western Front represent all those things that the Modernists had rejected, not limited to but including romanticism, old values and sentimentality. He notes of the cemeteries in particular that,

> …even when we add the towering examples of commemoration in war cemeteries to the catalogue of civilian art, religious or secular, the strength of traditional modes of expressing the debt of the living to the dead must be acknowledged.[25]

Winter's position in regards to the memorial sites of the Great War, reflecting a traditional approach rather than Modernist, is called into question indirectly by Alexandra Harris' Romantic Moderns. Harris, when discussing the broader remit of Modernism in the arts stated that,

> Modernism asked whether the artists could engineer a tidier world. Could white paint restore our disorderly species to a state of primal clarity? […] Then, after the Great War, there was the corrosive dirt of the trenches to be washed away.[26]

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[24] Selena Daly, Martina Salvante and Vanda Wilcox (eds.) *Landscapes of the First World War* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 9.
[25] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, P. 115.
[26] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010), p. 16.

This function of Modernism that Harris refers to could be seen to equally describe the use of white headstones or the pared-back, elemental architectural forms in the IWGC project.

Winter's reading of the cemeteries as traditional spaces for the remembrance of the dead is one that fits with the narrative of *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, but not with the realities of the IWGC project. This disconnect between the theoretical dissection of what Winter treats as an amorphous commemorative response to the war and the policies and design approach of the individually designed cemeteries, all of which have a distinct narrative within the context of the broader project, suggests a limited familiarity with the works of the IWGC. This is further suggested in Winter's essay included within the catalogue for the 2012 exhibition at the Thiepval 'memorial to the Missing', in which he describes the British cemeteries as "rows of light grey headstones", going on to suggest that "many (German cemeteries) have trees, which are almost always absent from French or British war cemeteries".[27] It should be highlighted, that Winter's study is not aimed solely at the works of the IWGC, rather it is a general survey of the cultural response to the Great War. In this respect, the oversight of a detailed and nuanced understanding of the British war cemeteries is only to be expected. However, it is also equally worth considering that the general terms in which Winter writes of cemeteries in *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, none of which are IWGC sites, are not necessarily applicable or able to

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[27] Jay Winter, 'Pilgrimage and Tourism on the Somme' in *Missing of the Somme* (Peronne: Historial de la Grande Guerre, 2012) p. 191. n.b. many British war cemeteries contain trees, indeed, Mill Road Cemetery, visible from the Thiepval Memorial Winter is responding to, contains trees.

capture the nuances of a specific response.[28] Winter's work stands as a yardstick within the field, and justifiably so, given the moment it reflects, but in the case of the IWGC project it remains too narrow a view to allow for a full understanding and appreciation of both the design process and the final outcome.

There are a number of volumes focussed on decoding the memorials of the Great War, whilst there is no such focus on the war cemetery project. The principal studies are those of Alex King and Alan Borg.[29] King's study of the function of war memorials in remembrance culture places and Borg's more general overview of memorials and designers add a solid theoretical foundation to numerous coffee-table photographic collections of war memorials. Beyond these broader studies Frantzen, Goebels and Archer explore specific facets of memorialisation, chiefly related to the sculptural elements of public war memorials.[30]

The landscape as war memorial is explored briefly by Keith Grieves in his chapter *Remembering the Fallen of the Great War in Open Spaces in the English Countryside*, in which he looks at the gift of land within the Lake District.[31] The enclosure of battlefields to create a national memorial park and the semi-accidental making

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[28] Winter, *Sites of Memory*, pp. 98-115. In the section entitled 'War cemeteries, abstraction and the search for transcendence' Winter focuses on The Cenotaph in London, Thiepval Memorial to the Missing, The Trench of Bayonets and Vladso German Cemetery.
[29] Alan Borg, *War Memorials* (London: Leo Cooper, 1991); Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).
[30] Geoff Archer, *The Glorious Dead: Figurative Sculpture of British First World War Memorials* (London: Frontier, 2009); Allen J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice and the Great War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[31] Keith Grieves, 'Remembering the Fallen of the Great War' in Open Spaces in the English Countryside in *Lest We Forget: Remembrance and Commemoration,* ed. Maggie Roberts, (Stroud: History Press, 2011), pp. 141-144.

permanent of the trenches at Vimy Ridge is covered by Hucker in her chapter looking at meaning and significance of the Vimy monument.[32]

## Architecture & the IWGC

It has been a standard approach to studies of the war cemeteries that they focus on the personalities interred within. Those books that choose to deal with the architecture of the IWGC very rarely move beyond this shadow. Stamp's essay on *The Memorial to the Missing at Thiepval* betrays his 1960s education and more often than not his writing returns to the names on the memorial rather than the memorial itself.[33] The only book that gives anything that could be considered as exposure to the process of design and creation of the cemeteries is Jeroen Geurst's 2010 study of Lutyens' war cemeteries.[34] There are a handful of pages that introduce the characters of the architectural department and attempt to outline the process through which the design of cemeteries happened. However, the very title of Geurst's study belies the role of the Junior Architects in the design process. Geurst, as with every other study before his, credits the majority of the design work to the Senior Architects of the Commission.

However, Geurst's section on the architectural office and cemetery authorship is, to date, the only understanding we have of the workings and procedures of the design process. As Geurst remarks, it is difficult to get an exact picture of the workings of the department owing to the large gaps in the archival evidence. Perhaps owing to the focus of his study, his distillation of the process into a few paragraphs masks over

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[32] Jacqueline Hucker, 'After the Agony in Stony Places: The Meaning and Significance of the Vimy Monument' in *Vimy Ridge: A Canadian Reassessment*, eds. Geoffrey Hayes, Andrew Iarocci and Mike Bechthol (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007), pp. 279-290.
[33] Stamp, *Memorial to the Missing*.
[34] Jeroen Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War by Sir Edwin Lutyens* (Rotterdam: 010, 2010).

a number of issues that are raised within the remaining documentation. Geurst's asserts that,

> 'The assistant architects elaborate the designs of the principal architects, who each produce around 130 designs. The assistants themselves receive commissions to design cemeteries smaller than 250 graves. For most of the assistants, this comes to around sixty-seven small cemeteries.'[35]

This places a great deal of emphasis on the role of the Principal Architects in the production of the larger cemeteries than is necessarily the case, moreover, it reduces the output of the Junior Architects to the 'small cemeteries'. There is an inference of less meaningfulness to this phrasing, a suggestion that the greatness of the designs comes through in the large cemeteries. Even if that were the case, which it most definitely is not, the role of the Junior Architect in this process is virtually removed.

Again, in his summary of the process we see this same tendency to err towards the Principal Architects as creator and designer. It is worth quoting at length Geurst's interpretation of the process.

> 'A procedure is formulated for the period from the assignment of a cemetery until its final completion. An assistant first goes to the site to map out the terrain levels, takes photos, draw sketches and make notes for a preliminary design. This design is then sent to the director of works in France. Work then starts on the detailed drawings in consultation with the greenery expert. The final design is accompanied by an approval form, which is sent for ratification successively to the director of works, the financial advisor, the principal architect, the botanical advisor and finally, to Kenyon. The approval form is

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[35] Ibid, p. 59.

> accompanied by detailed cost calculations and a division of the costs among the different countries if there are graves of other countries.'[36]

Taking the procedure as it is laid out, the emphasis is clearly placed on the Principal Architects and the various department equivalents. The role of the Junior Architect is reduced to site surveyor. This interpretation of the sign-off procedure is, rather than any failing of Geurst, a symptom of a drastically reduced archive and limited first-hand knowledge of the workings of the office. The architectural design is reduced to an element in the bureaucratic paper trail. The weighting of work is not evenly represented.

In addition, the brevity of study regarding the Junior Architect's respective roles further adds to the idea that it was the Principal Architects that had the final say on the design of each cemetery. It is perfectly true in principle; however, it is clear from a number of the approval forms that remain that more often than not the Principal Architect's comments box remains empty.[37]

Writing on the IWGC was, for many of the years following the war, limited to the official history of the Commission by Phillip Longworth[38] and by Fabian Ware's autobiography[39]. Both authors' discuss at length the concepts and ethos that drove the formation of the Commission and the scale of the project. The role of the architects or architecture is only briefly explored and all of this focuses on the

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[36] Ibid, p. 59.
[37] Examples where no comment is left by the Principal Architect can be found in CWGC, Add 1/6/3 Bernafay Wood, Guards Grave, Roye New British Cemetery; Add 1/6/4 Bouzincourt Ridge; Add 1/6/5 Woods Cemetery.
[38] Longworth, *The Unending Vigil.*
[39] Ware, *The Immortal Heritage*.

Principal Architects. The exploration of Ware's ethos of universal commemoration and of Principal Architects has come to define much of what has been written about the war cemeteries since.[40] However, as in the first IWGC publication to make reference to the architectural treatment and design of the cemeteries, the influence of the ethos on anything architectural beyond the use of identical grave markers is never expanded upon.[41]

The publication of Longworth's history came at a time when the Great War was being reappraised in a fashion that has come to define the position of the war in education. This is an important facet to the depth, or lack thereof, of the historiography surrounding the war cemeteries. All the authors of subsequent studies were educated using the perception of the Great War engendered in post-war Britain. As such, all bar one of the studies focus on the cemeteries and memorials in isolation; they are studied as architecture and not as components of something larger.

Longworth's official history was followed twenty years later by Gibson and Ward's unofficial history of the Commission, which considered similar aspects though with a greater weighting towards the scale of the operations to build and maintain the cemeteries.[42]

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[40] David Crane, *Empires of the Dead: How One Man's Vision Led to the Creation of WW1's War Graves* (London: William Collins, 2013), and David Reynolds, 'Lest WE Forget', *Cambridge Alumni Magazine*, 70 (2013), pp. 25-27.

[41] Frederic Kenyon, *War Graves: How the Cemeteries Abroad Will be Designed* (London: HMSO, 1918).

[42] T.A. Edwin Gibson and G. Kingsley Ward, *Courage Remembered: The Story Behind the Construction and Maintenance of the Commonwealth's Military Cemeteries of the Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945* (London: HMSO, 1989).

It took until 1977 for interest in the war cemeteries from an architectural point of view to emerge. [43]This may be explained by the relative proximity of the war, the intervening Second World War and the emergence of the International Style as such an all-consuming (and argumentative) architectural doctrine. The *Silent Cities* exhibition, curated by Gavin Stamp, was the first time the war cemeteries had been regarded in architectural terms and not purely as the tangible representation of the nation's collective grief.  The exhibition can be seen in a similar vein to Roy Strong's exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum during the mid to late 1970s; the primary role was to bring forgotten British architecture to the public in the face of the seemingly unstoppable forces of Modernism in its various guises.[44]

The *Silent Cities* exhibition was, in respect of challenging public perception of the nation's architectural heritage, not as successful of its counterparts held at the V&A.

Indeed, it was a further nineteen years before another study of an architectural aspect of the IWGC was published.[45] Stamp's essay on the *Memorial to the Missing at Thiepval* is the best known of all studies. It is, however, heavily focussed on telling the story of the creation of the memorial and not the impact it has had since. The final chapter of the essay, entitled 'Legacy', deals predominantly with structural changes to the monument and the addition of visitors centre in the surrounding park. However, there is a brief passage where Stamp seeks to place the memorial in context with both other architectural responses and artistic responses to the war. This is limited

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[43] Gavin Stamp, *Silent Cities* (London: RIBA, 1977).
[44] Between 1974 and 1979 the V&A, curated by Roy Strong, held a series of exhibitions detailing the plight of aspects of forgotten British architecture, they were: The Destruction of the Country House (1974), Change and Decay: the future of our churches (1977) and The Garden: a celebration of a Thousand Years of British Gardening (1979).
[45] Stamp, *Memorial to the Missing*.

to references to Siegfried Sassoon's denouncement of the Menin Gate and other war literature.[46]

Much of Stamp's final chapter is shaped by the aggressively anti-Haig sentiment that was rife at the time of his education. Comment on the architectural legacy of Thiepval is often ignored; instead the memorial is used as a prism to make a political point about the organisation and running of the war. Unfortunately, the lack of understanding of the operational aspects of the Somme campaign, combined with the ingrained vitriol towards those who ran the war, undermines any analysis of notions of legacy beyond that of a silent witness to perceived ineptitude. For Stamp, Thiepval is Lutyens' greatest work and yet he condemns it to be nothing more architecturally than a representation of "the folly and callousness of certain great men".[47]

For Stamp the architecture of the IWGC is inextricably linked with the dead and the modern notions of slaughter he attaches to them. Whilst he was the first to identify the importance of the architecture of the IWGC his inability to look at the memorials and cemeteries beyond totemic representations of a 'lost generation' limits his ability to understand broader ideas of legacy and impact that they may contain.

With the new millennium came a series of studies that sought to examine the architects and architecture of the IWGC in an architectural sense that was not so heavily politically motivated.

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[46] Siegfried Sassoon, 'On Passing the New Menin Gate', *The War Poems* (London & Boston: Faber and Faber, 1983), p. 153.
[47] Stamp, *Memorial to the Missing*, p. 157.

The first of which was Eitan Karol's study of Charles Holden.[48] This study, inspired

by an exhibition on Holden's architectural career that Karol had curated at the RIBA

in 1988[49], forms an architectural biography of Holden's life. Included within is a

chapter that focuses on Holden's war experience and his work with the IWGC.

Karol's study is important for two reasons; it is the first to explore the idea that,

even working within the structure of the IWGC, it was possible for an architect to

develop a clear architectural language of his own. In addition, the study introduces

the importance of the group of Junior Architects who carried out much of the design

work for the IWGC.

Following the work of Karol to identify a progression in architectural language,

Jeroen Geurst sought to explore the cemeteries of Lutyens in a similar fashion.[50]

Geurst's study also makes reference to the Junior Architects, attributing each

cemetery to one of them. The attempt to analyse and group Lutyens' cemeteries,

however, is undermined by Geurst's over-reliance on the suggestion that Lutyens is

the principal designer. As such, it becomes a study of variation rather than an analysis

of architectural development.

Between the publication of these two studies came the Skelton and Gliddon study of

*Lutyens' and the Great War*.[51] Unlike Geurst, this went beyond Lutyens' work with

IWGC to look at his civic war memorial work, too. However, the content, with a

foreword by Gavin Stamp, once again strayed into the same territory as previous

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[48] Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden: Architect* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008).
[49] Finch Allibone, and Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden: Architect 1875-1960* (London: RIBA, 1988).
[50] Geurst, *Cemeteries of the Great War by Sir Edwin Lutyens*.
[51] Gerrald Gliddon and Tim Skelton, *Lutyens and the Great War* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2008).

studies; it was heavily focussed on the process and ethos up to and including the building of the cemeteries and memorial. Once again, there is no breadth to ideas of legacy beyond that of grave markers.

Prior to the publication of these three studies came Dominiek Dendooven's commemorative volume to mark the 25,000th Last Post ceremony at Ypres.[52] As an architectural assessment Dendooven does not go beyond what was covered in previously published works, although in this case it is more specifically related to Sir Reginald Blomfield's Menin Gate. However, it is the only study that seeks to place the architecture in a broader commemorative sense.

## Landscape, Battlefields and Memory

The historiography of landscape and memory in relationship to the battlefields of the Great War is one dominated by the idea of death; ideas of memory and memorial are often intertwined and indistinguishable. There have been relatively few studies into the landscape of memory. Winter assessed the role of place (and to some extent the architecture) in the construction of memory, primarily suggesting that rather than being political statements the memorials were necessary focal points of grief. Whilst this is an important distinction that gives a purpose to the architecture beyond official apologia, it has served to underline the interpretation of memorials and the landscape they are within in terms of the dead. This distinction is one supported by Ken Worpole, who recognises the cemeteries of the IWGC as "a uniquely British collection of architectural styles and symbols for war cemeteries, which, when taken together, created one of the most powerful and enduring cultural

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[52] Dominiek Dendooven, *Ypres as Holy Ground: Menin Gate & Last Post* (Koksijde: De Klaproos Editions, 2001).

landscapes of all".[53] Both Winter and Worpole recognise the place of the cemetery in the landscape as a consoling statement, one that acts as a focus for grief. However, they do not expand upon their wider cultural influence and role in the landscape.

The idea of collective memory, as presented by Aleida Assmann, allows a more nuanced understanding of memory in terms of the relationship between landscape and the cemeteries. Assmann argues that through a system of symbols experiential and individual memory can be transferred to someone else, or a collective. These symbols act as 'props of autobiographical memory' that enable individual memory to be shared through material.[54] In the context of this thesis, both cemeteries and landscape function as props that enable a shared, collective memory. Indeed, it is this ability to share both landscape and its connected memory that, according to Sverker Sörlin, that creates a sense of belonging.[55] For Sörlin this is in terms of nationalism, but it is just as valid an observation in the context of the interwar veteran community.

Other recent scholarship by Nicholas Saunders[56] and Ross Wilson[57], on the materiality of war has sought to understand how place shaped the experience and thus the memories of soldiers. Wilson attempts to break from Winter's death-centric view by stating that the "memorialisation given to the trenches by the

[53] Ken Worpole, *Last Landscapes, The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West* (London: Reaktion Books, 2003), p. 164.
[54] Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations Between History and Memory', *Social Research*, Vol. 75, No. 1, Collective Memory and Collective Identity (SPRING 2008), pp. 49-72.
[55] Sverker Sörlin, 'Monument and Memory: Landscape Imagery and the Articulation of Territory', *Worldviews*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (1998), pp. 269-279.
[56] Nicholas J. Saunders, 'Crucifix, Calvary, and Cross: Materiality and Spirituality in Great War Landscapes', *World Archaeology*, 35 (1) (2003), pp. 7-21.
[57] Ross Wilson, *Landscapes of the Western Front* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

soldiers reflected their presence in the landscape, their witnessing of the events of the war and a way of placing meaning and permanence upon their surroundings".[58] By doing so, Wilson is stating the importance of landscape to the soldier in quantifying his respective experience and memory. Therefore, the landscape becomes representative to the all his experiences beyond death. These themes are also present in Cunningham's exploration of the New Zealander's experience of the landscape of the Gallipoli peninsular.[59] Through a study of diaries and letters home, Cunningham explores the relationship the soldiers had with the landscape, going on to show how the landscape came to be viewed as home.

The importance for an individual to identify with a landscape in the construction of memory has also been explored by Bart Ziino.[60] In his study of the Australian experience of the war cemeteries of the Great War. Ziino, albeit still referring predominantly to the mourning process, explores how the use of battlefield locations on local war memorials sought to "recall the sites where the dead actually lay".[61] This again sought to use the landscape, or perceived landscape depending on the viewer, as a trigger for both memory and memorialisation. In particular, how the association with a distant landscape could help the grieving relatives make tangible sense of the loss of a loved one in a foreign landscape by comparing it with familiar landscapes. Thus the comparison between the shores of Gallipoli and the Australian bush provide a forum within which memorialisation can take place. Continuing on this theme, John Stephen's paper explored how the geographic distance between the

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[58] *Ibid*, p. 168.
[59] Matthew Cunningham, 'Familiarising the Foreign: New Zealand Soldiers' Observations on Landscape During the Gallipoli Campaign', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45 (2) (2011), pp. 209-224.
[60] Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War* (Crawley: UWA Press, 2007).
[61] *Ibid*, p. 137.

battlefields and areas of the empire was crossed by representations of architecture in landscape, in particular the Menin Gate.[62]

Hoffenberg furthers the importance of landscape in memory by adding that places such as Gallipoli not only shape the memory of conflict but the identity of the nation at large.[63] The landscape of The Dardanelles, according to Hoffenberg, came to be considered as much a part of Australia the nation as it was a war memorial. This is a theme that resonates in the work of John Pierce on his study of the importance of the Vimy Memorial in shaping Canadian national identity.[64] Whilst many of the examples of scholarship focus on the experience and role of the landscape in wartime, there are others that seek to analyse it in a post-war context.

As part of a broader study of engineered landscapes, Shepheard approaches an understanding of the battlefield landscape in various stages of its lifecycle; battlescape, timescape and parkland. [65] The simultaneous overlaying of narratives into the same space provides a consideration of the spaces that begin to tackle the "complex layering of commemorative materialities and spirituality" to which Saunders refers. [66] Shepheard's reading of the landscape is one that remains a battlefield. It is a landscape that confronts the individual to bring meaning to it, encouraged by it being "thick with the memory of that time" and the marks of war still evident within.

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[62] John Stephens, 'The Ghosts of Menin Gate: Art, Architecture and Commemoration', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 44 (1) (2009), pp. 7-26.
[63] Peter H. Hoffenberg, 'Landscape, Memory and the Australian War Experience, 1915-18', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36 (1) (200), pp. 111-131.
[64] John Pierce, 'Constructing Memory: The Vimy Memorial', Canadian Military History 1 (1) (1992).
[65] Paul Shepheard, *The Cultivated Wilderness, or what is landscape?* (Cambridge, MA & London: The MIT Press, 1997).
[66] Saunders, *Crucifix, Calvary and Cross*, p. 7.

Viewing the former battlefields as a canvas upon which to paint the story of the war is a theme that Paul Gough investigates in his analysis of the various incarnations of the Newfoundland Park memorial at Beaumont Hamel. [67] For Gough, the interpretation of the landscape to tell the story of a brief incident - albeit a tragic one - over that of the broader narrative of the landscape undermines the validity of the space. The intention to retain an aspect of the landscape as it was during the war was always likely to be fraught with difficulties, just as Bennett Farmer explores in her study of memory in the preserved landscape of Oradour-sur-Glane. [68] The inherent problems with attempting to freeze time and the effects thereof on a landscape or, to use Shepheard's term, a *battlescape*. Bennett Farmer's discussion around the problems associated with halting the decay of the ruined environment further, so that it remains as the true ruin, is one that is evocative of the arguments between Churchill, the Ypres League and the City of Ypres in regards to the ruined city of Ypres immediately after the war.

## Interwar Audiences of the IWGC

Despite the large numbers of academic texts published on the Great War, there is a dearth of studies on post-war visits, be they pilgrimage or otherwise, to the former battlefields. Amongst this small offering David Lloyd's is the first and definitive volume, exploring a range of aspects related to the subject.[69] In particular relation to the cemeteries, Lloyd records the nature of pilgrimage that took place. The predominant audience upon which he focuses are bereaved relatives. Lloyd notes the

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[67] Paul Gough, Sites in the Imagination: The Beaumont Hamel Newfoundland Memorial on the Somme', *Cultural Geographies*, 11 (2004), pp. 235-258.
[68] Sarah Bennett Farmer, 'Oradour-Sur-Glane: Memory in a Preserved Landscape', *French Historical Studies*, 19 (1) (1995), pp. 27-47.
[69] David W. Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism: Pilgrimage and the Commemoration of the Great War in Britain, Australia and Canada, 1919-1939* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

central theme of death in the interwar pilgrimages and the variety of manifestations grief and remembrance took when pilgrims visited the cemeteries.

> Bereaved relatives travelled to the graves of their loved ones or, if no body could be found, to one of the memorials to the 'Missing'. In either case it was the name on the headstone or the memorial which drew them. Pilgrims took photographs of these names and occasionally would kiss the name of a loved one or the headstone under which he lay. Many pilgrims also traced a name on paper so that they could take it back with them.[70]

The practices undertaken by pilgrims to the former battlefields also highlighted the importance of place in the act of pilgrimage. Though, it is interesting that Lloyd identifies a distinction between place and location.

> The landscape which drew travellers to the battlefields was largely an imaginary one. It was not the sites themselves which attracted travellers, but the associations. They were places where loved ones or fellow countrymen had fought. In fact many of the places had little intrinsic appeal.[71]

This desire on the part of pilgrims to retrace and experience the places of their loved one's war experience led to the re-emergence of the wartime toponymy to provide a sense of authenticity to a pilgrimage. This is evident throughout Lloyd's study. More recently, Stephen Miles' study of tourism and the old Western Front also briefly covers the interwar period and some of the places of interest to tourists, though without the detail of Lloyd.[72] Miles' primary concern is modern day visitation to the former battlefields.

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[70] Ibid, p. 135.
[71] Ibid, p. 113.
[72] Stephen Miles, *The Western Front: Landscape, Tourism and Heritage* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2016).

Both Lloyd and Miles make reference to ex-service groups that visited the battlefields. Lloyd, whilst mentioning ex-service group pilgrimages, tends to focus on individual veterans' experiences of returning to the old frontline rather than a consistent way of seeing the battlefield sites. A differing approach is taken by Professor Mark Connelly in his study of the Ypres League, an ex-service and bereaved families organisation established in 1920, shows the collective approach taken as an organisation to retaining the landscape and places they regarded as sacred to the memory of those who fell.[73] The cultural significance of the former Ypres Salient was not only reflected in the veterans and pilgrims who visited, but as Connelly identifies, the emergence and growth of a British community centred on the town. Central to both the intentions of the Ypres League and in the importance of Ypres to contemporary British culture was the landscape of the Salient, more specifically those places that had made up the war experience of the British soldier during the Great War. The importance of Ypres and its places in interwar commemorative practices is expanded upon in Connelly and Goebel's recent study of the town throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.[74]

Expanding upon Lloyd's observations, Connelly and Goebel identify the importance of wartime locations and vernacular to bring both validation and authenticity to the pilgrimage process, highlighting a report of the unveiling of the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in 1927.

> …'bravely and calmly, holding their little posies of English flowers. All one could do was put one's arm in theirs, as if they had been one's own

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[73] Mark Connelly, 'The Ypres League and the Commemoration of the Ypres Salient, 1914-1940', *War in History* 16 (2209), pp. 51-76.

[74] Mark Connelly and Stefan Goebel, *Ypres* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2018).

mother, and pointing high up on Menin Gate, spell out a name to them.' Looming over the whole event were the ghosts of the dead […] The correspondent asked these ghosts, 'what sight could amaze you more than "Dear Mother" so near to Hell Fire Corner holding a little bunch of flowers from the front garden at home?'[75]

As is epitomised in the above quote, the toponymy of the old Salient becomes a defining point in the power of the experience. As with Lloyd's study, and also that of Catherine Switzer's chapter within a wider work on Irish pilgrimages to the battlefields, much of the discussion on interwar visits to the old front lines focuses on the broader experience.[76] The veterans, while present, form part of the narrative, the distinctiveness is sometimes lost. In the dichotomy of Pilgrim and Tourist that Lloyd speaks of the veteran experience becomes tantamount to, and is subsequently absorbed into, the Pilgrim narrative. Whilst Connelly's article on the Ypres League gives the veterans an individual and distinct voice, and this is continued in the later work, there is very little scholarship solely devoted to the narrative of the returning veteran.

In one of the few such studies, John Pegum focuses on the dislocation felt by returning ex-servicemen to the former battlefields of the Western Front.[77] He posits the argument that returning veterans had no particular wish to visit the cemeteries, more the geography and places that held resonance with their own respective experiences. This is a compelling observation that highlights the importance of the war cemeteries as a broader memorial to the Great War.

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[75] Connelly and Goebel, *Ypres*, pp. 82-83.
[76] Caroline Switzer, *Ulster, Ireland and the Somme: War memorials and battlefield pilgrimages* (Dublin: The History Press Ireland, 2013).
[77] John Pegum, 'The Old Front Line: Returning to the Battlefields in the Writings of Ex-servicemen', in *British Popular Culture and the First World War*, ed. Jessica Meyer (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 217-236.

In addition, Pegum deals with the problems facing the returning veteran - being marginalised by forms of remembrance that solely focus on the dead, the power of the dead over the landscape and over the individual.His concluding paragraph sums up his thoughts in regards to the relationship between returning soldiers and the cemeteries,

> The dead, who possessed the land as the ex-servicemen once had, possessed it still. Death had preserved, cast in the Portland stone of their headstones, their location and their identity. The survivors had lost their right to the land. It had been stolen away from them, along with their wartime identity, by the silence of peace. They were left dislocated and dispossessed, strangers in their own vanished land and their own fragmented memories.[78]

Where Pegum focuses on the negative aspect of this relationship the returning soldiers had with cemeteries - predominantly driven by a sense of guilt and the idea that the ownership of the land had been ceded to the 'lucky ones' who had died - there is also a perspective that has an opposing narrative. The cemeteries and architecture came to represent the geography of the war - they were the last vestiges of the landscape of memory. Whilst Pegum rightly points out that ex-servicemen visited the place rather than the dead, the fact that in a number of cases the two occupy the same space is of importance in memory of the war beyond those who served.

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[78] *Ibid*, p. 235.

Pegum quotes the section from H.A. Taylor in regards to Point 110 Cemetery, but he fails to include the wider comment that relates to the veteran's ability to locate himself in the geography of his mind because of that cemetery.[79] The architectural entity coming to be the only physical reflection of 'Shaftesbury Avenue, Park Lane and Watling Street'. This acts as a reference to the displaced veteran and to the pilgrim alike. The battlefield of the Western Front is maintained via a series of spatial and linguistic triggers that are preserved in the architecture of the IWGC. Within close proximity, Devonshire Cemetery does much the same, though its human and territorial associations are more obvious to the casual observer. By placing a cemetery at the point of the trench the battlefield - including aspects of the geography and memory - are retained. Whilst there has been a great deal of scholarship on peripheral aspects of this study, this thesis will be the first to consider the architecture as a piece of material culture in its own right, not simply a lens through which to observe other aspects of remembrance and memory. It will build on the rich scholarship that exists on war and memory and add a new level of understanding to the IWGC memorial on the old Western Front that has, until now, been overlooked.

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[79] H. A. Taylor, *Good-bye to the Battlefields* (London: Stanley Paul, 1928).

# 1 | The IWGC Organisation

## 1.1 The Junior Architects: war experience and memory in the design process

As the literature review has shown, the historiography relating to the architecture of the Imperial War Graves Commission has been dominated by discussion of the Principal Architects. Lutyens, in particular, has attracted a great deal of study.[80] Indeed, the narrative of the IWGC architecture is one entirely defined by the Principal Architects' involvements. The team of Junior Architects who worked both under and alongside their better-known colleagues have received scant attention. This chapter will remedy the lack of understanding surrounding the role of the Junior Architects within the organisation. It will show how the architectural office functioned and its position within the larger hierarchy of the IWGC, in doing so, it will show the pivotal role the Junior Architects had in converting vision into practice, and the role that their personal war experiences and memories had in imbuing the sites with cultural resonance.

The position of the Junior Architects within existing scholarship can be best described as limited. This lack of understanding of the role of Junior Architects is typified with the IWGC's official history. Longworth, whilst mentioning Kenyon's desire that the cemeteries should be designed, under the guidance of the Principal architect by " a small team of younger architects who had fought in the war", omits all of their names and gives no indication of their place in the design process.[81] This is

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[80] See previously cited works by Geurst, Skelton and Gliddon, Stamp, Winter, also Allan Greenberg, *Lutyens and the Modern Movement* (London: Papadakis, 2007).
[81] Longworth, *Unending Vigil*, p. 37.

of particular interest in that at least one of the example cemeteries referred to in the text is that of Bedford House on the outskirts of Ypres, which was entirely designed by Wilfrid Clement Von Berg.

Longworth's decision to overlook the Junior Architects established a narrative of primacy with regard to the Principal Architect and the IWGC architectural response. This primacy has come to dominate the literature surrounding the architectural design of the war cemeteries. The first example of the Junior Architects being referenced by name, though not particularly by deed, is in the catalogue that supported Gavin Stamp's 1977 exhibition at the RIBA, Silent Cities.[82] The brief references within the main text and the short, single paragraph biographies are the first – and in some cases, only – references to the life and works of the team of Junior Architects. In regards to the understanding of the Junior Architects, this exhibition was important in that a short exchange of correspondence occurred between Stamp and the aforementioned Junior Architect, Wilfrid Von Berg. Whilst not particularly revealing and limited in scope, this correspondence remains the only interview, albeit at a distance of several thousand miles, with one of the Junior Architects of the IWGC. Subsequent writings, as referenced previously, have focussed on the Principal Architects, though these have at least made greater reference to the Junior Architects. Both Karol and Geurst show a recognition of the Junior Architects' involvement in the design process. Indeed, Geurst briefly explores the IWGC architectural office and the problem of authorship attached to cemeteries. Despite this recognition of involvement, the primacy of the Principal Architects is retained within their works.

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[82] Stamp, *Silent Cities* (London: RIBA, 1977).

The scholarship relating to the IWGC architecture has, as a result of the focus on the Principal Architects, overlooked the contribution of the Junior Architects. The little that has been mentioned has only touched on the minor aspects of their role and tends to focus on the subservient nature of the relationship. Even within the CWGC, there is very little known or promoted regarding the role of the Junior Architects in the creation of the cemeteries and memorials.

It is not the intent of this chapter to give credit for the design principles of the IWGC architectural response to the group of Junior Architects. The Kenyon Report of 1918, as well as the precursory correspondence between the Principal Architects, make it clear that the design aesthetic was primarily established prior to the first stone being laid.[83] In addition, the prototype cemeteries of Charles Holden at Louvencourt and Forceville established so much of the visual design language that it would be disingenuous to suggest that the Junior Architects had any real impact on this.[84] However, the decision to ensure that all the Junior Architects had served in the war suggests that their role was intended to be more involved than current understanding allows.

Nearly a hundred years after their creation, the cemeteries and memorials of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission are admired by pilgrims and tourists alike. They are considered as places where an individual can still connect with the actions of a century ago.  Whilst the cemeteries remain a focal point for visitors, understandably, it is more through those who are remembered within them than anything else. Common responses to the cemeteries that refer to aspects beyond

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[83] Kenyon, *War Graves.*
[84] Karol, *Holden*, p. 217.

the graves contained within reflect the horticulture or the atmosphere – they're always kept so beautifully or they are always so peaceful, tend to be the predominant visitor responses to a CWGC cemetery. The aspect of these cemeteries that rarely gets mentioned or often considered is the architecture.[85] This chapter will explore an aspect of the architectural response to the Great War by the Imperial War Graves Commission. Specifically it will look at the role of the group of Junior Architects of the IWGC in defining these memorials. It will draw on case studies of two members of this group, Wilfrid Von Berg and Reginald Truelove, to explore a layer of memory that can be found within the architecture that has hitherto been either forgotten or ignored. This layer adds a reading of the cemeteries and their place in the physical and memory landscape with moves away from one solely focussed on death.

### 1.1.1  The Recruitment of Junior Architects

The establishment of the IWGC has been written about at great length in a number of volumes.[86] However, these histories have tended to focus on the high level establishment of the organisation, its principles and principal personalities. The discussion around cemeteries and memorials has been dominated by the Principal Architects, Lutyens, Baker and Blomfield and often by the ethos of universal commemoration. In his investigation of Lutyens' war cemeteries, Jeroen Geurst expanded this high level view with a brief introduction to the establishment and the workings of the architectural office.[87] However, Geurst's work on the office is primarily providing context for his study of Lutyens' cemeteries, it does not explore

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[85] For an expansion on cemetery engagement and modern day battlefield tourism see Jennifer Iles, 'Recalling the Ghosts of War: Performing Tourism on the Battlefields of the Western Front', *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26 (2006), pp. 162-80.
[86] See Longworth, *Unending Vigil*, and Gibson and Ward, *Courage Remembered*.
[87] Geurst, *Lutyens*, p. 59.

the working relationships, nor does it provide more than a cursory insight into how the office functioned. Geurst's view is based on initial proposal documents as to how the office would work. This section, then, will provide a more in depth study of the establishment of the architects office of the IWGC, how it functioned, how those functions altered over time and will place it within the context of broader architectural practice immediately prior and post the Great War.

A letter from Harold Wilkins of the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) to a Major Wynch, dated 5th November 1917, is the first mention of a Drawing Office to be established in France with the specific remit of treating the cemeteries.[88] The Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries had been functioning in various guises on the Western Front since early 1915. Established by the former journalist Fabian Ware, it became the fore-runner and catalyst for what was eventually to become the Imperial War Graves Commission. A footnote in Ware's report on the works of the IWGC captures the early days of the unit,

> The work had at first been carried out, within the limitation of their powers, by the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. In September 1914, at the suggestion of Lord Kitchener, the committee sent out a Mobile Unit to Search for missing soldiers along the line of the retreat and advance between Aisne and Ourcq […] It was provided at its own request by the Red Cross Society with the means to mark and register British graves in whatever area they might be found. This Mobile Unit with its personnel was taken over and enlarged by the Army in October 1915.[89]

Ware, being typically modest, did not give himself the credit he deserved for his role in establishing the unit that would go on to become the IWGC. David Crane's

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[88] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Red Cross Record Office File 390: Graves Registration Commission.
[89] Ware, *The Immortal Heritage*, Footnote p. 24.

recent biography of Ware has gone some way to rectifying this, but even at the time it was very much seen as Fabian Ware's unit. Indeed, the future IWGC photographer, I. L. Bawtree is listed as being a member of 'Fabian Ware's Unit in a BRCS Grant of Leave form.[90] The initial remit of Ware's unit and subsequently the DGRE was the identification and marking of the whereabouts of British graves along the Western Front. The process was originally aimed at those individual burials and small clusters of graves that may have been lost in the fighting. As the war progressed the unit became part of the army structure and Graves Registration Units (GRU) were established. The initial remit expanded to cover the management and maintenance of cemeteries. The diary of Colin Rowntree, a former member of the Friends Ambulance Unit and then of a GRU, identifies the range of jobs required of a GRU member.[91] The average week included laying out new plots in established cemeteries, tracking down individual graves, organising and transporting orderlies to maintain cemeteries and transporting official DGRE photographers to various sites, as well as the copious amounts of administration that was generated. The scale of the war cemeteries and the varying roles of the DGRE lead to the establishment of the IWGC by Royal Charter on 21 May 1917.

Within seven months the recognition that a formal approach to the layout and design of the growing numbers and capacities of cemeteries had been agreed. Wilkins' letter to Major Wynch asked for confirmation that "the Graves Registration required the presence of Mr. Cowlis-Shaw (sic) and six Architects in Boulogne and that we were to give them our Brassard and Certificate and Contract".[92]

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[90] IWM, Documents 2496, Private Papers of I.L. Bawtree.
[91] Rowntree Family Collection, Colin Rowntree Diary (Unpublished: 1918).
[92] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 5 November 1917 from Harold Wilkins to Major Wynch.

Clarification was received by Wilkins a week later from a representative of the DGRE stating that the requirement was for one architect, six draughtsmen and two orderlies. The letter confirmed that these men would come under the auspices of the BRCS and wear their uniform. In a memorandum on 8th November 1917 it was expressly noted that "these men will be of a classification which disqualifies them from front line service".[93] At the same time as the confirmation letter to Wilkins, Major Wynch sent a letter to the Director General Medical Services, General Headquarters to inform him as to the new unit, explaining that their remit was to be to "work out plans, details and specifications for Cemeteries in France under the supervision of Lt. Col. Messer".[94] Thus the formal establishment of the BRCS Drawing Office Unit was complete.

The appointment of William Cowlishaw was briefly expanded upon by Major Wilkins in one of his letters to the BRCS, in which he explained,

> Colonel Messer has interview Mr. W.H. Cowlishaw, Architect, of 9, Clifford Street, W. and is satisfied that he will make a suitable and capable office manager, and has entrusted him the selection of a sufficient number of draughtsmen with which to commence operations.[95]

That Cowlishaw retained a personal connection with the men he selected as draughtsmen is evident in a letter some two years later as the BRCS Drawing Office Unit transferred over to the architectural branch of the IWGC in which he took personal interest in the terms of transfer for one of his last remaining men, Sergeant

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[93] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 8 November 1917 from DGRE to BRCS HQ.
[94] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 13 November 1917 from Major Wynch DGRE to Director General Medical Services, GHQ, 2nd Echeleon, BEF.
[95] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 8 November 1917 from DGRE to BRCS HQ.

K. J. Bonser.[96] Cowlishaw, who signed off the aforementioned letter regarding Sergeant Bonser as Officer Commanding BRCS DOU, was unsure of his own position as the unit was absorbed into the architectural branch of the IWGC. In a later letter from the same exchange, Cowlishaw announced that that he was to leave the IWGC.[97] Indeed, a letter ostensibly regarding the transfer of salary payment makes mention that,

> Mr. Cowlishaw has not yet decided whether he wishes his name to be put forward as an Architect to the Commission. Mr. Bloomfield Bare will fill his vacancy on the establishment of the IWGC.[98]

Henry Bloomfield Bare was better known as a sculptor, but had achieved a certain amount of architectural notoriety in a block of cottages for the Port Sunlight development for the Lever Soap Company in 1906.[99] His role as an architect at the IWGC was seemingly limited to his work with the Drawing Office Unit. However, in consideration as to how the future cohort of Junior Architects were used this excerpt from Christopher Crouch's study of the origins of the Liverpool School of Architecture suggests a differing form of architectural influence on the IWGC;

> Bloomfield Bare…made demands for the creation of a 'Chair of Architecture and Applied Arts'. This, as far as I am aware, was the first public demand in the city (perhaps nationally) for the specific educational pairing of Architecture and the Applied Arts. Bloomfield Bare set out a general programme of study that in its emphasis upon

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[96] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 17 April 1919 from W.H. Cowlishaw to Deputy Commissioner BRCS HQ.
[97] Ibid.
[98] CWGC, 1/1/1/23, Letter 29 May 1919 Letter from Inspector of Works, IWGC, London to Major L. M. Wynch.
[99] Edward Hubbard and Michael Shippobottom, *A Guide to Port Sunlight Village: Including Two Tours of the Village* (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool: 2005), p. 102.

drawing and the combination of studio and workshop closely prefigures the form that teaching at the Liverpool School was finally to take.[100]

Bloomfield Bare's interest and involvement in architectural education, combined with an early role in the IWGC architectural branch, suggests an input in the selection and roles of the future group of Junior Architects. Unfortunately, the remaining files of the CWGC archive do not expand on this, so it remains a tantalising proposition that a leading architectural reformer of the time had a proactive input into the shaping of the Junior Architect position at the IWGC.

In February 1918 Reginald Blomfield makes reference to two members of the designing staff in a report on the cemeteries in France;

> The designing staff under the Assistant Director at present consists of two architects, Lieuts Holden and Pearson. I saw some designs by Lieut. Holden, and subject to one or two criticisms thought them very satisfactory, and on the right general lines. On the other hand I saw a detail, not by his hand, which in my judgement was unsuitable and incompetent. Only carefully selected men of known ability and invention should be entrusted with the designs and it would be better to limit the numbers of the designing staff to a few really good men who will work together on the same lines and under the same general inspiration…[101]

Even though it is not explicit in Blomfield's report, the suggestion is that Pearson's work was not up to the required standard of the IWGC architectural branch.

Charles Holden and Lionel Pearson had both been wartime members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit (FAU), a medical unit founded by the Quaker Society at the

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[100] Christopher Crouch, *Design Culture in Liverpool, 1880-1914: The Origins of the Liverpool School of Architecture* (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool: 2002), p. 74.
[101] CWGC, Add 1/6/1 Report on the Cemeteries of the British Expeditionary Force, February 1918, para 12.

outbreak of war. First Pearson in June 1917 and then Holden in October 1917 transferred from the FAU to the DGRE.[102] Holden and Pearson had been friends since 1897 when they had been introduced through a mutual friend. Indeed, in 1903 Pearson had joined Holden's joint practice becoming a partner in 1913.[103] The connection with Holden is perhaps one reason Pearson was recommended for a post in the IWGC architectural branch, additionally, he had studied at Liverpool School of Architecture and it is highly possible that Bloomfield Bare's early role and connection with school had some influence. Upon Pearson's death in 1953, Holden wrote of his abilities as an architect that;

> About his powers as a designer Lionel was very reticent, quite unnecessarily so, for he had a very sure sense of the right thing and inevitably achieved it…[104]

Blomfield's criticism, in the light of Pearson's own reticence to believe in his own abilities, offers a compelling argument as to why Holden was kept on as an architect, later Senior Architect, with the IWGC and Pearson was not. Despite Pearson's role within the IWGC architectural branch ultimately being nothing more than a footnote, he went on to design two of the most highly regarded war memorials in Great Britain; the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner in London and also the Sandham Memorial Chapel in Burghclere, Hampshire. Again, within the context of Holden's quote about Pearson, it is perhaps unsurprising that both of these pieces of architecture are remembered more for the artworks they frame, C.S. Jagger's sculptures and Stanley Spencer's paintings, respectively.

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[102] CWGC, SDC 4, 1918 IWGC Staff List, p. 3.
[103] Karol, *Holden*, p. 94.
[104] Charles Holden, 'Lionel Godfrey Pearson', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (April 1953), p. 251.

The period from 1918 to 1919 was one of continuing flux within the architectural branch of the IWGC as the organisation emerged from the ad-hocism of wartime and sought to create an established office. Throughout the period at least four architects passed through the Commission without completing a design that was built.[105] One such example was J.H. Gibbons, who was appointed as an architect to the Commission in November 1918, just four days after the Armistice.[106] There is no remaining evidence of his work within the IWGC, but he went on to run a provincial practice and designed, amongst other buildings, St. Barnabas church, Northolt.[107] Perhaps the most interesting of the architects who passed through was Adrian Berrington. Like Pearson and Bloomfield Bare, Adrian Berrington had studied at Liverpool School of Architecture. Upon his return to London he was a member of the First Atelier, a part of architectural training related to the Beaux Arts system that allowed architects to improve their skills under the watchful eye of an established patron – in this case Arthur J. Davis. As Charles Reilly, the Director of the Liverpool School of Architecture noted in his 1931 review of British architects, "the atelier was not meant for juniors", it was intended for releasing the promise in graduates of an architectural course.[108] Berrington achieved professional success for a number of years prior to the war, receiving a number of prizes from the RIBA and exposure in many of the leading trade journals.[109] At this time, according to Alan Powers, Berrington's architectural approach was a possible influence on Reilly's

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[105] The two other architects who appear on IWGC employee lists are W.H. Ward (CWGC, letter of 26 September 1918) and A. Bartlett FRIBA (TNA, T 1/12423, IWGC employee list of 27 May 1919).

[106] CWGC, 6/4/1/2/2459, Staff Card for J. H. Gibbons M.C.

[107] Bridget Cherry and Niklaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 3: North-West* (Yale University Press, London: 1991), p.186.

[108] Charles Reilly, *Representative British Architects* (JM Classic Editions, London: 2007[1931]), p. 79.

[109] Anon., 'Adrian Berrington' in *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada* <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1107> [accessed 2 August 2016]

direction of the school, "Berrington was interested in poetry and philosophy, and may have stimulated Reilly to a deeper search for unifying qualities in architecture".[110] On the coming of war, as with so many architects, Berrington joined the Royal Engineers. Indeed, he was wounded a number of times in the course of his service. Just prior to the end of the war, in August 1918, Berrington was taken on as an architect by the IWGC.[111] As with Gibbons, there is no evidence of any design work carried through to completion, but it is possible that his work was focussed on drawing. His spell, at the IWGC was short lived, by 1919 he had returned to private practice where his career picked up where it had left off prior to the war. Berrington was awarded prizes for his submissions to the Paris planning competition and this ultimately led to his installation as the Professor of Civic and Town Planning at University of Toronto. Berrington returned to London, where he died in 1923 of wounds sustained during the war. In a posthumous exhibition held at the Architectural Association in 1925, Berrington's "talent as a draughtsman and delineator" was highlighted, which lends weight to the idea that his chief involvement with the IWGC was drawing and site planning. [112]

As well as those Junior Architects who briefly passed through the IWGC in the months in and around the signing of the Armistice, a number of other men were suggested for the roles. In a letter to Fabian Ware of June 1918, Fredric Kenyon passed on the suggestions of Blomfield that included; Captain Lee, Major C. Burns,

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[110] Alan Powers, 'Architectural Education in Britain 1880-1914' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1982), p. 143, quoted in Peter Richmond, *Marketing Modernisms: The Architecture and Influence of Charles Reilly* (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool: 2001), p. 203.
[111] CWGC, WG 459, Letter 29 August 1918.
[112] 'Adrian Berrington', *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada*.

Major M. Witt and Major O. Milne.[113] Of these Captain Lee and Major Milne were suggested for France, Major Burns for Gallipoli or Salonika and Major Witt for Palestine. In the same letter, Kenyon proposed Gilbert Scott as a potential additional Principal Architect and also Louis de Soissons as a possible Junior Architect and also mentioned that Sir John Burnett – who had been assigned the role of Principal Architect in Palestine – had asked for a pupil of his to be added to the architectural staff.[114] In these suggestions by Blomfield the importance of patronage in the profession emerges. Oswald Milne had been articled to the office of Sir Arthur Blomfield, the uncle of Reginald Blomfield, following which, Milne joined the offices of Edwin Lutyens as an assistant.[115] Milne did not take up a post in the IWGC, though was involved in the designing of war memorials, including the King's Lynn Borough War Memorial and the War Memorial Hall for his alma mater, Bedford School. Indeed, the only architect of all those discussed who went on to work with the IWGC was Louis de Soissons, though this was some 27 years later with the post-Second World War cemeteries in Greece and Italy.[116]

On 12th December 1918 the Drawing Office Unit officially became part of the IWGC, in doing so it moved from the Red Cross headquarters at Boulogne to Hesdin. Of the group of Junior Architects employed by the IWGC in the wartime years and immediately post-war months, five went on to have designs converted into either cemeteries or memorials. The five architects were Charles Holden, William

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[113] CWGC, SDC 61, Letter 17 June 1918 From Frederic Kenyon to Fabian Ware.
[114] Kenyon also mentions that the Scottish architect Clyde Francis Young also proposed himself as a Principal Architect but that there was no opening for his services. Likewise, the Sir Aston Webb is mentioned in connection with a form of consultancy on the design work of the IWGC.
[115] Antonia Brodie, *Directory of British Architects 1834-1914: Vol 2 (L-Z)* (London: A&C Black, 2001), p. 186.
[116] Longworth, *Unending Vigil.*

Cowlishaw, William Binnie, Frank Higginson and Gordon Leith. Of these five, Higginson and Binnie designed one memorial or cemetery each, though Higginson is involved in other submissions towards the end of the building phase. Both men moved into the Department of Works after initially being taken on as architects. Leith, who was one of the earliest appointed Junior Architects having joined on 1st December 1918, worked with the IWGC on very few cemeteries. The catalogue for Stamp's 1977 *Silent Cities* exhibition also states that Leith took on the position of Senior Designing Architect under Holden on 1st April 1920.[117] Leith resigned from the Commission on 31st July 1920 to return to his native South Africa. The remaining two, Holden and Cowlishaw, were the only two of the earliest employed architects who went on to work on a number of cemeteries. Cowlishaw was formally transferred to the IWGC in July 1919 and on 21 January 1920 Holden was appointed as Senior Architect in France. In practice this appointment made Holden an additional Principal Architect.[118] Between May and September 1919 the IWGC went on to appoint five more Junior Architects who would, along with Holden and Cowlishaw, make up the team of architects in France.

The functioning of the design and sign-off within the office was also established in principle at this time. It is this 'in principle' arrangement that still informs much of the public perception of the creation of the war cemeteries. Each cemetery under 250 burials would be given to a Junior Architect to design. Above 250 and the responsibility would belong to the Senior Architect, who would work with a Junior Architect. Those cemeteries that contained 250 burials and above were to be visited by the Senior Architects who would sketch up a design for the Junior Architect to

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[117] Stamp, *Silent Cities*, p. 24.
[118] CWGC, 1/1/7/B/60, Holden, Major Charles.

formalise for sign-off. In this way the Senior Architects would have the ultimate say on much of the design.

However, the reality was very different. At best this partnership worked along the lines of the Junior Architect working up a design and submitting it to the Senior Architect. The Senior Architect might then, in turn, give feedback and suggest alterations to the design. The more likely scenario is that for many cemeteries much larger than 250, the Junior Architect took on the role of the Senior Architect and received little or no input from the Senior Architect who is still often credited with the authorship of the cemetery.

## 1.1.2 The Establishment of the IWGC Architects' Office

A memorandum penned on 13 March 1918 by Fabian Ware represented the first formalised approach to how the Architects' Office would work.[119] Interestingly, the paper is on British Museum headed notepaper, which suggests that the memorandum may well have been drafted alongside Frederic Kenyon. The memorandum established early aspects of the Junior Architect role that have since been overlooked. Breaking the procedure into eight steps, Ware began by stating;

> 1. When it is decided that plans are required of a given cemetery, the Junior Architect to whom the particular cemetery is allotted will inspect the site, obtain the levels and photographs, and make such sketches and notes as he may require. He will then proceed to prepare a sketch design.[120]

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[119] CWGC, 5002 A, Memorandum, Procedure to be Followed by Architects, Fabian Ware, 13 March 1918.
[120] ibid, para. 1.

Within the first paragraph of his memorandum Ware identified that each of the Junior Architects would be involved from the outset in establishing the suitability of sites. This requirement to visit the site and survey its appropriateness for architectural treatment also meant that the Junior Architects witnessed the majority of the potential cemetery sites within the battlefield landscape. This process enabled two specific functions. Practically, it allowed the Junior Architect to assess whether the site was suitable for development. This was an important factor in identifying which cemeteries were to be kept and which were to be absorbed, or concentrated, into others. In terms of design, it provided the opportunity for the Junior Architect to understand the landscape context of the cemetery.

The following five points defined the intended relationship between the Junior and Principal Architects. They identified the process through which Junior Architects would submit designs for agreement. This began with a sketch design to be submitted through the IWGC secretary to the Principal Architect responsible for the given cemetery. The Principal Architect would then either agree to the sketches or make adjustments and suggestions to be sent back to the Junior Architect. Once the Principal Architect was happy with the plan the Junior Architect would then be required to prepare the working drawings and detailing. This would go through the same process as the sketch design. Once the Principal Architect was satisfied with the working drawings and overall design it would be the responsibility of the Inspector of Works to ensure that 'no departure is made from approved plans without first reference to the P(rincipal) A(rchitect)'.[121]

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[121] Ibid, para. 7.

The final paragraph makes reference to the horticultural treatment and the agreement process required. Specifically, it states that this is yet to be agreed with the Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. On 26 March 1918 an addenda was added to the memorandum that contained precisely this information. The procedure was straight-forward; the Junior Architects in France would consult with the IWGC horticultural staff in France. The Principal Architect would then obtain the concurrence of Captain Hill, the representative of the Botanical Gardens. This should happen prior to the completion of the sketch design phase. Captain Hill would be required to sign and approve the sketch plans before the Principal Architect returned them to France for the working plan to be prepared.[122]

The final document, circulated shortly after Fabian Ware's handwritten memorandum was entitled Memorandum of Services of Architects and went into far greater detail in regards to the role and position of the Junior Architects in the process. Again broken up into eight paragraphs each dealt with a specific aspect of the role of the Junior Architect and the relationship with the Principal Architect and other IWGC departments.[123] There are several interesting points in regard to the position of the Junior Architect within the IWGC that have been overlooked in academic studies and also in the current day presentation of the cemetery information by the now CWGC.

Hinting towards the way in which the cemeteries would be divided amongst the Principal and Junior Architects, paragraph two says;

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[122] CWGC, 5002 A, Memorandum, Suggested Regulations for Horticultural Procedure, 26 March 1918.
[123] CWGC, 5002 A, Memorandum on Services of Architects c.mid-1918.

> Cemeteries will be divided into groups, each under one principal architect, who will have with him two or more Junior Architects. The groups will in general be geographical, so that each group will (within the limits of the scheme prescribed by the Commission) have a character of its own, and the work of different designers will not be intermingled. Special arrangements may be made for the large base-cemeteries.[124]

There are two specific elements of the language of this statement that suggest, whilst the general approach was to divide the cemeteries into groups, there was also the flexibility for Junior Architects to move between Principal Architects and for there to be an element of selection within the division of work. That the groups would 'in general be geographical' is evident in the clusters of cemeteries designed by Junior Architects. However, the geographic split between the Principal Architects was broad enough to allow a large degree of flexibility. Lutyens, for example, has 103 cemeteries directly identifiable by the CWGC historical information.[125] Of these, there is a fair spread of cemeteries in West Flanders, Somme and with a marginally higher number in Pas-de-Calais. During his time with the IWGC Lutyens worked with all the Junior Architects at various times and on several schemes. The second aspect of the language is the use of 'special arrangement', which in itself suggests that flexibility existed for the perspective of the Principal Architect in regard to which Junior Architect they would like assisting them.

In his brief overview of the Junior Architects and IWGC Architectural Office, Geurst noted the difficulty in identifying the authorship of these cemeteries. At the same time, he maintains the traditionally accepted view that the Principal Architect was

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[124] Ibid, para. 2.
[125] Geurst disputes this number, suggesting a figure of 140 based on cemeteries handed over to assistants and other cemeteries where another Principal Architect took over the cemetery.

responsible for the cemeteries. He notes that the Principal Architects 'each produce around 130 designs'.[126] He goes as far as to mention there is a variance in the way each design is approved, but retains the primacy of the Principal Architect in this process. Paragraph Three of the memorandum sheds light on the original intention of this relationship;

> Each principal architect will, with the approval of the Commission, reserve a few cemeteries for his own designing. The remainder will be designed by the Junior Architects; and while every design must receive the approval of the principal architect of the group, it is the intention of the scheme that the fullest possible credit shall be given to the Junior Architects.[127]

In this paragraph the role and responsibility of the Junior Architect within the process is given much greater precedence than either Geurst or any other study has allowed. It also enables a greater understanding of the autonomy within which the Junior Architects were working. The paragraph went on to say;

> The principal architects will stand sponsors for the whole Commission and the country; but it is hoped that, by cordial and loyal co-operation on both sides, this will be compatible with allowing full scope to the initiative and genius of the younger man.[128]

Combining the intention that the Principal Architects should only chose a 'few' cemeteries to design and the desire that the Junior Architects should be promoted as the designers, the authorship question is not so difficult to understand. With this stated intent, the authorship of the cemeteries lays with the Junior Architect for the vast majority of cemeteries. This point is further confirmed by paragraph seven of

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[126] Geurst, p. 59.
[127] CWGC, 5002 A, Memorandum on Services of Architects c.mid-1918, para. 3.
[128] Ibid.

the same document, which states that, 'all accepted plans will bear the signature of the designer and the counter-signature of the principal architect'.[129] The relationship could not be clearer; the Junior Architect is the designer, the Principal Architect is the sponsor.

The final paragraph of the memorandum qualifies this further and also adds an aspect of the responsibility for the Principal Architect;

> The principal architect will visit the cemeteries in their respective groups so far as may be necessary and military circumstances permit during the progress of the work, but will otherwise leave as much artistic responsibility to the Junior Architects.[130]

The role of the Junior Architect is further made clear, as is the role of the Principal Architect in visiting the sites. The role of these visits is not made clear in the document, but subsequent approval forms suggest it was to enable the Principal Architect to understand the ground and also to provide the opportunity for the pair to discuss designs in situ. One particular example is that of Aval Wood Military Cemetery, by Hutton and Baker, for which the Junior Architect remarked on the approval form that he had, 'visited the site with the Principal Architect who suggested that entrance might be made to the South in the centre of this wall'.[131] Incidentally, Hutton, it appears, ignored this suggestion, as the entrance is found on the eastern wall

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[129] Ibid, para. 7.
[130] Ibid, para. 8.
[131] CWGC, ADD 1/6/3 Sir Herbert Baker Cemeteries File, Aval Wood Military Cemetery, 13 December 1923.

In the context of the desire to give as much autonomy to the Junior Architects as possible, the approval procedure between Junior Architect and Principal Architect takes on that of a designer and mentor. Indeed, the opening paragraph of the Ware's memorandum stated that;

> The term "junior" refers only to age and length of professional standing. It is hoped it will include the ablest of architects of military age, who have actually served in the Army, and who will in due course rise to be the heads of their profession. [132]

All of this, of course, represents the 'in principle' of how the IWGC Architects' Office would function. The little remaining paperwork that remains provides evidence that it did not function quite so smoothly and that the operational reality was that the Junior Architects took on an even greater role than had been projected. The two sources of information on the functioning of the relationships outlined in Ware's two memoranda are the Approval Forms and an exchange of correspondence between Reginald Bloomfield, Fabian Ware and the Horticultural Office.

The Approval Forms represent the official process through which the design went following the initial sketch stage. They were the formalising of the decision to move from the design phase to the build phase. Each approval form is made up of several parts. The information includes general remarks from the Architect in France, report by the horticultural officer, followed by remarks from the Deputy Director of Works, Land Acquisition, Financial Advisors, Principal Architect, Botanical Advisor and finally the notes and signature of Sir Fredric Kenyon. The quality of information

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[132] CWGC, 5002 A, Memorandum on Services of Architects c.mid-1918, para. 1.

on these documents is variable, but does give some indication to the changing nature of the process.

In July 1920, approximately 10 months after he joined the IWGC, Arthur Hutton submitted the approval form for Hazebrouck Communal Cemetery, under the supervision of Herbert Baker. Hutton remarked that;

> All the burials are within the Communal Cemetery. The War Stone is situated on the East Boundary and is raised on a terrace having a high brick wall as a backing, this wall having a continuation of the present high wall enclosing the Communal Cemetery. Pleached limes behind the War Stone tend to shut out the gable of a house butting on this ground.
>
> Facing the War Stone is the Cross "A" Type, similarly treated. Opposite the Central Entrance in a low brick wall the Path is terminated in a seat raised on a stone paved dais and backed by beech hedge and lime trees.[133]

Hutton's relatively comprehensive remarks sought to explain the various details that would have been shown and understood in the context of the working drawings. For the cemetery design to be at the approval form stage, according to the procedure, the sketch design must have been previously approved by Baker. A disconnect in the procedure is suggested in the verbosity of Baker's remarks on the proposal;

> My criticisms of this are that the two platforms to the War Stone and to the Cross have on a level site been artificially raised up, quite unnecessarily in the case of the cross and too much in the case of the War Stone, though this of course must be raised in order that it should not be cut off by the line of the headstones. But I think three or four steps would be enough to effect this. I think a few extra steps to the Cross would be better than the platform with high walls at the edges. The money saved out of the platforms would provide a small shelter

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[133] CWGC, ADD 1/6/3 Sir Herbert Baker Cemetery Files, Hazebrouck Communal Cemetery, General Remarks by Architect in France.

which can in this case be easily designed against the high boundary wall if its treatment is simple. I feel certain that such shelters will be much appreciated and will be of much more value than these artificial platforms.[134]

The inference from these two statements, contrary to the agreed procedure, is that Baker had never seen a sketch design for the cemetery. Indeed, the cemetery today reflects, to some extent, the remarks made by Baker, so it is likely that these were Baker's first comments on the design.

This single case is representative of the general tension between Junior Architects and Principal Architects in the early stages of the IWGC project.

In his 24 October 1922 submission for the building of Fricourt New Military Cemetery, Arthur Hutton notes simply, 'The cross is sited facing the graves to the east of the cemetery, and is on the entrance axis approached by a series of small terraces. A brick wall encloses the cemetery'.[135] The remarks by the remaining other offices are only in agreement. William Binnie, in his role as Deputy Director of Works states that, 'This cemetery was designed by the Architect in France. The design comes within the unit cost per grave with a suitable margin for contingencies'. There are no remarks from Baker, the single word 'approved from Hill' and the stock phrase 'The design is in accordance with the scheme of the Commission' from Kenyon.

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[134] Ibid, Remarks by Principal Architect.
[135] CWGC, ADD 1/6/3 Sir Herbert Baker Cemetery Files, Fricourt New Military Cemetery, 24 October 1922.

It is a series of seemingly mundane statements, hinting that much of the discussion had been undertaken prior to the formal signing off of the design. However, in the context of Hutton's earlier confrontations with Baker regarding Aval Wood and then Fricourt it can be considered to reflect a number of alterations in the process. First, Baker's already distant input into the design process is now all but vanished, and secondly it suggests greater confidence in the Junior Architects and, by extension, greater design autonomy for them.

### 1.1.3 The Junior Architects: War Experience and Cemetery Design

The recruitment of the Junior Architects varied from man to man, for some it was a case of a letter of support from one of the Senior Architects – as in the case of George Goldsmith, who had worked with Lutyens before the war.[136] For others it was a case of applying and hoping for the best.[137] The Junior Architects of the IWGC were predominantly made up of men who, whilst having trained and qualified as architects, had little or no practical experience. Those that had worked in practice had little in the way of large project experience. Indeed, it was only Charles Holden and William Cowlishaw who could boast of anything significant within their respective portfolios.

Of the remainder, the vast majority were newly qualified and had only worked on small projects, all of which remain obscured in the mists of time. If we look at the example of other architects of the period who were also in the early stages of their

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[136] CWGC, WG 462, Lutyens, E. L.
[137] CWGC, ADD/1/6/11, Two Letters written by W.C. Von Berg in response to requests from the British Architectural Library.

pre-war careers it is likely that these jobs involved detailing on larger works or perhaps the occasional extension or alteration to an existing building.

Architecture, of course, was a profession that very much fitted into the late-Victorian, early-Edwardian aspirational middle class. With the establishment of the Royal Institute for British Architects in the mid-nineteenth century, the increased sense of professionalism and a little less of the dandy artist, it became a respectable, even desirable, way in which an individual could improve their social position. That being said, whilst professionalisation of architecture improved its position in society, it also proved to be an accessible profession from many points in the rigid social hierarchy of pre-war Britain.

The Architects Office of the IWGC – specifically those roles of the Junior Architects – represented a broad cross-section of backgrounds and education. This, of course, could be seen as a reflection of the emerging meritocracy during the war years.[138] It is interesting to note that, despite the mixture of upbringings, all those men who went on to be Junior Architects in the IWGC had served as officers during the war.

However, the war experience of the group varied quite dramatically. A large number of the Junior Architects served in some role or another within the Royal Engineers. Indeed, using the RIBA war memorial as a sample of the units within which architects served a large number served with the Royal Engineers. The only other units that show a cluster of architects within their make up are the Artists Rifles and the Army

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[138] For further discussion on officer recruitment see: John Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks* (London: Orion, 2010) and Christopher Moore-Bick, *Playing the Game* (Warwich: Helion, 2011).

Service Corps (ASC). The former is unsurprising as the Artists Rifles were predominantly an officer training unit based at Hare Hall in Romford. Many an officer, architect or otherwise, passed through their ranks en route to an active service posting with another unit. The ASC example is more intriguing as there seems to have been a clique of architects serving with the Sanitation Department. The inference of this grouping is that they were proficient at designing and building latrines, the latter being most likely as those architects who served within this section were all within the other ranks.

Within the IWGC cohort of Junior Architects, of which there were twelve who were directly involved in the design and build of at least one cemetery or memorial, there is a slight difference in the mixture of war experience. Only three served in the Royal Engineers, there were two who had served in the Friends' Ambulance Service, one had served in the Stationery Services and Royal Field Artillery, respectively, and the remaining five had served within infantry units. Also important to note is that all the Junior Architects had active service experience on the Western Front.

Whilst there was a decision taken to ensure that all Junior Architects had served, there are a number of aspects related to this decision that remain unclear. Throughout the course of this thesis the reasoning behind this decision will be explored in the context of the design process. For example, it is not known if this decision limited service to the Western Front, or at least service within the theatre they were working in. It is unclear from the remaining papers in the CWGC archive as to who suggested that only ex-servicemen should be employed, and likewise, beyond the general operating principles of the IWGC, why this rule was

implemented. Irrespective of how and why this decision was made, having old soldiers' involvement in the design process added legitimacy to the work. It could not be said that this was the older generation imposing their form of memorialisation onto those who had fought. It is, therefore, interesting that in the context of this decision, the architects who are predominantly remembered for their involvement with the IWGC are the Senior Architects who had not served.

**Wilfrid Von Berg's War**

To fully understand the importance of the Junior Architects in the process that created the cemeteries it is important not to distinguish between soldier and architect. It would be too easy to separate the two careers as unrelated, however, it is the contention of this thesis that the ability to create the complexity of memorial as an architect for the IWGC was fundamentally based on the experiences of the individual as a soldier.

Shortly after the fighting had ceased, all along the old Western Front, millions of men found themselves employed gainfully or otherwise on military duties with the prospect of demobilisation and a different form of uncertain future. As Connelly noted in his introduction to his study of the memorials of East London, it was this uncertain future, the "irony between idealism and loyalty of the service given and the ingratitude shown by the state afterwards", that came to define the experience of many former soldiers after the war. [139] In this environment of burgeoning disillusionment and a growing sense of unease, in the orderly office of the London Rifle Brigade (LRB), working through the various issues of the army in those weeks

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[139] Mark Connelly, *Great War: Memory and Ritual* (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2003), p. 3.

and months after the armistice, sat the battalion adjutant, Captain Wilfrid Von Berg.[140]

Von Berg fitted the earlier summary of the social and education profile of a Junior Architect of this period. He had been educated at the Whitgift School near Croydon, then a grammar school. Upon being articled to Withers and Meredith he attended the Architectural Association's atelier. The atelier was effectively a night school and proved one of the most popular ways for an architect to become qualified at this time. The atelier provided a formal education alongside the practical apprenticeship of working within an office. Although it is unclear when Von Berg finished his formal architectural education it cannot have been long before the outbreak of war.[141]

According to the battalion history, Von Berg joined the LRB in March 1915.[142] The LRB was the perfect unit for an aspirational and professional member of the middle class. A territorial unit of the London Regiment, the LRB was made up predominantly from bankers, clerks and other professionals from within the City of London. It was one of the units of The London Regiment commonly referred to as class battalions, where a certain level of education was prerequisite for membership of the unit - as indeed was an annual subscription, just as you would with any other exclusive club. A quick scan through the nominal roll of officers shows members of the aristocracy, alumni of all the major public schools and a large number of graduates from Oxbridge – most regular army battalions of the period could not

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[140] TNA, WO95/2962/6, London Rifle Brigade War Diary.
[141] Stamp, *Silent Cities.*
[142] Anon. *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1921), p. 486.

boast such a social and intellectual standing.[143]

Throughout the course of the war, even during conscription, the LRB maintained a rigorous grip on the men they allowed to join their battalions. In his social study of the LRB in the Great War, Bill Mitchinson identifies a strategy on the part of the LRB to target specific regular haunts of office workers during their lunch breaks. The recruiting team would hand out leaflets that unashamedly announced that there was a twenty-five shilling annual subscription and that this ensured "the social standing of the regiment is maintained and provides special advantages and comforts which would otherwise be missing".[144] Interestingly, Mitchinson also identifies that of the enlistments in 1915 a large number seem to have come through what the LRB recruitment called 'the grapevine'; in other words, the old school tie and other such networks. This certainly seem to be supported in the case of Von Berg, where there are at least eight other Old Whigiftians in the LRB roll of officers and many others are known to have served within the ranks, too.

Von Berg initially joined the LRB as a Rifleman, the rifle battalion version of a Private, and spent much of his time in and around the Ypres Salient. Joining the battalion at St. Omer, he proceeded with them via Poperinghe to 'T'' Trenches at St. Eloi. This period from the 29th November 1915 to 7th February 1916 seem to have been his only time in the frontline as a Rifleman.[145] According to his medal records, in this period Von Berg reached the rank of Sergeant. By April 1916 Sergeant Von Berg was sent back to the United Kingdom to begin his training as an officer.

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[143] Ibid, pp. 429-492.
[144] K.W. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers: The Impact and Experience of War on a Territorial Regiment 1914-1918* (Uckfield: Naval and Military Press, 1994), p. 89.
[145] TNA, WO 95/2962/6 LRB War Diary, and WO 372/20/156213, Medal Card of Von Berg, Wilfred (Sic) Clement.

Whilst his time at the front was limited there are two important aspects of this that shaped his future as both an officer in the LRB and as an architect with the IWGC; as an officer, he was considered LRB through and through. In a unit that considered itself to be, according to one early war recruitment poster, 'the finest Regiment God ever made', this was essential to his acceptance by a battalion known for its social snobbery.[146] This connection with the battalion was essential in his promotion to Captain and Adjutant, which, in turn, was pivotal in his appointment as an architect of the IWGC.

There is an interesting connection between the LRB and Talbot House, the everyman's club for soldiers in Poperinghe. Von Berg would have been one of the early visitors to Talbot House, or Toc H as it became known amongst the 'Tommies' after then phonetic alphabet used by signalers. He would have been acutely aware of the Toc H mantra '*abandon rank all ye who enter here*'.[147] In this wartime show of human spirit, Toc H first captured the very essence that became one of the pillars of the IWGC; universal commemoration, all men being equal. One only need look through the *Liber Vitae Toc H*, a calendar of remembrance, to find Riflemen, Lieutenants and Brigadier Generals listed on the same pages, remembered in the same way. It is this very ethos that forms the lynchpin of the IWGC memorials.[148] Von Berg's involvement in the early days of Toc H, along with so many others throughout the war, in combination with the experience of the war itself, undoubtedly contributed to the ex-service community's approval of the IWGC

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[146] Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers*, p. 89.
[147] Paul Chapman, *A Haven in Hell: Talbot House, Poperinghe* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2000), p. 25.
[148] Philip Byard Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1919), p. 26.

designs.[149]

The twist of fate that took Von Berg away from the battalion in April 1916 to begin his officer training may well have saved his life. The LRB, as part of the relatively newly formed 56th London Division, attacked the village and woods of Gommecourt on 1st July 1916. The battalion suffered 71% casualties, either killed wounded or missing. As Mitchinson put it, 'The 1st Battalion LRB was never the same again'.[150]

When Von Berg returned to the battalion in September 1916, the LRB had just passed through another bloody phase of the Battle of the Somme at Leuze Wood. Whilst the recruitment teams had sought to retain the ethos, the faces of the battalion had most definitely changed.

During the weeks after the initial fighting at Lousy Wood, the LRB were involved in a number of set-piece actions in the area. On 8th October 1916, near to the village of Lesboeufs, Von Berg and three companies of the LRB were involved in one such engagement to capture Hazy Trench and the associated gun positions. The battalion went over at approximately 3.30pm and came under heavy fire from both flanks. It was another costly interlude for an already battered battalion; the LRB suffered 281 killed, wounded and missing within the other ranks and 20 officer casualties. Included within these was Wilfrid Von Berg.[151]

It would appear from his records that whatever wound Von Berg picked up, it was not deemed serious to require treatment and a period of convalescence in the

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[149] Examples of this approval can be found throughout the journal of the Ypres League, The Ypres Times, such as: 'Free Pilgrimage to Ypres', *The Ypres Times* Vol.4 No.8 (1929, p. 226; and 'The Ypres League Pilgrimage – August the 4th, 1924', *The Ypres Times* Vol.2 No.4 (1924), p. 89.
[150] Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers*, p. 128.
[151] Anon., *History of the London Rifle Brigade,* p. 172.

United Kingdom. It is likely that he was sent to a base hospital behind the lines for whatever treatment was required, and by 12 November Von Berg was back with the battalion once more.

Throughout 1917 Von Berg fulfilled his role as a battalion officer; leading raiding and working parties, holding trenches, and keeping a watchful eye over the men under his command. One such patrol is mentioned in the lead up to the Battle of Arras in April 1917, where Von Berg gathered important information on the state of defences along the enemy wire near to Neuville Vitasse. The role that would come to define the rest of his army career and give him the position which led to his appointment as architect with the IWGC came in August 1917, when, after a number of forced changes to the LRB headquarters staff owing to woundings, Von Berg took up the position of Battalion Adjutant.[152]

It is from this period that we have one of the most revealing insights into Von Berg's war experience. A fellow officer of the Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel A. S. Bates, who had been invalided out of the army in the autumn of 1916, was tasked with compiling a record of the regiment during the war. To do so he began to gather memories from surviving officers. Included in the responses and subsequently in the LRB history Von Berg wrote candidly of the experience of the war of movement of the last 100 days:

> It was mighty stiff fighting at times and the lads stuck it well…our junior officers were just wonderful and did excellent work, but there is the same difficulty now that you experienced after Polygon Wood, viz., that there is no one left to tell us of any deeds of gallantry. We have managed to find a few however.
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> Young Frey, whom you remember as a runner, was killed, also Capt. Welch, I fear, though he was last seen badly wounded…Poor old Tom

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[152] TNA, WO 95/2962/6 LRB War Diary, August 1917.

> Burroughs got a nasty one through the body after doing magnificent work as O.C. 'B' Company. He was last seen in a C.C.S. and going well, so we are hoping he will recover…If you can find him in England I hope that you will go and see him, and tell him how frightfully proud we are of him…Cope was slightly wounded after doing good work as O.C. 'D' Company, but beyond that all other casualties are of new officers who you would not know.
>
> All Headquarters officers came through all right, the C.O., John, Mills and yours truly feeling rather like chewed string, and I am up to my eyes in the usual work of reorganization etc…The news is streaming in of further advances, and I think that the moral has never been better…I do wish you were with us now, you would simply revel in this new kind of fighting. It is awfully exciting and I am quite looking forward to the next 'binge'.[153]

This extract, quoted at length, clearly identifies the pressures and experiences that were standard practice for a battalion level officer; loss, confusion, friendship, pride and exhilaration. More importantly, in the case of this study, this excerpt perfectly illustrates that Von Berg had experienced the sharp end of soldiering. As if this point needed to be further stated Von Berg was also awarded the Military Cross in 1918 for his work as battalion adjutant, when still just a Second Lieutenant and only twenty-three years of age.[154]

The war came to an end on 11 November 1918 and the LRB found themselves in the vicinity of Harmignies, a village 4 miles to the south-east of Mons. Von Berg was confronted with the task of keeping a restless group of men entertained for six months as the process of demobilisation began. In his renowned memoir of life in the LRB Aubrey Smith captured a rare vignette of Von Berg as a peace-time officer.

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[153] Anon., *History of the London Rifle Brigade*, p. 240.
[154] *Supplement to the London Gazette*, No.31092 (1 January 1919),  p. 30.

The LRB, whilst not by any stretch of the imagination in open mutiny, began to suffer rumblings of discontent when it transpired that soldiers who had served with the battalion from the outset were being kept in France whilst those who had just arrived were being returned home. These feelings became apparent at a concert party organised by Von Berg and starring those remaining officers. Aubrey Smith, who had been asked by Von Berg to play the piano for the party, writes:

> When the curtain went up a perfectly appalling pandemonium started, all the bells whistles, tin-cans, combs and hooters breaking forth into a symphony which continued with vary degrees of intensity, but without a break through the entire performance…I was helpless with laughter the greater part of the time, but the joke of it was that the performers (except for Von Berg, who entered into the fun) carried on valiantly, raising their voices and doing their utmost to give effect to the programme as under normal conditions.
>
> …the Adjutant (Von Berg) who tried to sing a sentimental song, was received with moans and groans as soon as he started 'When I was a boy at School' there were loud cries of 'that wasn't long ago!'[155]

This brief snippet of life in the camp shortly after the war reminds us that despite the experience of the previous three years, Von Berg was still very much a young man in both age and spirit. Aubrey Smith seems to have thought highly of Von Berg, but that is likely to have been the result of his demobilisation papers arriving just a few days after this incident and his war was over.

For Von Berg it wasn't, but it would be soon and thoughts of the future began to enter his mind. In a letter to the architectural historian Gavin Stamp sent some 59 years later, Von Berg takes us back to the headquarters of the LRB;

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[155] Aubrey Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London: Odhams, 1922), pp. 405-406.

> In France in early 1919…I was awaiting demobilisation and wondering rather grimly what were likely to be my prospects of re-entering my profession in England when a notice arrived in my Orderly Room stating that architects were invited to apply for positions in the Imperial War Graves Commission. Without a moment's hesitation I saddled my horse, galloped off to a neighbouring town, was interviewed and accepted.[156]

As the remaining cadre of the LRB left the port of Antwerp on 17th May 1919, headed for England, it was noted that there were "3 Officers and 26 O.R.s, Capt. &. Adj. W. C. Von Berg being on leave".[157] Far from being on leave, Wilfrid Von Berg was preparing for another 6 years at the front.

## John Reginald Truelove: soldier and architect

The correlation between war experience and design experience is also evident in the career of John Reginald Truelove. Truelove was one of the group of Junior Architects who had worked in architectural practice in the years prior to the war. According to Stamp's notes for the Silent Cities exhibition Truelove had worked in private practice for the 4 years prior to the outbreak of war.[158] In addition Truelove used his architectural and artistic abilities to illustrate a 1909 guide to the ruins of Fountains Abbey in his native Yorkshire.[159]

Despite Truelove having been in architectural practice prior to the outbreak of the First World War there is little known work from this earlier period to judge whether the IWGC project influenced his approach. In an interview for *The Yorkshire Telegraph* in 1938, Truelove spoke of his admiration for aspects of contemporary

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[156] CWGC, Add 1/6/11, Two Letters Written by Von Berg.
[157] TNA, WO 95/2962/6, LRB War Diary.
[158] Stamp, *Silent Cities*, p. 25.
[159] A. W. Oxford, *The Ruins of Fountains Abbey* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1910).

American building design and it also stated that he had undertaken a visit to the United States prior to the design and construction of his only known pre-war building, the West Bar Lodging House in Sheffield. The most notable influence being the use of metal cornice work as per the buildings he had seen on his tour.[160]

The war experience of Truelove reflected very closely that of Von Berg's, having also been an infantry officer in one of the London Regiment battalions. Truelove's own unit, the 24th Battalion, London Regiment, however, were not one of the so called class units created from the various London and county volunteer rifles units, instead they were one of those battalions aligned with a standard County line infantry regiment. In this particular instance, the 24th Battalion were associated with the Queens' Royal West Surrey Regiment.

The 24th Londons made up part of the 47th (London) Division, a unit made up entirely of London Territorial Force units. As with Von Berg, Truelove's cemetery design portfolio with the IWGC closely matches the actions of his unit. Most notably being his commission to design the Le Touret Memorial to the Missing, to commemorate the missing of the Pas de Calais area of France from October 1914 to the later stages of the Battle of Loos in 1915. The memorial design was one of the competitions held within the Junior Architects, alas no paperwork is retained regarding the other submissions nor the decision process on Truelove's winning design.

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[160] Anon., 'Proud Record of Sheffield Architect', *Yorkshire Telegraph*, 15 July 1938.

The 24th Londons were heavily involved in one of the key actions this memorial represents, that of the Battle of Festubert in May 1915. There was never a battalion history written for the 24th London Regiment, but the Divisional history and battalion war diary capture the ferocity of the attack that Truelove was involved in. The 47th Division history said of the attack on 25 May 1915;

> …the first advance was made by the 23rd and 24th London Battalions, who swept across the open ground like a field-day attack at St. Albans, and at once captured, with comparatively small losses, the German trenches opposite to them. But they then encountered a fierce and deadly enfilading fire from the German guns, and particularly from a heavy battery posted near Auchy-les-la-Bassée, far to the south and out of reach of the guns of our Division….tremendous losses were suffered by the men crowded in the captured trenches. Nothing could be done to keep down this enfilading fire.[161]

The history goes onto note the brave actions of one subaltern;

> Lieutenant F. Chance, lying mortally wounded on the edge of some sloping ground, refused to let his men bring him in, and waved them back again and again, because from where he lay he could see that when they got to him they ran great risk of being shot down.[162]

Another 24th London officer noted as killed in the fighting in the war diary, most likely in the phase the divisional history referenced regarding the enfilade fire into the crowded trenches, was Second Lieutenant Wallis William Penn Gaskell.

Truelove, himself, does not appear by name in any of the scant references to the action, but the battalion sustained heavy casualties and many appear on the memorial. In the interview with the *Sheffield Telegraph* quoted earlier Truelove said of the memorial that;

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[161] A. H. Maude (ed.), *The 47th (London) Division 1914-1919* (London: Amalgamated Press, 1922), pp. 21-22.
[162] Ibid, p. 22.

> When the names were inscribed on the Le Touret memorial he discovered among them the names of his former Company Commander and two fellow subalterns.[163]

The two subalterns in question being Frank Chance and Wallis Penn Gaskell, and his company commander being Captain Frank Gill. Tragically, Lieutenant Chance's unselfishness and care for the lives of his men led to his body being lost. Not only was there a connection between Truelove's war experience and the place, but there was also an acute personal connection with those remembered on the memorial.

The divergence in the two portfolios comes in Truelove's involvement with the divisional memorials. Unlike Von Berg's role in the unrealised 56th Division memorial and his design of the regimental cemetery, Truelove did not complete any official regimental or divisional memorials. Instead, the 47th Division memorials at High Wood and Martinpuich on the Somme were undertaken by William Godfrey Newton, son of the RIBA president, Sir Ernest Newton.[164]

William Newton was one of the peripheral characters of the IWGC project. He is noted as having submitted a design for what went on to become the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing, although the details of his submission are unclear.[165] Indeed, he was one of the architects suggested in early discussions regarding the team of Junior Architects.[166] In the case of the divisional memorial his rank in both the army and architectural society is likely to have made him the more obvious choice to design the divisional memorials, rather than Truelove.

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[163] Anon., 'Proud Record of Sheffield Architect', *Yorkshire Telegraph*, 15 July 1938.
[164] Details of W. G. Newton's designs can be found in: Anon, *47th (London) Division War Memorials*, (Private Printing, 1925), p. 4.
[165] CWGC, WG 219/2/9 Ploegsteert Memorial.
[166] CWGC, SDC 61, Junior Architect Appointments.

**Von Berg and the IWGC**

There are a number of accepted notions related to the work of the Junior Architects in the IWGC; they were understudies to the genius of Lutyens et al, they had very little design freedom, their level of involvement in the process was limited to administration and draughtsmanship. Much of this understanding comes from Philip Longworth's official history of the CWGC, in which much of the work of the Junior Architects was not included. Longworth's heavy focus on the Senior Architects has been the evident in every study since. Indeed, Jeroen Guerst and Eitan Karol, albeit understandably given their respective studies focus on two of the Principal Architects, make only passing acknowledgement to the role of the Junior Architects in the design process.

Whilst these are the perceived roles of the Junior Architects, it was not anywhere near as simple and not quite so removed a role as has been considered. As Guerst recognised in his study of the war cemeteries of Lutyens, even the authorship of a large number of the cemeteries attributed to the Senior Architects is often not straight-forward. [167] The CWGC officially credit Von Berg with thirty-eight cemeteries, and an additional twenty-six nominally supporting some of the Senior Architects having been identified by the studies by Geurst and Eitan Karol's work on Charles Holden. The destruction of Von Berg's file in 1962 by the CWGC makes definitive and absolute identification of all the projects he worked on very difficult. As with most aspects of their roles, there has been very little understanding regarding the division of cemeteries amongst the Junior Architects. The architectural treatment of each cemetery, if considered, is generally accepted to have been

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[167] Guerst, *Lutyens*, pp. 62-65.

randomly assigned and that there was no specific reasoning behind this. This again supports the top-down approach to design that is as equally commonly accepted.

There is a different story within the seemingly arbitrary list of cemeteries. As you might expect given the nature of the post-war landscape, the cemeteries any given Junior Architect was chosen to work on often appear in clusters. It is most likely that there was a practical nature to this, but, as began to appear in the study of Truelove's work, another interesting trend emerges when the cemetery locations are compared with the individual's respective war experience.

Being fully versed in the war experience of Wilfrid Von Berg, a look at the cemeteries he was 'involved' in provides evidence of another interpretation. Quite what this involvement means varies, but often it pertains to everything from identifying the parcel of land through to the design and sign-off, a sign-off which he may or may not have received prior to the build phase beginning. An interpretation that considers the soldier and the architect reveals a marked crossover between defining locations of his war experience and the cemeteries he designed. This map highlighting the operations and movements of the LRB in and around Ypres, shows the key activities and movements of the battalion.[168] Highlighted in green are the locations of cemeteries known to have been worked on by Von Berg. Finally, in the shaded areas are points that appertain specifically to key points in either Von Berg's war experience or, more broadly, his battalion's. The points that stand out in Von Berg's own war experience up and down the Western Front coincide geographically with him having designed the nearest cemetery.

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[168] Anon., *History of the London Rifle Brigade*, Supplementary Maps Volume.

There are of, course, a large number that do not directly follow the pattern of war experience. There were, after all, many more cemeteries to design in places that the architects had not actively served. What is interesting, however, is that a cursory glance at the pockets of cemeteries alongside the respective regimental histories of other Junior Architects shows a similar correlation. We have seen the same correlation emerging between Reginald Truelove's cemeteries and the actions of 47th Division Within the index of the 55th Division history, the division in which George Goldsmith's infantry battalion served, a close correlation between key actions and clusters of cemeteries is also evident.[169]

This new reading of the relationship between Junior Architect and cemetery brings a fresh understanding to how these cemeteries were divided. It would, after all, seem odd that, with an LRB man on the architectural staff of the IWGC, that anyone else other than Von Berg would design the London Rifle Brigade Cemetery. Though, it is unsurprising that this connection has been missed owing to the attribution of the cemetery to the Senior Architect. Indeed, this was not the only time the LRB utilised these architectural links. When the clamour for memorials to battlefield exploits began immediately after the war Von Berg was heavily involved with a proposal for the 56th (London) Division memorial to commemorate the action of 1st July 1916 at Gommecourt.[170]

There is, unfortunately, a more tragic example which suggests that the Junior Architects had an active role in selecting which cemeteries they designed. To the

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[169] J. O. Coop, *The Story of the 55th (West Lancashire) Division* (Liverpool: Liverpool Daily Post, 1919).
[170] CWGC, WG 1653 pt.1.

west of Cambrai, in a small village called Sains-les-Marquion is a cemetery containing 227 burials. In plot I.C.27 can be found the final resting place of a soldier of 14th Canadian Infantry Battalion; Private Leslie Cyril Von Berg. Leslie was Wilfrid's older brother who had emigrated to Canada prior to the outbreak of war. If the thought of another architect else designing the LRB cemetery seemed strange, the thought of any of the other Junior Architects designing the cemetery at Sains-les-Marquion was unimaginable.

The combination of this tragic example and the strong regimental affiliation, along with the identifiable connection between war experience and certain design clusters make a very strong case to show that the Junior Architects were very much involved in the design process, far more so than thought of before. This introduction of a clear autonomy for the Junior Architects is a distinction that has not been made until now.

Returning to the proposal for a divisional memorial that Von Berg had been working on; the tablet was due to be placed on one of the perimeter walls of the Gommecourt British Cemetery, No. 2 - officially classed to be in Hebuterne. The cemetery contains 675 burials, many of whom belong to soldiers of the many and various London Regiment units of 56th (London) Division. As is often the way with the CWGC records, this cemetery was nominally attributed to a Senior Architect, in this case Sir Reginald Blomfield, with no mention of a Junior Architect.[171] However, we know that Von Berg was involved with other cemeteries in the immediate vicinity

[171] CWGC Historical Information, 'Gommecourt British Cemetery No. 2, Hebuterne' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

and that, according to the South African Institute of Architects, Von Berg worked with Blomfield on the Ypres Town cemetery at the very least. It would seem plausible, then, that Von Berg, whilst working on the divisional memorial (which did not ultimately come to fruition) also worked on the cemetery it was to be situated within.

This would, along with several other examples, test the accepted and often quoted 250 burial threshold for cemeteries that Junior Architects are believed to have been given a degree of autonomy on. We can further test the accepted threshold by comparing two of Von Berg's cemeteries, one we have already mentioned, London Rifle Brigade Cemetery and the other is Voormezeele Enclosures No.s 1 and 2. The latter, interestingly, also has the connection with being a cemetery closely aligned with Von Berg's war experience, being the cluster of cemeteries closest to the point that he first entered the front line near to St. Eloi in November 1915.

These two cemeteries are again nominally attributed to Senior Architects, LRB to Charles Holden and Voormezeele to Lutyens. The former contains 334 and the latter contains 597.[172] The cemeteries, only around 7 miles apart, use the same architectural detailing, including the same unusual style of pavilion – a pavilion reminiscent of one to be found in another of Von Berg's cemeteries near to Festubert in Post Office Rifles Cemetery. Comparing the oeuvre of Holden's IWGC work there is no comparative cemetery; again, the same can be said with Lutyens. The only unifying factor is Von Berg's involvement, which again suggests much

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[172] CWGC Historical Information, 'LRB Cemetery and Vormezeele Enclosures No.s 1 and 2' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

greater involvement than has been considered up until now. These two examples show that whilst the 250 limit existed in theory – and is referenced in a number of the authorisation sheets – as with many other aspects of the 'in principle' design process, in practice the real limit was a great deal more flexible. This flexibility appears to tie-in with the Junior Architect's intimate experience of the location during the war.

The evidence of connection between Von Berg's war experience and cemetery designs is important in terms of our understanding of the role of the Junior Architects within the IWGC. It shows that they had much greater responsibility in the designs of the cemeteries than has previously been thought. In addition, the connection with place suggests that the Junior Architects were involved at an early stage in the selection of sites and the development from that point to completion. In itself, this is an important step towards understanding the impact the Junior Architects had on the cemeteries we see today.

Perhaps the most interesting and important aspect of this perspective, however, is the impact it has on how we regard the cemeteries as sites of memory. If there was indeed the intention to bring legitimacy to the designs by employing ex-servicemen as Junior Architects, this interpretation vastly expands the potential reach of that legitimacy. By reading the involvement and role of the Junior Architects as one with far greater autonomy in terms of design than previously thought and with a direct connection to their respective war experiences, the war cemeteries take on a tangible personal journey of memory.

These sites are, therefore, steeped with their architect's personal experiences of the wartime landscape and with intimate knowledge of some of the individuals buried within. This experience also offers tantalising suggestions about the connections between the architecture and the landscape of the Great War. Moreover, these cemeteries were created with an understanding of what the importance of the location and experience represented for those who survived and returned. This is an architecture borne out of an intense connection with the landscape they sit within and one that ensures that far beyond only housing the unlucky ones who fell, they provide an insight into the experience of both those who designed them and, by extension, all those who served in the same area.

As well as demanding that we reconsider the role the Junior Architects played in the architectural treatment of the war cemeteries, this interpretation identifies another layer of memory that is very much focused on the living and on those who return. It is, after all an architecture of memory that houses the physical remains of those who fell, and the intangible memories of those who returned.

The understanding of the involvement of Wilfrid Von Berg and John Reginald Truelove in the design of these memorials means that we must begin to consider the cemeteries of the IWGC as more than sites of mourning. These war cemeteries of the IWGC should be considered as a tangible and accessible *memoryscape* that reflects both the experience of war and the wartime landscape. These cemeteries are not just memorials to the dead, they are the architectural embodiment of a personal relationship between soldier and architect, between experience and place.

## 2 | Architecture and Landscape Memory

The cemeteries of the Imperial War Graves Commission that are found on the old Western Front, whilst forming a very specific function, namely the commemoration of the British and Commonwealth dead of the First World War, have also come to play a significant role in the narrative of how we understand the war itself; the arbitrary nature of death being symbolically captured in the seemingly equal arbitrariness of the cemeteries. This single word, arbitrary, has come to define how the British cemeteries of the IWGC, specifically the design details, have been presented in both academic and popular histories.

Building on the previous chapter that showed the importance of the Junior Architects' war experience in the design process, this chapter will show how the physical architecture of the IWGC, far from being arbitrary, intentionally retained not just the personal memory of death, but the general memory of experience. This chapter will investigate the contention that the IWGC, from organisational level through all levels of the hierarchy down to the Junior Architects, considered far more in the design of these cemeteries and memorials than has hitherto been understood.

The chapter will begin by assessing the report of Sir Frederic Kenyon. Kenyon, the director of the British Museum, was appointed to the Commission as an Artistic Advisor in November 1917.[173] In his position Kenyon was to 'decide between the various proposals submitted to him as to the architectural treatment and laying out

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[173] CWGC, 6/4/1/2/3715, Staff Card for Sir Frederic Kenyon.

of the cemeteries'.[174] Kenyon's subsequent report outlined the design principles for the cemeteries of the IWGC and provides an insight into the broader intentions of the commission in their architectural interventions. Following a study of Kenyon's report, this chapter will explore the understanding of the architectural project in scholarship and in popular writing. Finally, by using the remaining written sources relating to the design process, held within the IWGC archive, and combined this with field studies of the extant architecture, this chapter will test some of the inferences of the Kenyon Report. In doing so, it will seek to establish intent on behalf of the Commission in creating an environment in which the architects were able to capture aspects of both experience and memory within the designs for the war cemeteries.

In 1918 Sir Frederic Kenyon published a document that was, in effect, the architectural design statement for the IWGC. *War Graves; How the Cemeteries Abroad Will be Designed* was the official publication of the discussions that had occurred between Kenyon, Sir Fabian Ware, the director of the IWGC, the principal architects of the Commission, Lutyens, Baker and Blomfield, and other consultants, such as Charles Aitken of the National Gallery, Gertrude Jekyll the noted landscape gardener, and Arthur Hill the director of Kew Gardens.[175] The document laid out an overview of the design approach to be taken by the architects in France and was intended to give the British public an understanding of how the cemeteries in France and Flanders would appear.

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[174] CWGC, WG 9, Minutes of Commission Meeting No. 1, November 1917.
[175] Kenyon, *War Graves.*

In relation to the design of the cemeteries, the guidance contained within *War Graves* is broad. Kenyon devotes much of the detail in the document to the aspects of architectural design that reflect one of the IWGC's key principles – the equality of treatment. Indeed, of the twenty-four pages, five are taken up by dealing with the treatment of individual graves. This is unsurprising given the furore created in parliament and within the general public by the decision that all graves would be marked by the same pattern of headstone; an argument that centred on the lack of explicit Christian symbolism in the chosen headstone design. Indeed, it was partly this objection that led to the inclusion of Blomfield's Cross of Sacrifice in the general cemetery furniture.

During an exchange in the House of Commons in December 1919 the strength of feeling regarding the implementation of a single pattern of headstone came to the fore. Lord Cecil asked of Winston Churchill, the then Secretary of State for War and defacto parliamentary representative of the IWGC "whether it is part of the policy of the Government only to allow tombstones according to a sealed pattern to be put up to our soldiers buried in France?".[176] This initial remark was followed up with questions from firstly Sir Henry Craik, who commented on the design proposal and "the strong feeling which has been aroused amongst the relatives of those who fell in France by the action of the Graves Committee in insisting that there should be absolute uniformity in the memorials erected". This was followed by Major Hennessey, who sought to find a way in which individual designs could be accommodated into the overall uniform dimensions. The response that followed from Churchill failed to abate the objectors prompting Lord Cecil to state, "Does

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[176] Hansard, HC Deb 15 December 1919 vol. 123 cc. 28-30, War Graves (Headstones).

not my right hon. Friend see that this a question in which the relatives ought to be primarily considered, and that the dictation of artists and architects and that kind of person as to what is proper and right is utterly improper?".

There followed a specific debate on the subject of the IWGC on 17th December 1919, in which Lord Cecil again attacked the Commission's stance on uniform headstones, stating them to be one of the 'three grave evils' of the operations of the Commission.[177] The decision by the Commission to opt for the headstone rather than a cruciform pattern was ultimately presented as one of practicality. In a Statement of Reasons published in April 1920 to engender support for the Commission's proposals in the House of Commons the following points served to outline the decision:

(a) A change in this respect would disturb the whole scheme of the cemeteries already arranged for, and in part laid out, owing to the greater width required for that shape of monument. [...]

(b) It is impossible to inscribe the necessary details now appearing on the headstone in the smaller space available on a cross.

(c) A cross, owing to its form, is far less permanent than a headstone.[178]

It went on to outline a number of other issues, including taking practical issue with the proposal by Lord Balfour of Burliegh, who had been a staunch critic of the Commission and its proposals.

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[177] Hansard, HC Deb 17 December 1919 vol. 123 cc. 485-512.
[178] CWGC, ADD 1/1/5, Statement of Reasons in Support of the Proposal of the Imperial War Graves Commission.

A theme that emerged within this debate, however, suggests the crux of the argument. After Lord Cecil's opening statement there came an answer from a Captain Brown:

> I am sorry to find myself in disagreement with the Noble Lord, but I feel that he has exaggerated the claims of the parents and minimised the claims of the State. I do not wish to give pain to any parent, but surely we might consider a little bit what possibly the soldiers themselves would have thought, supposing one could ask them what they would like done to their mortal remains. It seems to me a reasonable supposition that many of these soldiers, if they had been asked, would have said, "We would like to lie with those who fought and died beside us." Therefore, while the Noble. Lord rather cast ridicule at the lines of graves there is a great deal of sentiment about it, to know that these men are lying together as they fell in battle, and that their graves are uniform, like the regiments to which they belonged.[179]

The apparent dichotomy in the opinions of those who fought and those families of the fallen can be seen as the key dispute over the uniformity of design. It is in this point that the decision to appoint ex-servicemen as architects and into many other positions of the Commission that lends weight to the argument put forward of the legitimacy of the response. The utilisation of ex-servicemen within a project to add legitimacy to its position as a worthy memorial to the men who fought and fell during the war was not isolated to the work of the IWGC. Emily Curtis Walters, in her exploration of R.C. Sherriff's play, *Journey's End*, highlights the "primacy of direct experience" as a source of "authoritative testimony and authenticity".[180]

Even within the turbulent societies of many of the principal belligerents of the Great War in the years immediately following the armistice, a time that often saw ex-servicemen cast as haunted and brutalized by war, the veteran still held a place of

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[179] Ibid.
[180] Emily Curtis Walters, 'Between Entertainment and Elegy: The Unexpected Success of R. C. Sherriff's Journey's End (1928)'. *Journal of British Studies, 55*(2), (2016), pp. 344-373.

moral authority. Indeed, Jon Lawrence points to the role of ex-servicemen in quelling

riots and other forms of social disturbance 'simply by demonstrating their opposition

to the crowd'.[181] Jay Winter's consideration of the function of shell shock in post-

war society points out that the British veteran of the Great War often did not serve

a direct political function, being more concerned with the spirit of ex-service

camaraderie.[182] Indeed, for some parts of the ex-service community, particularly the

disabled, Deborah Cohen argues that, in comparison with their German

counterparts, the British disabled veteran is politically invisible.[183] However, it would

seem from the examples of Walters and Lawrence, this apolitical position, combined

with a perceived experiential and moral position to the general public, only served to

enhance the primacy of the veteran over other opinions and positions.


Whilst Kenyon's *War Graves in France* limits discussion relating to the exact design of

cemeteries, predominantly owing to its publication in January 1918 and the ongoing

state of war, it does make a clear statement regarding the 'local characteristics' of

each cemetery stating that "it is difficult to suppose that a design will be satisfactory

unless it is made on the spot".[184] Additionally, Kenyon's report promotes the idea

that all the Junior Architects should have served. Perhaps aware of the moral

authority society placed upon the veteran, he is unswerving in this principle, stating:


> I do not think that anyone should be accepted for the work who has
> not served, unless he has been absolutely precluded from serving on
> medical grounds; and even then I consider that preference should be

[181] Jon Lawrence, 'Forging a Peaceable Kingdom', *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 75, No. 3
(September 2003), pp. 557-589, (p. 569).
[182] Jay Winter, 'Shell-Shock and the Cultural History of the Great War', *Journal of
Contemporary History*, Vol. 35, No1, Special Issue: Shell-Shock (January 200), pp. 7-11.
[183] Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1919-
1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
[184] Kenyon, *War Graves*, p. 19.

given to those who have served, if a sufficient number with adequate professional attainments are available. Those who have themselves served, and whose comrades lie in these cemeteries, are best qualified to express the sentiment which we desire the cemeteries to convey.[185]

In the case of *Journey's End,* as with other aspects of post-war British society, it is the inclusion of ex-servicemen in the cast that adds moral weight to the story. In the work of the IWGC, the use of ex-servicemen in the design process adds not only legitimacy to the memorial but also vindicates the design decisions, such as the uniform headstones.

In addition to Kenyon's desire to have the junior architectural staff made up of ex-servicemen, he is also clear as to the division of work. Kenyon's vision Gothic Revival cum Arts and Crafts style *bauhütte*, whereby the Junior Architects would operate under a principal architect, is readily accepted in current scholarship. However, very little reference is made to Junior Architect autonomy. Kenyon's recommendations state that "the designs of most of the cemeteries should be made in the first instance by a corps of young architects living in France or Belgium and working on the spot", going on to say that "the majority of the cemeteries should be designed by the younger men".[186]

In spite of this, Kenyon's document was also partnered by a booklet, one intended for a more popular readership, entitled *Graves of the Fallen*.[187] This booklet contained not just text related to the design principles but artistic renderings of the headstones, architecture and landscape context of the cemeteries. There was, again,

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[185] Kenyon, *War Graves*, p. 20.
[186] Kenyon, *War Graves*, p. 19.
[187] Rudyard Kipling, *Graves of the Fallen* (London: HMSO, 1919).

a heavy focus on the individual memorials placed within context, rather than a focus on overarching architectural and design principles.

The focus on young architects, young men who had served in the war, the importance of their role, their understanding of the landscape and the importance of the proximity of designer to location all suggest a greater intent than simply an attractive solution to commemorating the nation's dead.

This early focus on the design of headstones and the centrality of its role in discussions and publications has meant that many of the other architectural principles received little exposure. Despite Kenyon's report covering a range of principles that hint at a greater significance to the architecture; the use of architects who served, the importance of local knowledge and an intimate understanding of the landscape, and the primacy of the Junior Architect within the design process, the principle of equality of commemoration has come to define the architectural response of the IWGC.

The literature relating to the architecture of the IWGC, either academic or popular, is scant. There are three books that deal primarily with the architectural response of the IWGC; all three focus on the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens. Additionally, there is a similarly small group of books that have a specific section relation to the architecture of the Commission. Even the official history of the Commission has relatively little to say on the subject, beyond the role of the Principal Architects. Again, the theme that is dwelt upon is that of universal commemoration.

If we consider Kenyon's Report as a representative marker for intent, in terms of the architectural treatment of the cemeteries, we can consider new ways of interpreting the extant architecture of the Commission. For Kenyon, the connection with the landscape was an essential part of both the design process and the role of the Junior Architects. This part of the thesis, then, will explore the direct connection between the architecture and the wartime landscape. It will analyse the design of the IWGC cemeteries in the context of the features of the Great War Landscape they reflect and show how the architects sought to both retain and accentuate this connection within their designs.

## 2.1 Trenches and Their Use in Cemetery Design

The single most recognisable features of the Great War landscape were the trenches; they have been mythologised by academics, poets and memoirists to become one of the defining visual tropes of the Western Front experience. This section will show how the architects of the IWGC engaged with the predominant feature of the battlefield landscape. It will do so by looking at the varying ways in which the trench lines of the old Western Front were interpreted and retained in the designs of the cemeteries. Firstly, it will look at geometric alignment between the trench lines and the lines within the cemetery architecture. Specifically, it will explore how the geometry of the trenches are retained through the layout, the physical architecture and the access and siting of the cemeteries. Secondly, it will look at trench motifs contained within the architecture, this will include both visual and experiential. Finally, this section will show how the Junior Architects, working within the strict guidelines of land acquisition, ensured that trench lines were retained within the design of the IWGC cemeteries. By using a series of case studies to support each grouping, this section will show how the architects of the IWGC used a variety of methods to ensure that the cemetery architecture retained an aspect of the landscape memory as well as commemorating those buried within.

### 2.1.2 Trench Line Mass Graves

Perhaps the most emotive of burial sites is the mass grave. In the context of the Great War this variant is exaggerated further by the mass grave of a filled-in trench line. In *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning* Jay Winter explored a French variant of this form of mass burial on the Verdun battlefield; *la Tranchée des Baionnettes*. The Trench of Bayonets was, according to Winter, formed when a landslip enclosed a

trench containing almost one hundred French soldiers. The only evidence that remained to show the location were the tips of rifles and bayonets poking out from the earth. Winter quotes the architect, André Ventre, who said of the design to bring permanency to the site:

> It is evident that nothing could typify the tragedy and heroism of the bayonet trench better than the trench itself. With its rugged, broken outlines and in its narrow space in which are entombed the erect forms of nearly one hundred soldiers, the trench is enclosed with an impressiveness no monument could ever equal.[188]

Ventre's impression that the simplicity of the filled in trench is an echo of Lutyens' thoughts in regards to the battlefield burial sites up and down the Western Front, of which he said in a 1917 letter to his wife:

> The graveyards, haphazard from the needs of much to do and little time for thought. And then a ribbon of isolated graves like a milky way across miles of country where men were tucked in where they fell. Ribbons of little crosses each touching each other across a cemetery, set in a wilderness of annuals and where one sort of flower is grown the effect is charming, easy and oh so pathetic. One thinks for the moment no other monument is needed. Evanescent but for the moment is almost perfect...[189]

It is within the context of both these statements that the first grouping of cemeteries should be considered. If the old Western Front was to be considered sacred ground, then the most sacred of all places were those were the men were buried where they fell. Whether the Trench of Bayonets is a true reflection of the circumstances of how the men came to be buried there does not matter, the power of place and mythology attached to it overcomes such details. At the Trench of Bayonets Ventre

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[188] Hoover Institution, Rand Papers, Box 7, '"Bayonet Trench" will be preserved', *Mercury Herald*, 27 September 1920. Quoted in Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, p. 101.
[189] Clayre Percy and Jane Ridley (eds.), *The Letters of Edwin Lutyens to his Wife, Lady Emily* (London: Collins, 1985), p. 350.

chose to enclose the trench in a semi-permeable sarcophagus, the architects of the IWGC chose a subtler form of retaining the trench lines.

Of all the sites on the Somme battlefields, one that appears on many a tour itinerary is that of Devonshire Trench.[190] The cemetery is situated a short distance from Mametz, the two places being separated by a shallow valley. On the morning of 1st July 1916 this shallow valley became a killing ground. The story of the 9th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment who attacked across the fields between the two points is one that captures not only the pathos attached to the first day of the Battle of the Somme – the bloodiest day in British military history – but, also many of what have gone on to become the touchstones of the mythology of the British experience of the Great War. Within the attack was killed one of the now esteemed clutch of War Poets, William Noel Hodgson, whose poem Before Action captured the thoughts of a soldier who has envisaged his imminent death. The attack itself was, if not entirely futile, certainly riddled with errors that proved of the highest cost to the 161 men who fell on the morning of 1st July 1916. In his walking guide to the Somme, historian of the battlefields Paul Reed says of the 9th Devonshires' attack:

> The ground was very difficult, and once in the open advancing troops could clearly be seen from Mametz village which boasted a number of machine-gun positions. Prior to the battle one of the officers in 9th Devonshires, Captain Duncan Lenox Martin, constructed a model of the Mametz battlefield and realised that if certain German defences were not silenced by the preliminary bombardment, he and his men were doomed. His grim predictions proved true and he fell with many others, enfiladed by machine-gun fire from The Shrine in Mametz.

[190] Jennifer Iles, 'Recalling the Ghosts of War: Performing Tourism on the Battlefields of the Western front' *Text and Performance Quarterly*, Vol. 26 No.2 (April 2006), p. 170.

> After the capture of Mametz, the bodies…along with many of their fellow officers and men were brought back to a disused trench in Mansel Copse for burial.[191]

The burial of the Devonshires is captured in Charlotte Zeepvat's study of Hodgson and the 9th Devonshires:

> The next day (Ernest Crosse) was out again with his team searching the shattered wreck of the German trenches; it was only on 3 July that he was able to attend to the dead. With a working party of fifty men, he began to bring the bodies in to the foot of Mansel Copse, where their identity discs and personal effects were collected.
>
> An officer from the divisional staff gave Crosse permission to bury them in the stretch of Blood Alley running parallel to the main road, and over the next two days he and his men brought in all the dead they could find from the two Devon Battalions.
>
> Apart from (Lt. Percy Gethin), all the men in the cemetery died on 1 July. This was Crosses's part in preserving the memory of the Devons at Mansel Copse. He held the funeral on the evening of 4 July, and in the days that followed he drew up plans for the cemetery. Twelve crosses were hammered into the ground in two rows, each with a group of names, and a simple notice: 'Cemetery of 163 Devons, Killed 1st July 1916'.[192]

This insight to the establishment of the cemetery by Rev. Ernest Crosse, the Chaplain to the Battalion, is an example with which the architects of the IWGC treated trench graves, in comparison with the over-bearing architectural intervention of Ventre's Trench of Bayonets pavilion. The architectural treatment of Devonshire Cemetery captures the essence of Lutyens' impossible desire to retain the evanescence in perpetuity.

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[191] Paul Reed, *Walking the Somme* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 1997), pp. 133-134.
[192] Charlot Zeepvat, *Before Action: William Noel Hodgson and the 9th Devons* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2015), pp. 201-203.

The decision to retain Devonshire Cemetery in its original form and not to consolidate other nearby graves ensured the integrity of the site remained intact. That Blood Alley is retained is due in part to the actions of Rev. Crosse and in part to the both the decision of the IWGC to confine the architectural treatment to only include the original site and by William Cowlishaw's – the Architect in France for the cemetery - subtle adaptation of the layout.

Cowlishaw, retained the two rows established by Crosse within his design. (Fig.1) The only minor, but significant, change being a greater number of grave markers to hold the names of those entombed in Blood Alley. The significance of Cowlishaw's decision is that it creates greater definition of the linear aesthetic within the cemetery; it enhances the trench dimensions. The geometric alignment of the burials to the position



*Fig. 1 – Devonshire Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

of the trench is exact, this is to be expected of a trench mass grave. However, there are other aspects of the design that retain the trench lines that would have been familiar to those who fought over the ground. The line of Blood Alley is also followed by the access path to the gate of the cemetery. In fact, the road, access and

Postick

Front line Trench

Unnamed

Dale St.

[67 St.]

Front line

*Fig. 2 – Devonshire Cemetery + Trench Line Sketch Map*

aspects of the perimeter wall all contain geometric alignments with the trench system. (Fig.2)

To access Devonshire Cemetery one must walk up Dale Street trench to its junction with Blood Alley. Turning right up the pathway to the cemetery one follows the same geometry of Blood Alley. Walking the length of the row of headstones to the far perimeter wall the cemetery geometry aligns with Postick communication trench.[193]

In her biography of Hodgson, Zeepvat shows a photograph of Devonshire Cemetery in the mid-1920s.[194] The cemetery is in the process of architectural treatment, but the only piece of permanent architecture visible is the cross of sacrifice. Interestingly, at this time the cross is outside the fenced limits of the cemetery. This in itself suggests that Cowlishaw had a clear vision for the overall site and that his subtle adjustments to the layout were considered. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the photograph is one that Zeepvat herself picks up on, saying that 'the apparent

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[193] HMSO, Trench Map, Meaulte S, 10-62DNE2-x 11-c, 15 June 1916.
[194] Zeepvat, *Before Action*, photograph op. p. 119.

trench line in the foreground is intriguing, but hard to relate to 1916 maps'. Indeed, this observation is confirmed by the June1916 Meaulte South trench map.

That there is a trench in the foreground of the photograph is undeniable, which suggests a new trench system being put in place at a later date to circumnavigate the former section of Blood Alley that was now being used as a cemetery. This trench line would appear to connect Postick Communication trench with Dale Street trench. This additional information as to the continued wartime usage of the ground in and around Mansell Copse highlights another important aspect of the geometries retained within Devonshire Cemetery; they are all distinct to the experience of the 1st July 1916. This relationship with the 1st July 1916 landscape is further supported by the IWGC's decision to retain Gordon Cemetery at the foot of the hill. Ostensibly Gordon Cemetery, designed by A. J. S. Hutton, is of the same trench mass grave, though there is a fundamental difference, as described in the IWGC historical information:

> Gordon Cemetery was made by men of the 2nd Gordon Highlanders who buried some of their dead of 1 July in what had been a support trench, together with two artillerymen who died 8 July and an unknown soldier.
>
> The cemetery contains 102 First World War burials, five of them unidentified. As the precise location of most of the graves could not be established, 93 of the headstones are arranged in semi-circles around the central cross.[195]

The support trench mentioned in the description was 67th Street trench, this led off from the junction of Dale Street trench in the opposite direction to Blood Alley. The path and entrance to the cemetery retain the geometry of 67th Street, but Hutton's

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[195] CWGC Historical Information, 'Gordon Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

layout for the cemetery, owing to the problems with identifying the exact locations of individual graves, was not so explicit as Cowlishaw's had been for Devonshire Cemetery.

Cowlishaw's architectural treatment of the cemetery, then, not only retained the physical space of the trench that the men of the Devonshires were buried in, it retained the Great War landscape around them. It has frozen the geometries of Mansell Copse permanently in 1916. Even more specifically, it has frozen them on 1st July 1916. Crosse's memorial to the men of Devonshire was not only retained by Cowlishaw it was expanded to permanently memorialise the landscape of 1st July. In the context of Hutton's Gordon Cemetery, this landscape memorial retained both geometric and spatial relationships of the frontline before Mametz on 1st July 1916.

The act of architecturally treating a mass trench grave is not isolated to Devonshire Cemetery. Owl Trench Cemetery is located in the northern battlefields of the Somme. It skirts the boundary between the attack of Von Berg's 56th (London) Division and the 31st Division. The latter division being made up of many of the northern, so–called Pals battalions, that suffered heavy casualties in the fields between the cemetery and the village of Serre.

According to the cemetery historical information Owl Trench was;

> …a German cross-trench before Rossignol Wood, raided by the 4th New Zealand Rifle Brigade on 15 July 1918, and cleared by the 1st Auckland Regiment five days later. The cemetery, however, contains the graves of men who died on 27 February 1917, in an attack on German rearguards by the 31st Division.

> …Row A is a mass grave for 46 soldiers, 43 of whom belonged to the 16th West Yorkshires. [196]

These 16th West Yorkshire burials relate to the attack on 27 February 1917. In a cruel irony of the war some of these men buried here had survived the carnage over the same field less than a year previously.

As stated in the historical information, the original Owl Trench ran from the woodland, known as Rossignol Wood, across the road, bisecting the current cemetery. Much like the decision taken by the IWGC to retain both Devonshire Cemetery and Gordon Cemetery, the Commission also retained Rossignol Wood Cemetery, despite it being just a few hundred yards away from Owl Trench. Whilst both cemeteries reflect the same period of fighting, Rossignol Wood, whilst retaining the 'tommified' name on the map, has no geometric alignment with the battlefield.

However, the geometric alignment between the architecture of Owl Trench cemetery and the battlefield space is intriguing. Noel Rew, the architect responsible for both Owl Trench and Rossignol Wood cemeteries, did not provide any statement of intent within his submission notes as to the alignment of the cemetery. The cemetery is positioned at an irregular angle to the road, again there is nothing in the documentation to suggest that Rew was forced to design it in such a way owing to topographical or geographic factors. However, what this angle has allowed for is the entrance to be on the same axis as the original trench without the requirement for a larger plot.

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[196] CWGC Historical Information, 'Owl Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

A recurring theme in the correspondence between the land acquisition department and the department of works is the necessity to keep the parcels of land to be acquired at a level appropriate to the size of the cemetery. In a letter from 1920 one side of the discussion is highlighted. Major Ingpen of the Land Acquisition department made clear his position regarding the land requirements of some of the architectural designs, stating, "I could tell the Principal Architect that the land is not available, and he must redesign".[197] Ingpen goes on to say that, with specific regard to such a redesign, "…this would be the shortest procedure, and would only cause heartburnings as regards the Architect".[198] As if there were any doubts as to the regard in which Major Ingpen considered the opinion of the architect in the matter of land acquisition later in the same letter he made the following observation in regards to the Commission purchasing extra land beyond the agreed parcel:

> The principle of purchase by the Commission, I presume, cannot be entertained:
>
> (a). It would create precedents which would be difficult to resist in future with regard to land acquisition in general.
> (b). The financial obligations of the Commission with regard to land purchase could not be defined.
> (c). The temptation of the Architect to be extravagant in his demands.[199]

The temptation to be extravagant was a concern for the Land Acquisition Department. Indeed, in another letter dated 27 February 1920, this time in the form of a response from the Director of Works, the fall out from another such exchange is recorded:

> The case of DAINVILLE CEMETERY, I think, will have a salutary effect on the architects, as they have now got instructions to re-design the cemetery in accordance with the land requirements.[200]

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[197] CWGC, WG 549/2 Box1041, Letter from Major Ingpen, 1920.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

The same letter also suggested that the Land Acquisition unit would prefer to have a standardised plot size and responded as such, '(i)t will not be possible to standardise the amount of land required owing to the various shapes and positions of the sites of the cemeteries'.[201]

That there was a tension between the architects and land acquisition officers is palpable in these exchanges. Within such an environment it is unsurprising that architects sought unusual siting choices to ensure that both the institutional principle of keeping men buried as close to where they died as possible and the practicalities of land acquisition were both met.

Rew's oblique entrance allowed for three important things to happen. Firstly, by angling the perimeter walls as he did the parcel of land was kept to a minimum whilst containing all the original graves from within the cemetery. By doing so Rew managed to keep the balance between both principle and practical demands of the design. Secondly, it retained the mass grave in a way that allowed an uncompromised linear aesthetic that was suggestive of the original trench line. Thirdly, it retained geometric alignment with the original Owl Trench, including the point at which the visitor enters the cemetery.

North of the battlefields of the Somme are those IWGC cemeteries that reflect the fighting of April 1917 and beyond around the city of Arras. In a cluster of three

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[200] CWGC, WG 549/1 France - Acquisition of Land. 17 Feb. 1916 - 30 June 1920 – Letter from Director of Works 27 February 1920.
[201] Ibid.

cemeteries that retain aspects of battlefield geometry and nomenclature, is Bootham

Cemetery.

The brief entrance in the IWGC historical information reads;

> Heninel village was captured in a snowstorm on 12 April 1917 by the 56th (London) and 21st Division. The 50th (Northumbrian) Division, advancing from Heninel on the two following days, captured Wancourt Tower.
>
> Bootham Cemetery was named from a trench, which in turn was named from Bootham School in Yorkshire. It was made in April 1917 by the 56th Division Burial Officer.[202]

The Divisional Burial Officer (DBO) – and the higher level Corps Burial Officer

(CBO) - was a post created to ensure the efficient burial of the dead in the course of

battle activities. Whilst at Corps level cemeteries were identified within battle

orders it was the role of the DBO to identify 'suitable sites for cemeteries in or near

'No man's land'. In case of an advance, a site farther forward will become necessary

and should be selected as required'.[203] The role of the DBO and the responsibility of

the Battalion in the burial of its dead is made clear in a set of orders issued in March

1918 by the 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade:

> Battalions are responsible that bodies are brought to these collecting posts, and here taken charge of by Divisional Burial Party. It must be clearly understood that no burials are to be made forward unless conditions warrant it, and in such cases statements must be forwarded stating reasons for such burials.[204]

For Tim Travers, in his study of the factors that led to an allied victory in 1918, these

orders reflect both the efficient nature of the British Army and the qualifying of the

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[202] CWGC Historical Information, 'Bootham Trench Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].
[203] TNA, WO95/935/1, XVII Corps No. G.S.32, 21January 1917, para 11 section B, Burial of the Dead.
[204] LAC, RG9-III-D-3/4869/196, War Diaries – 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade 1 March 1918 -30 April 1918, Appendix I, Appendix B, Burial and Cemeteries.

dead as 'liabilities' in the process of winning a war.[205] In contradistinction to Travers'
interpretation of the DBO and the processes that the DBO managed, the DGRE was
working alongside both Corps and Division to ensure that the 'liability' to the army
was treated as more than a logistical problem to be solved. In addition, the historical
information retained at the CWGC suggests a close working relationship between
both DBO and DGRE. Indeed, it was also the role of the DBO to provide the CBO
with daily reports on burials, which in turn would be passed on to the local Graves
Registration Unit (GRU).[206] Any queries on behalf of the GRU would be dealt with
by the DBO.

The historical information, however, is misleading in the respect that, whilst there
was a trench in the vicinity of the battlefield named Bootham Trench it was not at
the location of the cemetery, nor does it appear on trench maps until after the
attacks of April 1917.[207] There is geometric alignment with another unnamed trench
and this particular alignment captures greater significance in regard to the
involvement of 56th Division – the division of the Burial Officer who established the
cemetery.

In the case of Bootham Cemetery the 56th Division DBO selected a site that
reflected the actions of his division over the period of 12th to 14th April 1917. The
cemetery is geometrically aligned with a trench that was dug by the men of the
Division as part of the consolidation of the area on the evening of 13 April 1917.

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205 Tim Travers, *How the War Was Won: Factors that led to Victory in World War One*
(Routledge, London: 1992), p. 4.
206 Ibid, Appendix B, Para. 5.
207 Bootham Trench appears on HMSO Trench Maps, Bullecourt-S, 4 September 1917,
Bullecourt, 25 April 1918, and Vis-en-Artois, 25 April 1918.

Indeed, the line drawn on the map of operations passes through the site of the memorial.[208]

The naming of the cemetery, the historical information surrounding the cemetery and the alignment of geometries within the wartime and memorial landscapes all capture different layers of memory attached to the architecture. Within these layers of memory is an indication to the important, but little known, process of establishment and naming.

The use of trench burials within the architectural treatment of the cemeteries is the most direct example of the geometries of the battlefield being retained within the architecture. Owing to the IWGC desire to bury men as close to where they fell as possible, these geometries were, in practice, retained from the moment the DBO chose to site the cemetery within a trench.

## 2.1.2 Direct Geometric Relationship Between Trench and Architecture

Trench burial represents the necessity of burying men close to where they fell during a set-piece attack. These sites were organized, though as in the case of the DBO, with a degree of flexibility, in regards to the logistical requirements of the units in the attack. A second variant of direct alignment between the trench lines of the old Western Front and the cemeteries of the IWGC can be found in those cemeteries that were established adjacent to the original trench. Whereas those cemeteries that reflect a trench burial can, by definition, only contain one geometric alignment, this second grouping can retain as many as three separate alignments.

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[208] TNA, WO95/2933/3, Situation Map drawn at 6pm 14 April 1917

These alignments between architecture and trench lines were expressly to be considered as part of the architectural treatment. In his February 1918 report to the IWGC as to the intention of future architectural treatment Reginald Blomfield outlined a number of aspects as to how the cemeteries should be designed, paying particular attention to the role of the Junior Architects in the process. With specific regard to the role of the cemetery architecture in the retaining of the history of both the cemetery and the war, he stated:

> I think that as a general rule, except in extreme cases, this arrangement should as far as possible be preserved even at the cost of the design, because it is part of the history of the cemetery. At Sailly Sur Lys for example, one of the Cemeteries has been formed in an old strong point in an orchard surrounded on three sides by the old trenches. In such a case this characteristic piece of history should be preserved in preference to a formal and symmetrical design.[209]

Two very clear themes emerge from this statement that are important in both the understanding of intent with the geometric alignment of cemeteries that ran adjacent to trench lines, but also more broadly in regards to the question of intent of the varying methods of retaining the battlefield within the architecture of the IWGC. Firstly, that the history of the cemetery and the landscape within which it sits should not simply be considered, but it should be actively used as a design guide. Secondly, that the retaining of this history should outweigh any other aspect of the design. Blomfield's example of the cemetery at Sailly-sur-la-Lys makes clear that the wartime geometries are of far greater importance than any aesthetic requirements of the architect. It is the object of the architectural treatment of cemeteries, according to Blomfield earlier in the same paragraph "to preserve the memory of the dead. The

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[209] CWGC, Add 1/6/1, A Report on the Cemeteries of the British Expeditionary Force, February 1918 by Reginald Blomfield, para 6.

record of the circumstances of their death and burial should be kept steadily in view".[210] The use of the word 'circumstances' in the context of Blomfield's commitment to retaining history, can be interpreted in the sense of broader experience. The IWGC architectural treatment of the cemeteries should, therefore, retain the memory of the dead, the experience of the war and the geometries of the landscape.

In the case of the Sailly-sur-la-Lys example it has not been possible to track down the exact location of this cemetery. However, the remainder of this section will explore a number of cemeteries that use the perimeter walls to capture both geometric and spatial relationships with the former battlefields.

An example used in the exploration of Trench Burial Cemeteries, Bootham Cemetery, also highlighted the problem associated with naming conventions. It is not always clear who titled the cemeteries and when this entitlement took place. Indeed, references, even in the sections of orders relating to cemeteries, refer to the cemeteries in wartime by their trench map co-ordinates. In the papers of I.L. Bawtree a member of the GRU and later an official photographer for the IWGC, there are a number of references to the cemeteries in a far more informal manner. In a series of diary entries throughout September 1917 Bawtree describes navigating his way about the Ypres Salient with reference to 'tommified' places names and by the accepted names of cemeteries. In amongst the journeys to Shrapnel, Hellfire and Salvation Corners Bawtree makes reference to a cemetery just a few hundred yards from Hellfire Corner; China Wall Farm Garden Cemetery. At some point in the

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[210] Ibid.

intervening years the IWGC officially named the cemetery Perth Cemetery (China Wall). The IWGC historical information states;

> The cemetery was begun by French troops in November 1914 (the French graves were removed after the Armistice) and adopted by the 2nd Scottish Rifles in June 1917. It was called Perth (as the predecessors of the 2nd Scottish Rifles were raised in Perth), China Wall (from the communication trench known as the Great Wall of China), or Halfway House Cemetery. The cemetery was used for front line burials until October 1917 when it occupied about half of the present Plot I and contained 130 graves.[211]

The period in which Bawtree attends the cemetery ties in with the titles listed above. Indeed, both Wall of China trench and Halfway House appear on the trench maps of approximately the same period.[212] What is not clear from Bawtree's visits that came towards the end of the period of original burials, is when the Perth aspect of the name had been dropped and the trench nomenclature adopted. The 2nd Scottish Rifles arrived in the vicinity on 18th June 1917 and remained until 24th June 1917, before being moved out of the line and then further north of the Salient.[213] During this time the battalion suffered eight deaths, though the war diary makes no mention of burial location or of naming a cemetery.[214] Owing to the relatively small number of 2nd Scottish Rifles casualties within the cemetery – there were 158 French burials in the original cemetery[215] - and the short space of time the battalion

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[211] CWGC, Historical Information, 'Perth Cemetery (China Wall)' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

[212] HMSO, Trench Map, Zillebeke-S, 10-28NW4&NE3-5A 16, d & 17, c, 1 April 1917.

[213] TNA, WO95/1715/1-2, War Diary 2nd Bn. Scottish Rifles, June 1917.

[214] The 2nd Scottish Rifles War Diary lists 8 deaths in the period, however, the CWGC record has 14 casualties from the battalion buried within Perth Cemetery (China Wall) who were killed in the same period. This may be explained by the high number of wounded that were sustained in the period and who died subsequently. There is also one other member of the battalion buried at a later date in the original cemetery.

[215] Anon, "Perth Cemetery (China Wall)' in *The Great War in Flanders Fields* <http://www.wo1.be/en/db-items/perth-cemetery-china-wall> [accessed 18 July 2016].

was in the line in front of the Wall of China, it is highly likely that this title was never used formally, if at all, during the war. The decision taken by the IWGC, therefore, to make the predominant title of the cemetery Perth suggests that the historical information was specifically gathered to name the permanent cemeteries and that this was likely done post-war.

The architectural treatment of the cemetery is sensitive to the multitudinous connections with the landscape that the variations of naming suggest. The Wall of China trench, from which the cemetery gets its secondary title, is retained in the rear perimeter wall, including the alteration in geometry. Given the name of

*Fig. 3 – Perth Cemetery (China Wall) Plan (CWGC Archive)*

the cemetery a connection between architecture and landscape on some level was to be expected. However, the north-west and south-east perimeter walls also retain aspects of the trench system geometry. The north-western wall follows the line of another communication trench. The original trench shown on a 1918 trench map ran parallel with the Grange Road trench. The junction at which the north-western and
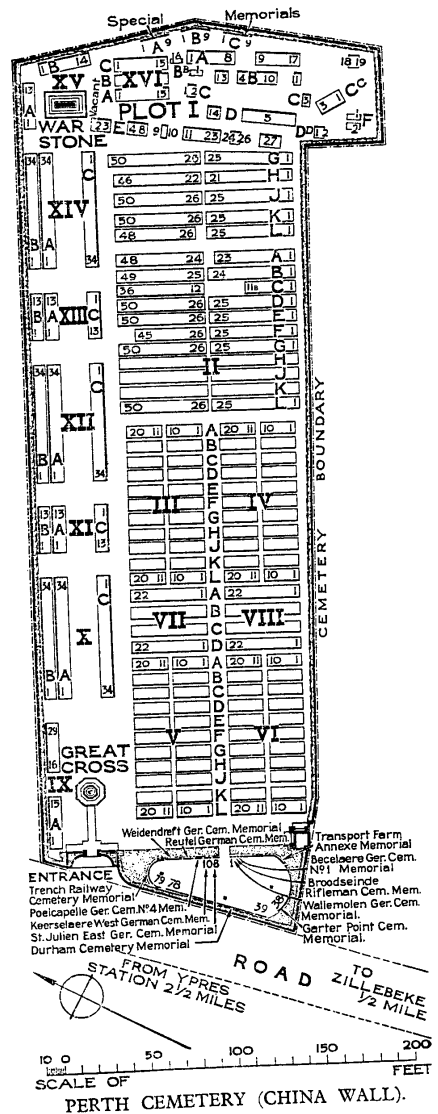
north-eastern perimeter walls meet was also the junction of the unnamed communication trench and the Wall of China trench. (Fig.3)

Most interesting of the geometric alignments is that of the rear perimeter wall and the south-eastern wall. The south-eastern wall extends from the road parallel with the north-western wall, until the section of the cemetery known as Plot I. Plot I was the original cemetery and at this point a small paddock area protrudes from the main south-eastern wall. The wall dog-legs out before maintaining the south-easterly direction; this detail enables two aspects of battlefield geometry to be retained. Firstly, the original lines of the battle field cemetery. Secondly, the protrusion ensures that the final section of the south-east wall retains the geometric alignment of Oxford Street trench. This alignment - which would have been lost but for the small protruding paddock in the east corner of the cemetery - retains a connection with Halfway House; a position on the trench map 300 yards along Oxford Street trench.

At Perth Cemetery (China Wall) the architects, Lutyens and Truelove, carried out the intentions laid out by Blomfield in his report. In fact, the location of Perth Cemetery provided an almost direct replica of the example cited by Blomfield, Sailly Sur Lys; a battlefield cemetery surrounded on three sides by trenches. The layout of the cemetery, which was greatly extended after the war, was planned in such a way so as to encompass the three trench lines into the geometry of the cemetery. The plan of Perth Cemetery perfectly encapsulates Blomfield's principle of history before design; the vast majority of the cemetery is laid-out to ensure the geometry of the battlefield is retained.

Gordon Dump Cemetery is situated on the Somme. Moreover, it is the closest IWGC cemetery to the Lochnagar Crater, one of the mines exploded on the morning of 1st July 1916. The historical information held by the CWGC, as with Perth Cemetery, shows a variation of wartime names;

> Plot I of the Cemetery was made by fighting units after 10 July 1916 and closed in September when it contained the graves of 95 soldiers, mainly Australian. It was called variously Gordon (or Gordon's) Dump Cemetery or Sausage Valley Cemetery, from the name given to the broad, shallow valley that runs down from it to Becourt. The remainder of the cemetery was formed after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the 1916 battlefields immediately surrounding the cemetery.[216]

The cemetery is nominally authored by Sir Herbert Baker, with the assistance of A. J. S. Hutton. Arthur Hutton had trained as an architect at the Glasgow School of Art under the renowned Eugene Bourdon, before completing his training in both private and public practice.[217] On the morning of 1st July 1916, when many of the men buried in Gordon Dump fell, just ten kilometres away in Hardecourt the British Army attacked alongside the French. Sometime on that morning Hutton's teacher and mentor, Bourdon, was killed. Kenyon's assertion that "those who have themselves served, and whose comrades lie in these cemeteries, are best qualified to express the sentiment which we desire the cemeteries to convey" is, in this instance of direct connection between architecture and war experience, never more true.[218]

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[216] CWGC Historical Information, 'Gordon Dump Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[217] Anon. 'Captain A. J. S. Hutton' in *Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980, Architect Biography Report* <http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=203484> [Accessed 19 July 2016].
[218] Kenyon, *War Graves*, p. 20.

As with Perth Cemetery, the trench map does not list a Gordon or Gordon's Dump, though Sausage Valley is clearly marked on all of the Ovillers maps of every period. There is also a discrepancy in the original plan and the current access to the cemetery. The plan shows the front to face onto what was known as Sausage Valley on the trench maps, there originally being a road that went from La Boisselle to Contalmaison passing through the valley. However, the road no longer exists and it is unclear at what point this occurred. Photographs of Gordon Dump taken interwar but post architectural treatment are inconclusive as to whether the layout as intended was ever achieved.[219]

The original layout is also important in terms of the geometric and spatial relationship between the architecturally treated cemetery and the battlefield landscape. The original cemetery was located in Plot I of the cemetery. This plot was originally at the rear of the cemetery, though is now the point at which visitors access the cemetery from the existing La Boisselle to Contalmaison road. The original layout meant that visitors passed through the perimeter wall that faced onto Sausage Valley and into the cemetery space. The south-east (Sausage Valley) and south-west walls both follow the geometry of the original trench lines. Indeed, the north-east wall is laid out so as to mirror the angle created by the junction of the two unnamed trenches that form the south-east and south-west walls. The original layout ensured that visitors passed from Sausage Valley, through the trench lines and into the cemetery space, as it would have been to access the original Gordon Dump cemetery.

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[219] Sidney Hurst, *The Silent Cities* (London: Methuen, 1929), p. 274.

Not far away from Gordon Dump, near to the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel is Knightsbridge Cemetery. This cemetery, even though it is located within a short walk from one of the most visited spots on the former battlefields, now sits in isolation, surrounded by established agricultural land and is accessed by a rarely used track from the village of Martinsart:
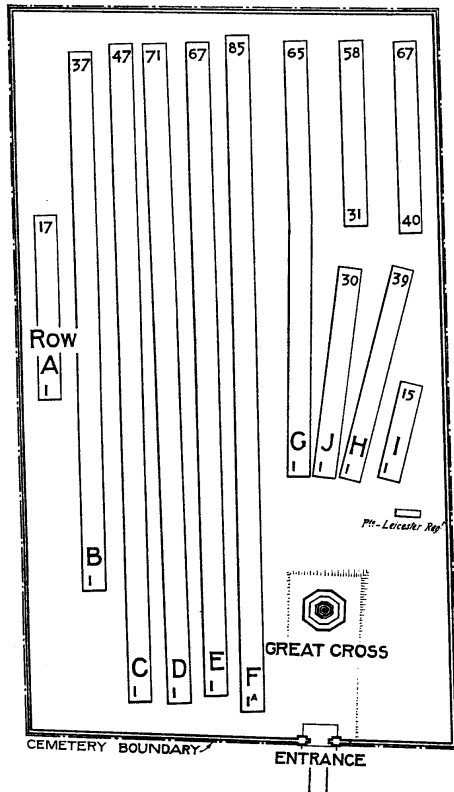


The cemetery, which is named from a communication trench, was begun at the outset of the Battle of the Somme in 1916. It was used by units fighting on that front until the German withdrawal in February 1917 and was used again by fighting units from the end of March to July 1918, when the German advance brought the front line back to the Ancre. After the Armistice, burials in Rows G, H and J were added when graves were brought in from isolated positions on the battlefields of 1916 and 1918 round Mesnil.[220]

*Fig. 4 – Knightsbridge Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

Knightsbridge Cemetery was designed by Wilfrid Von Berg, under the direction of Reginald Blomfield. Given Blomfield's desire that each design should place the history of a given site above any other aspect, it is unsurprising that Knightsbridge Cemetery contains a geometric alignment with the trench it is named after. In this case the alignment is to a single wall, the rear or south-west wall. (Fig. 4) Knightsbridge Barrack Trench, as it is listed on the trench maps, passed along the line of the cemetery perimeter wall on its way up to Hyde

[220] CWGC Historical Information, 'Knightsbridge Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

Park Corner and Piccadilly, the latter of which is now the approximate entrance to the Newfoundland Memorial Park. (Fig. 5)

Blomfield's assertion that memory of circumstance should be held within the architecture of the cemeteries is particularly pertinent at Knightsbridge. The original trench was one of the routes up to the front line for the assault of 1 July 1916, indeed, the cemetery contains the burials of some 1st July casualties. The location and geometric alignment of the cemetery provide a unique aspect on the approach to the frontline that, at the time
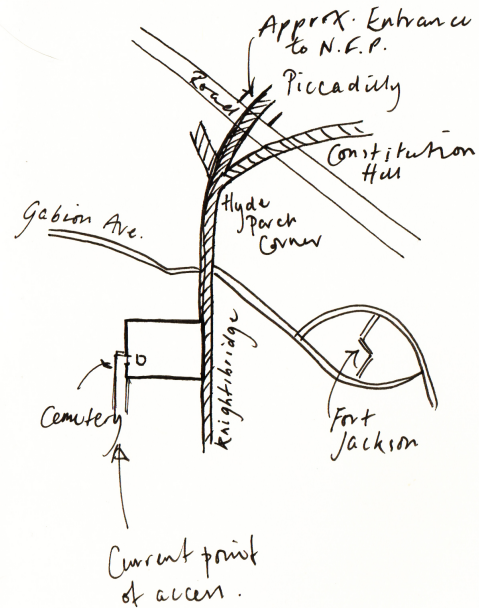


*Fig. 5 – Knightsbridge Cemetery + Trench Lines Sketch*

of its design, would have influenced the decision to retain the cemetery. The memorial landscape of the area is now dominated by the Newfoundland Memorial Park, the establishment of which will be explored further in the final chapter of this thesis. The land for the park was originally purchased in 1921, this, according to Paul Gough's study of the historical interpretation of the park, was the cause of heated exchanges between the IWGC and the respective Foreign Offices. [221] The cemeteries that sit within the boundaries of the park, Hawthorn Ridge No. 1 and Hunter's Cemetery, were purchased and designed prior to the establishment of a memorial park. The issue that arose was regarding access in perpetuity to the IWGC sites. However, what this argument best demonstrates is that the IWGC had no

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[221] Paul Gough, 'Contested memories: contested site: Newfoundland and its unique heritage on the Western Front.' *The Round Table* 96, no. 393 (2007), pp. 693-705.

inkling that a substantial portion of the old frontline was going to be retained. The principle of the IWGC to ensure that both history and circumstance were retained is made clear in the original siting choices, and in the case of Knightsbridge the geometric alignment. The intent of this principle is, however, somewhat lost by the literal retention of the battlefield landscape.

In Perth Cemetery, Gordon Dump and Knightsbridge, there is evidence of the Junior Architects taking a consistent design approach, specifically in that of retaining the history of each individual site. The intent of the approach is not one limited by the overarching design principles laid out by Kenyon and Lutyens, but rather it is one that shows both flexibility and a considered response to each site. The outcome is an architectural response that allows for the designer to react to local conditions, one that allows the historic narrative of the site to take preference over any other design consideration.

## 2.1.3 Geometric Alignment Between Trench Lines and Cemetery Access

In the previous two examples of how the architectural treatment of cemeteries aligns with the trench lines of the former battlefields, the physical architecture of the cemetery has been considered. This section will show how the architectural treatment also used access paths and points of access within the perimeter wall to retain geometric alignment with the battlefield landscape.

The role of paths and routes in expressing the historical narrative within the IWGC approach to place was captured by Lieutenant Colonel Cart De Lafontaine in a diary

entry regarding a churchyard cemetery. De Lafontaine was the chief land acquisition negotiator for the IWGC and kept fastidious diaries of his work with the IWGC throughout the early to mid 1920s. His diary entry regarding a discussion with the town secretary of Le Couture captures a broader sensibility to the general approach to conservation of both Blomfield's 'circumstances' and historic landscapes:

> Called at Le Couture & saw Secretaire de la Mairie. He said that there were several – he did not know how many – British officers & men buried in the N.W. corner of the churchyard. These bodies (or remains) would have to be exhumed in the near future & removed to the new C.C. because the Ports et Chaussees (Voirie) intended to alter the line of the existing road which would mean that all the northern part of the Churchyd. would cease to exist. I said I thought it was much to be regretted that this manic for straight roads on the part of the Voirie was allowed to pass without protest as the line of the existing road had a history and character which was certainly worth retaining.[222]

Ultimately, the road straightening occurred and the burials were moved to the Pont-du-Hem Military Cemetery in La Gorgue. The original cemetery contained men of 1st Battery, Royal Field Artillery, all of whom were killed in October 1914. The burial of these 1914 soldiers with the local churchyard perfectly encapsulates both history that La Fontaine referred to and captures the essence of Blomfield's 'circumstance'. Other such churchyard cemeteries, such as that at Zillebeke, were retained for the very reason that they capture both the personal history of those buried, but also epitomised the nature of the war in the 1914. Jerry Murland, in his study of the aristocrats buried in the Zillebeke Churchyard Cemetery said of it that;

> As with all such cemeteries the location and the manner in which they are laid out can often provide the historian with clues offering some

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[222] CWGC, Add 1/7/1, Diaries of Lt. Col. Cart De Lafontaine, 6 July - 15 December 1920, pp. 92-93.

insight into the circumstances that led to a particular locality being used.[223]

It is interesting to note that Murland falls upon the very word Blomfield had sought to retain within the architectural treatment; circumstance. Murland also points out the ubiquity of the cemetery in the subsequent war experience of those who served in the area, citing the war poet, and later literary advisor to the Commission, Edmund Blunden, who recalled of passing through Zillebeke that "one's eyes managed to register nevertheless a number of wooden crosses".[224] The full quote captures the role of the cemetery as a navigation point for moving through the sector:

> One turned from the lake at Hallebast Corner, easily designated Hellblast…a short ditch led to Zillebeke church…ruined brickwork hugged the ground, and among it some headquarters were answering questions…The church tower was not yet altogether down, but one lost its architectural distinctions in one's quick movement over the road, under German observation; one's eye managed to register nevertheless a number of wooden crosses. From that point two trenches went on to the firing line…Vince Street, the north one…led to the brutalized little wood known to mournful history as Maple Copse; and so did the other trench from the south, Zillebeke Street…[225]

That these 1914 cemeteries were already viewed with a distinct importance by the IWGC is also evident in the design submission documents. Reginald Truelove, in his designs for Guards Grave noted;

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[223] Jerry Murland, Aristocrats Go to War: Uncovering the Zillebeke Churchyard Cemetery (Pen and Sword, Barnsley: 2010), p. 15.
[224] Edmund Blunden, *Undertones of War* (London: R. Cobden-Sanderson Ltd, 1928), p. 184.
[225] Ibid, pp.183-184.

> This historical little cemetery contains for the most part officers and men of the Regiment of Guards killed in Villers Cotterets forest during the Retreat from Mons in 1914.[226]

In the case of La Couture churchyard, the road that La Fontaine laments the loss of shaped both the geometries of the original burial place and also the final paths these men and others passed along during the autumn of 1914.

Contalmaison is a small village within the Somme department. The village was the scene of bitter fighting throughout the early phases of the July 1916 battle and plays a significant role within the folklore of the experience of both the Battle of the Somme and the Great War at large. The 1920 Michelin guide to the area noted that 'Contalmaison was important, on account of its dominating position at the junction of several roads'.[227] For veterans who had fought over the village, Contalmaison dominated a position at the junction of their memories and experiences. Sir George McCrae, the founder and Commanding Officer of one of the Edinburgh 'Pal's battalions that attacked Contalmaison on 1 July 1916, felt keenly the place of Contalmaison in both the individual and the collective battalion memories. In a 1926 letter to a fellow veteran, regarding the potential erection of a memorial cairn to the battalion, McCrae highlighted the importance of place in both memory and remembrance of the war:

> I am told the public wishes to forget the War, but before they cast it fully from their minds, let them first be informed what took place near that shattered village whose name means so much to us…[228]

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[226] CWGC, ADD 1/6/2, Submission Paperwork, Guards Grave Villers Cotterets Forest, 16 October 1922.
[227] Anon., *The Somme Volume 1: The First Battle of the Somme (1916-1917)* (Clermont-Ferrand: Michelin and Cie, 1919), p. 65.
[228] Quoted in Jack Alexander, *McCrae's Battalion* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2003), p. 272.
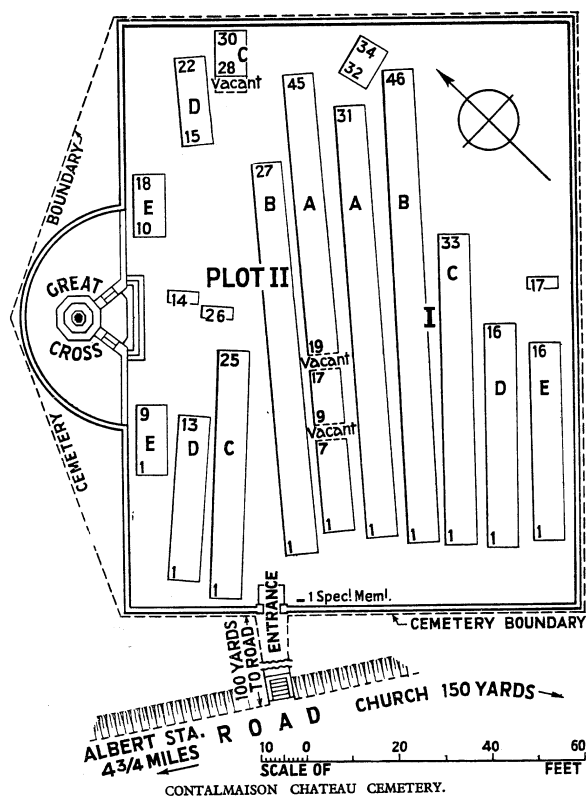
*Fig. 6 – Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

As a result of the fighting, several cemeteries were established in the area. However, within the village only one had been created. The cemetery files of the war graves commission record that;

The cemetery was begun by fighting units on the evening of the 14th July, 1916, and used from September, 1916 to March, 1917 by Field Ambulances. A few burials were made in Plot I, Rows B and C, in August and September, 1918. Graves were added after the Armistice by concentrations from the battlefields of the Somme and the Ancre. 18 German graves and one French were removed to other burial grounds.[229]

In his guide to the Somme battlefields, Martin Middlebrook states that 47 of the burials account for those concentrated, but also remarked that despite these additions the cemetery "retains its 'battlefield' character".[230] (Fig. 6) The cemetery was begun in the grounds of the chateau, which had been destroyed during the war, and, as such, caused a point of contention between the landowner, local commune and IWGC. Unfortunately, much of the exchange between the belligerents has been lost. However, a small excerpt within a letter from Lieutenant Colonel F.R. Durham, the Director of Works for the IWGC, makes clear the commission's position on the cemetery. The letter forms a response

[229] CWGC Historical Information, 'Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[230] Martin Middlebrook, *The Somme Battlefields* (London: Viking, 1991), p. 126.

in a report by Sir Frederic Kenyon on the status of land acquisition and cemetery construction, Colonel Durham stated, in regard to Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery that the "owner's desire to remove this should be resisted".[231] The exact detail of the owners 'desire' is not explicit, nor is the detail of the IWGC's commitment to retain the cemetery in-situ. However, both the Blomfield Report of February 1918 and the Kenyon Report, emphasise the importance of historical narrative being retained within the architectural treatment of the cemeteries.
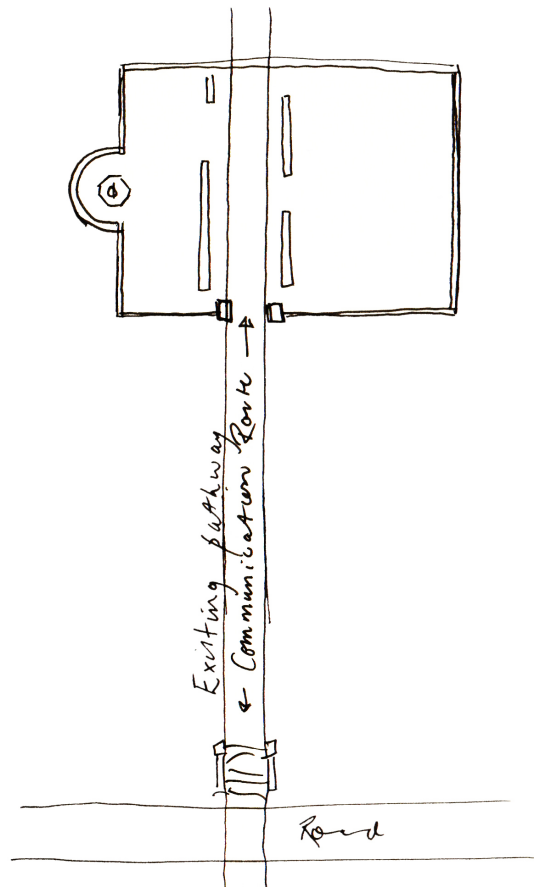


*Fig. 7 – Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery + Trench Line Sketch*

An analysis of Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery reveals a clear alignment between the geometries of the battlefield and memorial landscapes. In the previous sections that alignment has been evident in the physical architecture of the cemeteries, in the built aspects of the treatment. At Contalmaison Chateau the alignment, whilst evident within the built aspects of the design, most notably in the positioning of the gateway, the starkest alignment is found in the access path. (Fig. 7) The cemetery is located in a position set back from the road. Post-war photographs with the Michelin

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[231] CWGC, ADD 1/3/9 CWGC Works Department and Maintenance.

guide show the proximity of the cemetery to the ruined chateau. To retain the cemetery in the original location required that the chateau could not be rebuilt in the same location and that a route of access would be required. It is likely that the rebuilding of the chateau was the cause for the owner's dissatisfaction with the IWGC. The requirement for an access path, then, is likely the defining point as to why the IWGC wished to retain this cemetery. The pathway from the road to the cemetery follows the exact route of the original communication trench.

The cemeteries of the Somme sector predominantly cover the fighting that took place between July 1916 and November 1916 and then the second battle from August 1918 until the end of the war. Whilst there were casualties between these two periods, many of the cemeteries in the area were established as a result of the battles. Berles Position Military Cemetery (Fig. 8) is located in the northern sector of the Somme battlefield. The CWGC historical information relating to the site states;

> Berles Position Military Cemetery was begun by the 46th (North Midland) Division in July, 1916, and used (largely by the same Division) until February, 1917. It lies in a long dip; and it was known also as The Ravine Cemetery and as Nobs Walk Cemetery.[232]

According to the Ransart South trench map of 19 September 1916, the cemetery was established on a section of British trench named Neverending Street, that joined onto Nobbs Walk.[233] The name Berles Position did not appear on trench maps, but the Blairville 25 July 1918 trench map highlights a defensive system of trenches named Berles Loop, Berles Trench and Berles Support immediately to the rear of

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[232] CWGC Historical Information, 'Berles Position Military Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[233] HMSO, Trench Map, Ransart 51c –SE – 3&4 Edition 3, 19 September 1916.

CEMETERY  BOUNDARY

A
II                                        I

B
I2                                        I

C
I5                                        I

D
I4                                        I

GREAT CROSS

ENTRANCE

IO  5  O       IO      20
SCALE OF            FEET
PATH FROM MONCHY-AU-BOIS —
BERLES-AU-BOIS  ROAD  I7O YARD.

BERLES POSITION MILITARY CEMETERY.
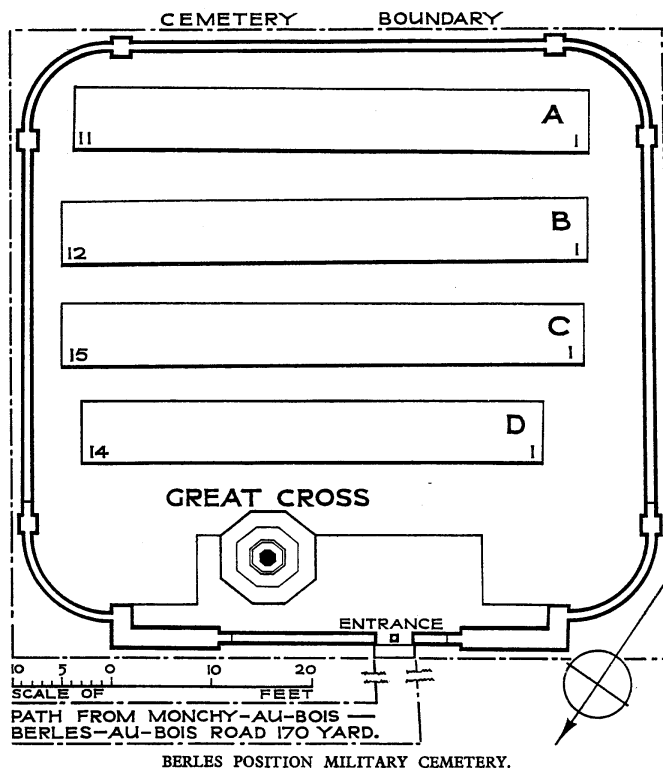
*Fig. 8 – Berles Position Military Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

the cemetery location.[234] It is likely, then, that this name derives from a forward observation point for the remainder of the trench network in this area. The naming of Berles Position Military Cemetery of is of particular importance in this instance as it does not feature on the trench maps, nor does Chasseaud make reference to any such location.

The decision by the IWGC to name the cemetery as such has ensured that part of the language of the battlefield in that area has been retained that would otherwise have been lost.

The land for Berles Position cemetery was agreed as early as March 1919, which suggests a wartime verbal agreement had been made.[235] This type of agreement was not uncommon and a reference to just such an historical agreement is made in the same IWGC land acquisition file in regards to Neuville s/Montreuil Military Cemetery. It is, however, not as common to find small battlefield cemeteries with such an agreement. Of the 57 cemeteries with agreed land acquisition that appear on the same sheet as Berles Position only 5 can be considered to be small battlefield

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[234] HMSO, Trench Map, Blaireville 51c – SE – 4 Edition 3, 25 July 1918.
[235] CWGC, WG 549/1 France - Acquisition of Land. 17 Feb. 1916 - 30 June 1920.

cemeteries. The majority are either large cemeteries, such as at Etaples, communal extension with churchyards, civilian cemeteries or are the design prototype cemeteries of the IWGC. The topography of the landscape within which Berles Position is located perhaps lent itself to a speedy agreement, it being at the base of a large verge and unlikely to have been much of an obstacle to agriculture or redevelopment.

The cemetery is positioned alongside the road between the villages of Berles-au-Bois and Monchy-au-Bois. However, rather than using a direct line from the road across to the cemetery, the path takes a different and, more importantly, longer route. Longer is an important consideration in the light of the previous
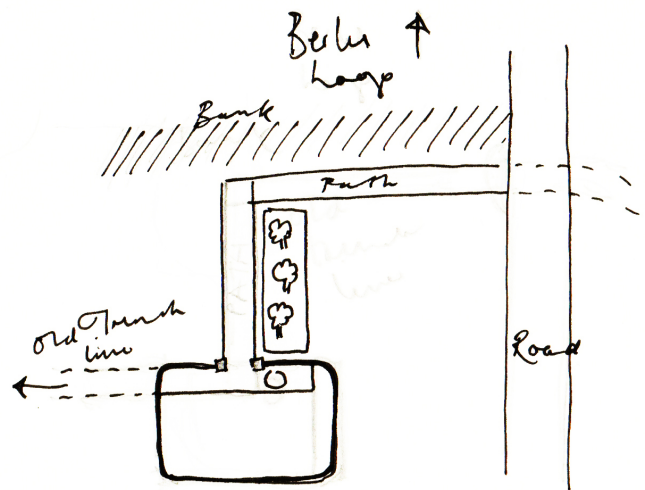


*Fig. 9 – Berles Position Military Cemetery + Trench Lines Sketch*

statements on land acquisition. The architecture of the cemetery, in the entrance way and the perimeter wall, retains a spatial relationship with Neverending Trench. The entrance to the cemetery and the adjacent boundary wall also retain the geometry of the dogtooth. This overlapping of spaces links the visitor with the battlefield, moreover, it links them with the original battlefield cemetery. The original titles reflect the battlefield at the point at which the cemetery was established. The IWGC title relates to a later phase of warfare where both Nobbs Walk and Neverending Trench have disappeared from the trench maps.

Indeed, not only does the entrance way to the cemetery capture the geometry, the entire access path runs along the line of the original path of Neverending Trench. From the road to the cemetery entrance the visitor passes through the space using the geometries of the 1916 battlefield. (Fig. 9) This sense of connection with the experience of the Great War battlefield is heightened by the escarpment that runs along the northern edge of the path. Additional seasonal effects on the landscape, such as mid-summer, when the surrounding crop and the flanking covert are in full bloom, serve to create a similar dislocation from the landscape as experienced by the soldiers using the original trench. One final aspect of geometric alignment comes at the point that the access path meets the road; this being the junction of Neverending Trench and Nobbs Walk. Berles Position Cemetery captures many aspects of geometric and spatial alignment that make up this study. In addition, the naming of the cemetery means that whilst the geometries retained ensure that the 1916 origins of the cemetery remain another aspect of the wartime landscape is retained in the name. Berles Position does not simply capture a snap shot of the Great War landscape at a moment of its history; it captures a window onto subsequent phases of both landscape and British military defensive doctrine.

The nature of the cemeteries enabled the architects to design multiple ways of retaining the memory of the place within the built and landscape architecture of the treatment. Berles Position Cemetery reflects an aspect of the multi-faceted design approach. This feature is common in many of the cemeteries this study has used, the principal method of geometric alignment coming to define into which grouping the cemetery is placed. However, there are some cemeteries that do not so readily fit in

one category or another, such as New Munich Trench Cemetery a little further south on the Somme battlefield.

The historical information regarding the establishment of the cemetery is scant;

> Munich Trench was occupied by the 51st (Highland) Division on the 15th November 1916; New Munich Trench was dug on the previous night by the 2/2nd Highland Field Company and a company of the 8th Royal Scots, and lengthened by the 8th Devons in December.
>
> The cemetery was made by the V Corps in the spring of 1917, when their units cleared the battlefield, and it was known also as V Corps Cemetery No.25.[236]

The establishment of the cemetery at a later date through the act of battlefield clearance crystalised the historical connection between the cemetery and the specific actions that took place in the landscape between 14th and 15th November 1916. The 8th Royal Scots war diary entry for the period makes mention of the establishment and extension to the existing trench network "to be called New Munich Trench".[237] This new trench was to form the 'jumping off' point for the attack by the 51st Division. Within the divisional after action report is included a section relating to the establishment of the trench system, it states that;

> Every trench should be notice boarded. The scheme of naming should be got out at the earliest possible moment and not altered.[238]

The decision by the IWGC to retain this name not only ensured this order was carried out in perpetuity; it established a memorial both to those who fell and to the

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[236] CWGC Historical Information, 'New Munich Trench Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[237] TNA, WO95/2857/1, 8/Royal Scots (Pioneers) War Diary 12-16 November 1916.
[238] TNA, WO95/2845/3, CRE Report on Recent Operations, 22 November 1916, p. 4.

landscape created specifically for the actions of mid-November 1916. The trench, then, plays a defining part in the narrative of the cemetery. Unlike in the Trench Burial Cemeteries looked at in Section i, New Munich Trench Cemetery does not reflect a burial of bodies into an open trench, rather the naming is entirely used to retain the geographical location of the trench. The nuance of this layering of memory - the place, battle history, the landscape and the dead - are all captured in the architectural treatment of the cemetery. As referred to previously, New Munich Trench British Cemetery could be used to explore a number of methods of memory retention, however it is Cowlishaw's use of the access that encapsulates a balance between these layers of memory.

William Henry Cowlishaw was one of the few Junior Architects of the Commission who had any form of established architectural design portfolio prior to the outbreak of war. During the war Cowlishaw had served alongside fellow architects Charles Holden and Lionel Pearson in the Friends' Ambulance Unit. Upon Holden's appointment as Senior Architect in France to the Commission, Cowlishaw also joined the Architectural Department. Throughout the establishing years of the architectural works of the Commission Cowlishaw worked as Junior Architect to Holden. Indeed, this pairing gradually softened Holden's austere, elemental architectural language as seen at Corbie and Wimereux, to a more balanced British variation of Modernism.[239] During this partnership Cowlishaw was exposed to Holden's desire to create an elemental architectural response to the Great War. As both Karol and Hanson have noted, Holden was drawn to ancient architecture. His

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[239] Tim Godden, *Refining a Style; Charles Holden, the Imperial War Graves Commission, and the birth of British Modern* Unpublished PGCert Dissertation (Birkbeck, University of London, 2012).

early works at Wimereux and Bolougne, both of which Cowlishaw assisted on, were heavily influenced by the massing and battered block work of ancient Egyptian temples.

That the idea of the Egyptian temple had already been considered in the context of the IWGC work, and that Cowlishaw had been exposed to it, is evident in his design for New Munich Trench Cemetery.
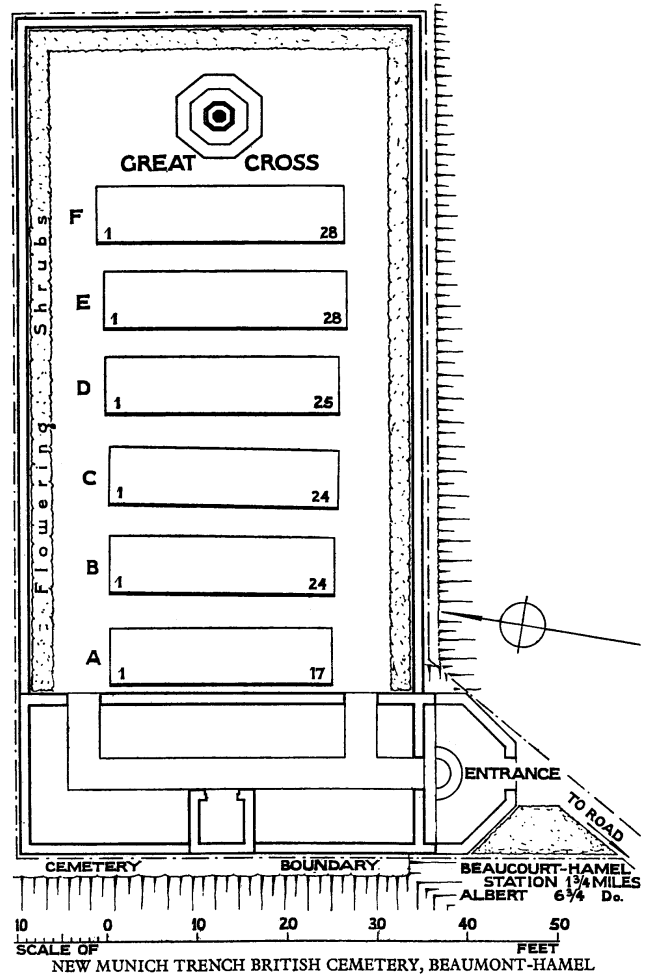


*Fig. 10 – New Munich Trench British Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

The cemetery is situated just off a small farm track, as per the guidelines circulated by Fabian Ware's Red Cross Unit to all divisions. However, whilst the cemetery is sited next to a track, Cowlishaw chose to make the entrance point to the cemetery at the opposing end, that furthest from the road. It is this decision that exposes an aspect of the ancient Egyptian influence. Cowlishaw creates three distinct architectural spaces, all codependent and all designed as a preparation for the next space. (Fig. 10) This hierarchy of transitional spaces was a common theme in Egyptian temple construction, to prepare the visitor for the central space.

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The three spaces of Cowlishaw's New Munich Trench design allow for Yi-Fu Tuan's idea that the "mind discerns geometric designs and principles of spatial organization". [240] In turn that "human beings not only discern geometric patterns…they also try to embody their feelings, images and thoughts in tangible material".[241] In regard to Tuan, this infers that the visitor to the cemetery interprets three distinct spaces with three distinct purposes. The three spaces are the entrance, courtyard and cemetery.

The entrance space is made up of a white stone floor and surrounded by a low rubble brick wall. This change in texture and the angular lines created by the wall remove the visitor from the generic agricultural space and establish the idea of distinct space. Removed from one space, there is still an otherness to the spaces beyond, too. As Tuan highlights, this transitional space is identifiable in feeling and image, and inevitably in thought, too. To move into the courtyard one ascends a short flight of three white capped, semi-circular steps and passes through a gated entrance way. The surrounding wall, also of rubble brick and capped with white stone, is much higher; the visitor can still view the landscape beyond, but the sense of enclosure is much greater. Additionally, the path is starkly defined with white block work framing small, grassed areas. These paths were not uncommon in early IWGC designs. Indeed, Holden's Forceville Cemetery, one of the prototype cemeteries, included stone walkways, and the public facing version of Kenyon's report, the *Graves of the Fallen* pamphlet, showed artist's impressions of cemeteries

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[240] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota: 1977), p. 16.
[241] Ibid, p. 17.

that included such details.[242] However, many form the axis of a cemetery upon which the Cross of Sacrifice is placed, rather than an entranceway or circulation device. To pass into the cemetery section of the design there are two un-gated openings in the interior wall, the stone path leading through both. The stone path, however, stops at the cemetery edge of the interior wall.

Throughout the IWGC architecture white Portland stone or light coloured concrete were used as both a main material and to highlight changes in space. Contemporaneously to the designing and building of the IWGC cemeteries, Donald A. MacKenzie's study of the symbolism of colour made several references to the perceived purity of white in ancient civilizations, "white is perfect, being exempted from stain, sorrow and exhaustion".[243] More recently, Alexandra Harris has observed the connection between interwar society and the whiteness of Modernist architecture, noting, "after the Great War, there was the corrosive dirt of the trenches to be washed away".[244] In the vast majority of the early cemeteries the starkness of architecture, in detailing and in material, is suggestive of precisely this catharses of war through architecture. In New Munich Trench Cemetery, the white stonework is used to establish the 'sacred space'; the white-capped perimeter walls sharply distinguish field from cemetery, upon entering the cemetery the ground changes from track and grass to white stone. Inside the Cross of Sacrifice and grave markers are white Portland stone, the latter being the ultimate signifier of sanctity.

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[242] Kipling, *Graves of the Fallen*, pp. 13-14 – For other examples of stone paths in IWGC cemeteries see Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension, Corbie, France (Holden & Cowlishaw); Strand Cemetery, Ploegsteert, Belgium (Holden & Cowlishaw); and Guards Cemetery, Lesbouefs, France (Baker & Truelove).
[243] Donald A. MacKenzie, "Colour Symbolism." *Folklore* 33, no. 2 (1922), pp. 136-69.
[244] Harris, *Romantic Moderns*, p. 16.

The stone path that leads from the entrance space to the cemetery is also white. This can be interpreted in a number of ways, practically it is a way of managing footfall, and metaphorically it acts like a mediaeval labyrinth, guiding the visitor to the holy space. Whilst both of these interpretations are borne out in the architectural evidence they still do not explain the existence of the courtyard space. There is no practical reason for it to be there, an entrance gateway might just have easily have been set into the perimeter wall surrounding the cemetery space. It is the combination of the white path, or more specifically the location of the path, and the inclusion of a seemingly unwarranted architectural space that offer a compelling case for Cowlishaw's intent to include battlefield geometry within the design.

Using the Beaumont trench map of mid-February 1917, the map closest aligned to the establishment of the cemetery, the geometry of the original New Munich Trench runs precisely through the entrance gateway, using the same geometry of the stone path in the courtyard.[245] At Perth Cemetery (China Wall) near Ypres the architect, John Truelove, had used a similar extension to the cemetery to ensure geometric alignment with the battlefield, though this extension had at least included a single grave. At New Munich Trench Cemetery there is no such requirement to ensure an outlying grave is included within the plan. Cowlishaw's decision to create a secondary space to the cemetery has three important roles in retaining the memory of the landscape and the war experience. Firstly, it maintains the spatial relationship between the trench and the cemetery. Given the consideration put to the placement and the naming of the cemetery in 1917 it is clear that this relationship was important to retain. Secondly, it creates, in effect, a memorial to the battle exploits

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[245] HMSO, Trench Map, Beaumont, 10-57DSE 1&2 – 4A – Q,6,D, 17 February 1917.

of the 51st (Highland) Division. Finally, it retains the geometry of the battlefield that both soldier and visitor were and are required to follow to visit the cemetery.

## 2.1.4 Trench Motif: Memory of Experience in Cemetery Architecture

The first section of this chapter explored the geometric relationship between the cemetery architecture of the IWGC and the battlefield landscapes codified within the official trench maps. This section will look at how the architecture of the IWGC cemeteries includes motifs of trench experience. Specifically, this section will show how the cemetery designs, both the physical and landscape architecture, can be interpreted as a representation of the shapes and experiences of trench warfare. As with the previous section it will consider the aspect of intent on behalf of the architects.

The reason for the persistence of the trench within our collective memory as a visual trope of the battlefield is suggested in Tuan's broader discussion of the role of place in how we perceive space:

> Place is a type of object. Places and objects define space, giving it geometric personality…the triangle is first a 'space', a blurred image. Recognizing the triangle requires the prior identification of corners – that is, places.[246]

Placed upon the former battlefields of the old Western Front, the geometric personality of the battlefields is defined by the trenches hewn into the landscape. These distinct places, in turn, define that other place retained in our communal mind

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[246] Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 17.

map; no man's land. To paraphrase Tuan, recognizing the battlefield requires the prior identification of trenches. By the time the cemeteries of the IWGC were being built, however, the trenches of the battlefield were disappearing, if they had not disappeared already. This fundamental change in the landscape meant that for the architecture to follow Blomfield's guidance and capture something of the circumstance, of both those who died and those who lived, the cemeteries must also reflect aspects of the experience. That the IWGC project was the mode for encapsulating the geometries and associated experiences of the battlefield landscape is best reflected in the memoir of an officer who had served during the war, Guy Chapman, who recalled his time in the trenches as his "architectural memories".[247]

Santanu Das, in his exploration of touch and intimacy in the literature of the Great War argued that "sensuous awareness of the surrounding world marks the experience of the trenches".[248] For Tuan, too, "an object or place achieves concrete reality when our experience of it is total, that is, through all the senses as well as with active and reflective mind".[249] This requirement for the senses to be engaged to understand both the experience and place will be explored in the architecture of the IWGC cemeteries.

As with many of the locations of the IWGC cemeteries Grand-Seraucourt British Cemetery is in a secluded, rural setting. Unlike the other cemeteries looked at so far in this study, Grand-Seraucourt was established after the war in 1920, and remained

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[247] Guy Chapman, *A Passionate Prodigality* (Buchan & Enright, London: 1985 [Ivor Nicholson & Watson: 1933]), p. 41.
[248] Santanu Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 74.
[249] Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 18.

open until 1926.[250] The cemetery is positioned not far from the junction of a track to a minor road, which, in turn, runs along the south-eastern corner of the cemetery at a similar elevation. The track slopes away from the junction to leave a considerable bank from road level to the level of the cemetery. The architect, Charles Holden chose the track from which to position the entrance. This combination of the site and Holden's decision to orientate the cemetery as he did offers an opportunity to investigate the architecture in phenomenological terms.

The ability of architecture to represent landscape, in particular the trench systems of the old Western Front, appears in Christopher Moore's exploration of his relative's experience of the Great War. Moore uses the shared toponymy of the urban space and the battlefield to evoke the places on the Western Front:

> From the Aldwych, I head for the River Thames, cutting down through the cobbled communication trench of Savoy Hill to the support line of Embankment Gardens…[251]

Likewise, the narrator in Richard Aldington's semi-autobiographical *Death of a Hero* describes a scene where the novel's main character and a friend are passing through London streets, the language conflating street scene and the same sensorial conditions and experiences of the trenches:

> We walk up Church Street. Up the communication trench. We cannot see "over the top," have no vista of the immense No-Man's Land of London.[252]

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[250] CWGC Historical Information, 'Grand-Seraucourt British Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

[251] Christopher Moore, *Trench Fever: An intimate story of The First World War* (Abacus, London: 1999 [1998]), p. 7.

[252] Richard Aldington, *Death of a Hero* (Chatto and Windus, London: 1932 [1929]), p. 127.

The use of the phrase "Over the Top" linking both the architectural and battlefield places, also expands the shared language beyond nomenclature to that of a language of action and experience. Amanda Laugesen's study of Australian Soldier's slang in the Great War says of the phrase that it represented "entering another world".[253] Doyle and Walker, in their study or trench language, described the act of going 'over the top' as being "a pivotal experience in the life of any Great War soldier".[254]

Aldington's reference to vista, or lack thereof, is further borne out by Edmund Blunden. A passage in Blunden's *Undertones of War* identifies the limited horizon of a soldier in the trenches, saying of the preparations for the Somme campaign that are taking place further south, "what use thinking about it […] no one seemed to have any mental sight or smell of that vast battle".[255] In his exploration of this passage Mark Larabee expanded upon this theme by adding that "events beyond one's own horizon are hardly worth knowing – if they can be known at all".[256]

In the design of Grand Seraucourt the act of engaging with the architecture becomes a representation of one of defining features of the Great War experience; the symbolic act of going over the top. This analogy is carried further in the context of Brophy and Partridges description of the phrase 'over the top':

> To leave the shelter of a fire trench in order to make the assault, troops had to hoist themselves over the front wall of sandbags. Many

[253] Amanda Laugesen, *Furphies and Whizz-bangs: ANZAC slang from the Great War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 141.
[254] Peter Doyle and Julian Walker, *Trench Talk: Words of the First World War* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2012), p. 183.
[255] Blunden, *Undertones of War*, pp. 76-77.
[256] Michael D. Larabee, *Frontlines of Modernism: remapping the Great War in British fiction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 27.

were struck down by bullet or shell explosion before they had time to take a stride forward.[257]

The use of level changes, evoking the act of going over the top, can also be witnessed at other cemeteries such as Bellacourt Military Cemetery, where a similar ziggurat style shifting of levels takes the visitor from the main cemetery to the upper level and to the a view of the fields beyond and also at Ancre Military Cemetery.

Whilst the act of going over the top was a defining single act of the war for many soldiers, however, the experience of trench life was experienced by many more. The claustrophobic conditions, the engineered space and the restricted field of vision were part of the daily interaction between soldier and trench. At cemeteries such as Perth (China Wall) the perimeter wall directly followed the geometry of the original trench, the same is true of other cemeteries that are based on the original trench lines. The distinct shape of trench lines, dug to stop shell blasts travelling down front line trenches, are also apparent in the perimeter walls of cemeteries not directly associated with the trenches. At cemeteries such as Orange Hill Cemetery the architect, Cowlishaw, playfully evoked the trench network with a decorative flourish in the front wall, the wall dog-toothing and curving around an otherwise empty space. The same can be seen at Carnières cemetery by Von Berg near to Cambrai. It is difficult to establish intent on behalf of the architects in these and other case, but the comparison of shape is clear to see.

The claustrophobia and isolation of the trenches defined the spatial experience of trench life and both these aspects appear within the architecture of the IWGC

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[257] J. Brophy and E. Partridge, *The Long Trail: What the British soldier sang and said in 1914-1918* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1965), p. 159.

cemeteries. The segmented view of the landscape, seen through slits in trench periscopes in frontline trenches during the day and from a ground level view at dawn and dusk each daily during each stand-to. For the soldier, this breaking down of the environment into a thin strip of sky above and framed segments of no-man's land was the extent of interaction with the landscape. In his article on Richard Neutra's Kaufmann House, Volker Welter noted the distinct connection between war memory, architecture and the landscape:

> Viewed as a whole, the structures that comprise the Kaufmann House appear as a harmonious merger between architecture and nature; the two intertwine so closely that it is nearly impossible to draw a dividing line between the natural and the architectural environment. On the level of architectural detail, however, the doors' metal seals establish a firm barrier between inside and outside, revealing that the relationship between the natural world and the human-made one is a hierarchical order: architecture is an artificial addition to the site that creates spaces for humans in a constant state of defensive alert with regard to their surroundings [...] The simultaneously defensive or adversarial character of his architecture is not only manifest, it is fully comprehensible in light of Neutra's life experiences. In fact, the close relationship between humans, architecture, and the natural environment that characterizes much of Neutra's mid-twentieth-century architecture was influenced by his military service during the Great War.[258]

For Welter, the segmenting of the landscape apparent in trench warfare is reflected in Neutra's use of eye level windows to give a trench-eye view, and a layout that adopts the same hierarchies evident within trench architecture. Within the architecture of the IWGC these same ideas of a fragmented vision of the landscape are also evident.

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[258] Volker Welter, 'From the Landscape of Ware to the Open Order of the Kaufmann House: Richard Neutra and the Experience of the Great War,' in *The Good Gardener? Nature, Humanity and the Garden*, eds. Annette Giesecke and Naomi Jacobs (London: Artifice, 2015), pp. 216-33.

At Carnières Communal Cemetery Extension, designed by Von Berg, we can find an explicit example of the architecture of the cemetery reflecting the delineated relationship between trench space and the surrounding environment. As the title suggests, the IWGC is an extension of the Carnières civilian cemetery and was created by men of the Guards Division in October 1918.[259] The IWGC approach to communal cemeteries, generally speaking, was to make the IWGC space distinct from the remainder of the cemetery, but often to share access points and navigation routes. In this respect, it is not uncommon to find a war cemetery to the rear of the civilian plots that requires passing through the civilian cemetery gates and all the civilian graves prior to accessing the IWGC plot. At Carnières we see a different approach, whilst the overall layout is similar

*Fig. 11 – Carnières Communal Cemetery Extension Plan (CWGC Archive)*

to other communal cemeteries, in the proximity of the IWGC plot to the civilian plot, Von Berg created a separate access to the IWGC cemetery. (Fig. 11) The cemetery file for Carnières offers no explanation as to reasoning for a distinct entrance, nor does the commune appear on the blacklist of communes where land acquisition or access problems had been encountered. From these two points it can be inferred that the decision was a purely based on design and intent of the architect.
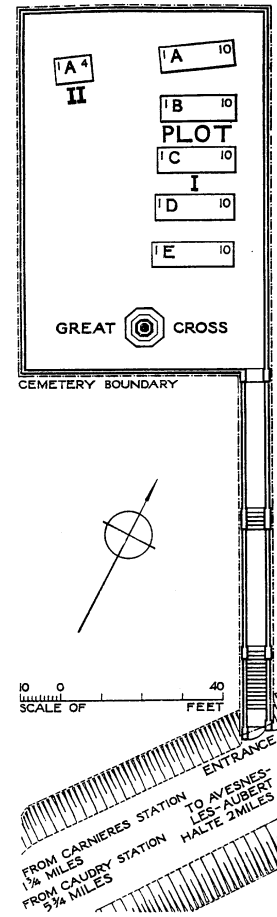
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[259] CWGC Historical Information, 'Carnières Communal Cemetery Extension' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

Carnières cemetery, located above and set back from a sunken road, required Von Berg to design an access that would transition from road level to cemetery level whilst covering the distance from the road to cemetery plot. In other IWGC cemeteries similar conundrums had been resolved with a designed stairway and grass path to the cemetery perimeter. Indeed, such designs can be seen at the previously discussed Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery. At Carnières Von Berg took this as an opportunity to instill the cemetery architecture with the landscape interaction of the trenches. Reminiscent of a breastwork and adopting the claustrophobic dimensions of a trench, Von Berg created a 20 metre enclosed walkway. Much like Welter's assertion regarding Neutra, Von Berg deliberately imposed the architecture on the site to make reference to a previous architecture. This architectural intervention not only provides the practical connection between cemetery and road, it captures the memory of experience. In his article *Memory Without Monuments*, Stanford Anderson discussed how vernacular architecture contained social memory and that, by its design reference, modern architecture was a memory of both vernacular architecture and social history. In this context, if we consider the construction of trenches as a distinct form of vernacular architecture, albeit temporary, then the cemeteries of the IWGC become a vehicle to retain 'earlier practices and memory systems'.[260] This same form of spatial echo retained within the architecture can be found at the entrance to Ancre British Cemetery, which uses a dog-toothed staircase enclosed by a red brick wall to provide three distinct functions; a transition through the road and cemetery levels, a defined emotional transitional space, as at New Munich Trench Cemetery, and an architectural memory of the spaces inhabited by the men who served and in some case are buried in the cemetery.

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[260] Stanford Anderson, "Memory Without Monuments: Vernacular Architecture", *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review II*, no.1 (1999), p. 21.

So far the architecture we have looked at has considered how the architects retained the spatial qualities of trench warfare within their designs. This has considered the open trench systems of popular imagination and collective memory of the Great War. There were, however, other aspects to the creation of trench systems that appear by way of motif in the architecture of the IWGC, not least of which is the pill-box or stronghold. These were positions that typically armed with machine-guns and slowed or halted entire battalions in an advance. In his foreword to the British Legion guide to the Pill-Boxes of Flanders General C.H. Harrington drew comparisons between the architecture of the battlefield and the IWGC cemeteries;

> At the time you visit these pill-boxes you will visit our Cemeteries in the Ypres Salient. Your thoughts will turn from the awfulness of those pill-boxes to the peace and beauty of those Cemeteries – to those gallant lads of our great Empire who lie there.[261]

Harrington's comparison contrasted the brutal efficiency of the pill-box as a piece of war architecture, it also conjured images of dead soldiers strewn around the narrow openings from which the machine-gun fired and firmly located the pill-box as a memory site of its own. The excerpt, and indeed the entire volume, highlights the specific role of pill-boxes in Flanders. Most notorious of the pillboxes were those found at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917.

A short distance, indeed visible from, the largest IWGC cemetery at Tyne Cot is the Passchendaele New British Cemetery. The cemetery was created after the end of the war from bodies found in the fields around the varying assaults that took place in the autumn of 1917. The cemetery was designed by Charles Holden, with the

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[261] E.G.L.Thurlow, *The Pill-Boxes of Flanders* (London: British Legion, 1933), p. 7.

support of Wilfred Von Berg and forms one of Holden's elemental designs. There is an immediate similarity between the architectural styles of Holden's cemetery entrance and the pill-boxes scattered throughout the landscape. The pill-boxes, made from ferro-concrete and often reinforced with shell splinters and other scrap metal, displayed external evidence of the wooden shuttering of the forms and lacked any decorative nuance beyond utility. They were the very definition of an architecture fit for purpose, a description that Holden and Frank Pick would centralize in their later work on the London Underground stations. This stripped back, brutal architecture of the pill-boxes was echoed in the elemental forms of Holden's early IWGC architecture. The battered block work of the pavilions, echoing the squat concrete pill-boxes that had, in the words of a veteran of the Passchendaele battles, "studded the landscape".[262] This similarity in aesthetic is evident in the window openings and it is in this architectural detail that the battlefield motif is particularly strong. On looking through the slit openings of the Passchendaele New British Cemetery pavilions, one can see the scatter graves of men. The symbolism contained within this view echoes the language and motif of Harrington's phrase. The stark openings of the pavilions, also evident in many other cemetery pavilions, frame the landscape in the same defensive manner of the pill-boxes and thus the architecture of memory comes to directly reflect both the architecture and landscape of war.

In this chapter we have seen how the architecture of the IWGC was used to retain both the physical space and the geometries of original trenches, be that in the use of architecturally treated trench mass graves, to the inclusion of their geometries into the perimeter walls of the cemeteries. We have seen, too, how the siting of

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[262] Chapman, *Passionate Prodigality*, p. 188.

cemeteries and the designed access points retained both space and geometry of the original trench lines. These alignments and direct connection with the history of the sites has been forgotten in the years since the Second World War, but it is clear from the archival evidence that remains and the extant architecture that it was the intention of the Commission that the cemeteries should have this connection. Bloomfield's report of February 1918 provides a clear indication that the IWGC recognised the importance of the broader context of these cemeteries and they were to reflect the history of the landscape, a landscape that would inevitably disappear. The extant architecture is also evidence that the Junior Architects considered this intention for the sites to contain a direct connection with the wartime landscape. Whilst it may not have always been possible to directly reference specific parts of the battlefields, the cemetery architecture also reflects motifs of the experience of trench life. In the desire of the Commission and in the execution of the architectural designs it is clear that the cemeteries of the IWGC reflect a layer of memory related to the experience of trench life and also of the experience of trench warfare. The architecture makes a direct connection with the landscape of the war and with the way in which the soldiers viewed this landscape.

## 2.2 Shell Holes, Mine Craters and Mass Burial in Cemetery Design

The previous chapter looked at how the architects of the IWGC incorporated the trench lines of the Western Front into their cemetery designs. This chapter will explore how the other defining manmade impression on the landscape, the shell hole and the mine crater, were included into the cemetery designs. It will do so by an investigation of three types of cemetery within which there are references to craters; those that make direct reference to a physical crater; those that utilise a direct motif of the crater; and those that use an indirect motif. It will show how the architects of the IWGC chose to develop specific design solutions for each site, rather than adopt a universal approach to the challenge of this distinct landscape. In a series of case studies of each type this chapter will show how the architects of these cemeteries sought to retain the landscape history of the site and in doing so capture another aspect of the experience of the Western Front. In addition to an exploration of the ways in which the architects sought to design in aspects of the battlefield, the use of shell holes and mine craters was often related to mass burials. This chapter will use the exploration of this group of cemeteries to establish the IWGC approach to architectural treatment of mass burial sites.

As with the trench, shell holes and mine craters became defining points in the landscape and the experience of the First World War. Indeed, the most popular cartoon of the war, 'A Better 'Ole' by the artist Bruce Bairnsfather, made light of the ubiquity of these man-made landscape features.[263] The shell holes came to represent many things in the experience of the Western Front landscape. For Bairnsfather's

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[263] Bruce Bairnsfather, 'Better 'Ole', *The Bystander*, 24 November 1915.

character Old Bill they were a mocking home from home, for Paul Baumer, the main character of Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* they meant protection and the scene of an intense interaction with an enemy soldier.[264] Within the battles of the war, shell holes had great tactical significance. The opening of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 1916 was marked by two large mines, one at Hawthorn Ridge near to Beaumont Hamel and the other near to the village of La Boisselle. Later in the war in 1917, a series of mines were blown to signal the beginning of the Battle of Messines Ridge. If the trenches have come to represent the human war, the shell holes and craters represent the void between the trenches, no-man's land; they represent the landscape. Despite the number and central position in many landscape experiences, the shell hole or mine crater has received no study in terms of its position as a defining motif with the memory of the war.

Given their ubiquity and the inherent void created by a shell hole or crater it is unsurprising that many became graves and some became established cemeteries. The Commission lists at least three crater cemeteries that were absorbed into concentration cemeteries after the war. There are many others not explicitly listed as shell hole or crater cemeteries, such as London Cemetery near Longueval. Begun in late September 1916 by men of the 47th (London) Division, the original cemetery utilised a large shell hole to bury 47 men killed in the fighting in front of High Wood. After the war several thousand unidentified bodies were recovered in the surrounding fields and the original shell hole cemetery was subsumed by the vast numbers of concentrated burials.

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[264] Erich Marie Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (London: Putnam and Co., 1929).

## 2.2.1 Mass Graves and Design Policy

To understand the case study cemeteries it is necessary to first consider the broader IWGC approach to the use of and architectural treatment of mass graves. We have already looked at some examples of architecturally treated mass graves in the respect of trench burials. Those burials at Bootham and Owl Trench cemeteries respectively can be considered as mass graves in that they were formed from a single open trench. The fundamental difference between trench-based mass burials and those that utilised large craters is the ability to individually identify those buried. In the case of the two trench mass graves the Divisional Burial Officer was able to identify the majority of the men individually and, as a consequence, there is now a row of white headstones remembering each man. However, in cases where individual identification was not possible the IWGC adopted differing approaches.

One such mass burial is that of V.C. Corner near Fromelles. The Commission Historical Files contain the following information regarding the cemetery:

> V.C. Corner Cemetery was made after the Armistice. It contains the graves of 410 Australian soldiers who died in the Attack at Fromelles and whose bodies were found on the battlefield, but not a single body could be identified. It was therefore decided not to mark the individual graves, but to record on a memorial the names of all the Australian soldiers who were killed in the engagement and whose graves were not known. The memorial, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, was built to commemorate nearly 1,300 Australian casualties [...][265]

Whilst the historical information is relatively scant, there are two aspects of the description that provide information on the IWGC approach to mass burials. Firstly,

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[265] CWGC Historical Information, 'VC Corner Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

that wherever possible they would use an approach similar to that of the trench mass burials, attempting to individually identify each soldier. Secondly, that this decision was made on the basis of the specific site and not a universal position. The approach at V.C. Corner was, in effect, that of a smaller scaled Memorial to the Missing, the difference being the bodies were not missing, rather they were unidentifiable. The historical information also identifies that the mass burial represented by the V.C. Corner Cemetery and Memorial was undertaken during wartime and, as such is likely to have been a purpose built interment rather than the utilisation of a battlefield feature. This is an important distinction as it signifies that there was no specific battlefield landscape feature upon which to base any design.[266]

Further to the south of the battlefield are a pair of cemeteries created by the Canadian Corps Burial Officer, Zivy Crater and Lichfield Crater. According to the Commission historical files both were used by the Canadian Corps Burial Officer in 1917 for the burial of bodies found on the Vimy battlefield. Rather than giving each cemetery a name, the Burial Officer serially lettered and numbered the two plots, the original name for Zivy Crater being CB 1 and the original name for Lichfield Crater was CB 2 A.[267]

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[266] As if to further prove that the Commission has no specific approach to the architectural treatment of mass graves, in 2009 in a field near to V.C. Corner another mass grave was discovered. The men buried within were killed in the same attack as those remembered at V.C. Corner. This time, however, the War Graves Commission took the decision, along with the Australian government, to individually identify as many soldiers as possible and bury those who were unidentifiable under Unknown Soldier headstones. The creation of the first new War Graves Commission cemetery since the end of the Second World War also reflects the flexibility in interpretation of the Commission's tenet to remember every soldier.

[267] CWGC Historical Information, 'Zivy Crater and Lichfield Crater' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

Both sites function ostensibly as memorials rather than as cemeteries, this in spite of the fact that all but nineteen of the 110 total burials are identified by name. They both use a similar memorial premise to that of V.C. Corner; in that they have a memorial wall as well as a piece of land that is surrounded by a perimeter wall. This approach is of particular interest in the context of both the larger Memorials to the Missing and also the prevailing attitude to battlefield pilgrimage. In his 1920 work, *Ypres; the Holy Ground of British Arms*, Henry Beckles Willson, the recently instated military administrator of Ypres, had spoken of the sanctified ground of the Ypres Salient.[268] His opening remarks to the guide book were that "there is not a single half-acre in Ypres that is not sacred, there is not a stone which has not sheltered scores of loyal young hearts, whose one impulse and desire was to fight and if need be, to die for England"[269]. The importance of the landscape as a memorial in its own right, or at least the perception of the landscape as a memorial, is one that was gathering pace in the early 1920s. The idea of the landscape as a memorial was, in part, driven by the reconstruction of the devastated areas and the reclaiming by nature of the old battlefield. In one of the early guides to the old Western Front, Lt. Col. T. A. Lowe opened his introduction with the following statement:

> Nature is hard at work on the battlefields, nursing them back to health and peace. She has it all her own way now. Already many of the scars of war have softened down: soon they will be gone altogether, and the old familiar landmarks will be things of the past. It will be no easy matter to pick up the trench lines and to recognize the various positions held by ourselves and the enemy. It will be harder still to picture those days of mud and strife and dreariness, and to see with the mind's eye life as it used to be on the western front.[270]

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[268] Henry Beckles Willson, *Ypres: The Holy Ground of British Arms* (Bruges: Chas. Beyaert, 1920).
[269] Ibid, p. XIII.
[270] T. A. Lowe, *The Western Battlefields: A Guide to the British Front Line* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1920), p. B.

The recognition by Lowe that the places and spaces of the battlefield were disappearing is a common theme in the guidebooks and memoirs of the returning veterans. That there was a clear disconnect emerging between the post-war landscape and the memorial landscape can be explained in terms of memory by the work of Pierre Nora.[271] Nora's exploration of the transition of memory to history is particularly apt in the case of landscape memory. For Nora the move from something changing from memory to history is caused by; "the acceleration of history […] an increasingly rapid slippage of the present into a historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear".[272]This description accurately captures the shift that was taking place in the war time landscape, infused throughout with distinct wartime memories, and the disappearance of this with the coming of peace. Nora also addressed the idea of the emergence of sites of memory that provides a useful context of the role of sites such as Zivy and Lichfield Craters. He noted that sites of memory are created "because there are no longer real environments of memory".[273] If we consider this concept in terms of the two crater sites it enables a distinct reading of the architectural treatment that places the landscape at the centre of the memorial space and acts as proxy for the missing headstones.

Both spaces were designed by William Cowlishaw. It is important to distinguish these sites as spaces rather than specifically cemeteries. They are, of course, cemeteries in the technical sense of what constitutes a cemetery. However, the lack of grave markers and inclusion of memorial walls also led to the IWGC omitting the

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[271] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", *Representations*, No. 26 (1989), pp. 7-24.
[272] Nora, *Between Memory and History*, p. 7.
[273] Ibid.

word cemetery from their titles. The same can also be said of V.C. Corner and of other 'cemeteries' this chapter will look at. As has been mentioned previously, the two memorial spaces are defined by a perimeter wall, an entrance at road level, a path and a stairway. All of these architectural aspects frame the defining feature of the space, a landscaped shell hole that fills almost the entire footprint of the site. In his 1936 cycling guide to France, Bernard Newman described these to spaces as;

> 'two of the most striking cemeteries in France […] They were used as giant graves in which to bury men who died in their capture; they are now filled in, covered by a carpet of turf, with a stone scroll to record the names of the men who lie beneath it'.[274]

For Newman the direct inclusion of the wartime landscape within the memorial site made a lasting impact, indeed other than general remarks about the nature of the IWGC cemeteries, these are the only cemeteries he mentions specifically. Newman's connection with the space is also something that Nora's work helps to clarify, saying that, "memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progression and
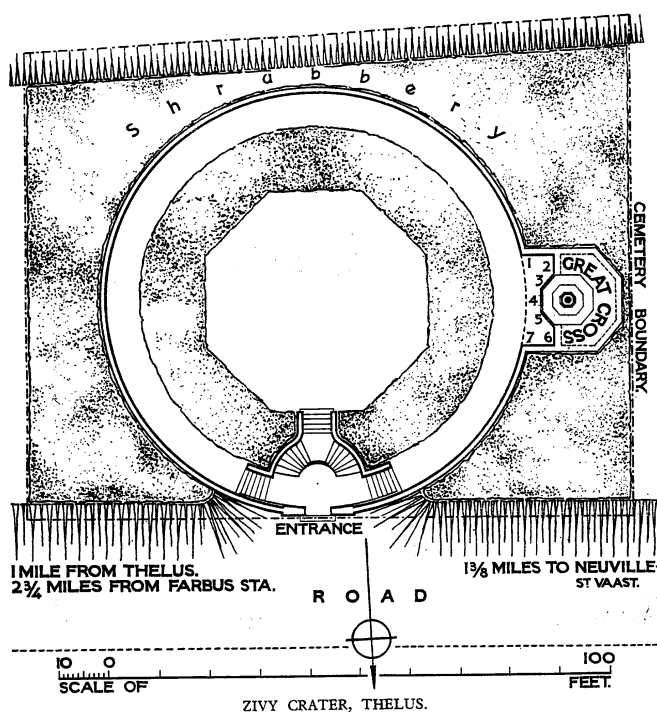


Fig. 12 – Zivy Crater Plan (CWGC Archive)

274 Bernard Newman, *Cycling in France (Northern)*, (Herbert Jenkins Limited, London: 1936), p. 95.

to relations between things".[275] In the case of Newman, the direct use of the same crater space within the design made both Zivy and Lichfield distinct from other cemeteries. The use of the original crater void within the designs created a focal point, an object, that visitors could attach memory to; there were no bodies, no markers, just the names of the missing, but the landscape remained. The crater, then, came to represent the grave marker of the fallen as much as the memorial tablet. (Fig.12)

If we consider Blomfield's remarks as to retaining a sense of 'circumstance' within the designs, Newman's response is testament to the power of this within the architectural treatment of the cemeteries.[276] As before with those cemeteries that retained the geometry of trench lines, the retention of the physical crater void as part of the design also ensures that the 'circumstance' or experience of all those who fought over those two specific craters and others in the same fighting are also retained.

The inclusion of the crater void into the designs for Zivy and Lichfield speak of more than cemeteries. They are memorials to a lost landscape, as well as being burial spaces. It is in this aspect that the two proponents of the idea of 'Sites of memory' provide a markedly different understanding of the space. For Nora these 'sites of memory' are multi-faceted, containing many potential layers of meaning.

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[275] Nora, *Between Memory and History*, p. 9.
[276] CWGC, Add 1/6/1, A Report on the Cemeteries of the British Expeditionary Force, February 1918 by Reginald Blomfield, para. 6.

The scholar Jay Winter identifies sites of memory as focal points of mourning. Winter describes the distinction between his approach to these sites and that of Nora as;

> First they are international; secondly, they are comparative; thirdly they are there for their value in answering specific historical questions related to the cultural consequences of the 1914-18 war. That is why my 'sites of memory' are also 'sites of mourning'.[277]

The cemeteries of the IWGC are inherently international and comparative. They are international by virtue of their establishment by the British government on foreign soil. They are comparative by the juxtaposition of this British form of memorialisation in a broader foreign memorial culture. The most problematic of the definitions is the final point, not because it is untrue, but because it is only partly true. Within the context of understanding the multiplicity of memory layers contained within these spaces, it could be said that Winter's approach is clouded by the phrase 'sites of mourning'. The inference from this is that memory and mourning are intrinsically linked and that by being a space of wartime memory a cemetery is inherently a site of mourning. Whilst this is true for one layer of memory encoded within the space, it is limited to a one-dimensional understanding of the role of the site.

To appreciate the architectural spaces of Zivy and Lichfeld Craters, the work of Nora in identifying the landscape as a repository of memory enables a more nuanced understanding of the layers of memory contained within the architectural design. In this respect, the work of landscape archaeologists such as Birger Stichelbaut and of

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[277] Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, p. 10.

material culture historians such as Nicholas Saunders provide a more useful way of understanding the memory contained within an architectural space.

Landscape archaeology looks at the broader history and memory contained within an area of land, rather than at the minutiae of individual sites. As a result, it is closely linked with aerial photography and the use thereof within archaeological surveying techniques and as an historical resource. In regard to this thesis, there is a direct correlation between aerial photography and trench maps. As Stichelbaut has noted, trench maps are a graphic interpretation of the landscape which was often informed by the aerial reconnaissance photography.[278] To understand the information contained within aerial photography the archaeologist must employ what Hauser called in her study on archaeology and photography, the archaeological imagination: a form of understanding that enables the archaeologist to understand the layers of history visible on a single plain, in Hauser's case a photograph.[279] According to Saunders, the old Western Front is, "a complex palimpsest of overlapping, multi-vocal landscapes".[280] This palimpsest is for Saunders:

> Composed, variously of industrialized slaughter houses, vast tombs for the 'missing', places for returning refugees and contested reconstruction, popular tourist destinations, locations of memorials and pilgrimage, sites for archaeological research and cultural heritage development, and as still deadly spaces full of unexploded shells and bombs.[281]

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[278]Stichelbaut, *The Great War Seen From the Air*, p. 26.
[279] Kitty Hauser, *Shadow Sites: Photography, Archaeology, and the British Landscape 1927-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[280] Saunders, *Matters of Conflict*, p. 7.
[281] Nicholas Saunders, 'Matter and Memory in the Landscapes of Conflict: The Western Front 1914–1999' in *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place, ed. by* B. Bender and M. Winer (Oxford: Berg, 2001), p. 37.

Saunders recognizes that these in themselves are just some of the layers open to interpretation of the old Western Front. The idea that the same physical space can hold multiple meanings is particularly applicable to IWGC locations such as Zivy or Lichfield. The same space has many nuanced memory functions: as a burial site to the men who fell; as a retained piece of battlefield that is representative of both the exact spot and the broader battlefield; and an immersive memorial site in which the visitor experiences an echo of the wartime landscape. There are other memory layers that relate to the role of these sites within the context of pilgrimage and tourism over the last century. That these layers remain visible in the same plain is directly connected to the architectural treatment of the site. Understanding the IWGC sites in terms of these layers, rather than the limiting them to 'vast tombs for the missing' or 'locations of memorials' of Saunders' reference, enables the idea that sites of memory retain aspects of memory that relate to more than the burial and commemoration of the dead. Newman's assertion that these are two of the most striking cemeteries in France is not related to the fact they are cemeteries, but to the experience of visiting the site and interacting with the several layers of memory the site retains.

Cowlishaw's designs at Zivy and Lichfield Craters retained not only the site, the void of the shell hole; it codified two ideas, that of mass burial and that of shell hole burial. The idea of mass burial speaks to the visitor of the nature of the warfare, that bodies could go missing even if their location was known. By choosing to create these sites as memorial spaces, rather than cemeteries with place-holder grave markers, the design explicitly marks out the connection between experience and place. It categorically demarcates the circumstances of not only those buried in the

shell hole, but also those who fought around it and feared they too would be buried within such a space. The symbolic void of the site reflects not just the impact on human life, but on the landscape. The surrounding fields have succumbed to Nora's accelerated history; within the walls of Zivy and Lichfield Craters this process has been arrested.

## 2.2.2 Crater Motif as Landscape Memory in Cemetery Design

In the confined strip of land that became known as the Western Front there were few parts that were not affected by shellfire. Indeed, this was even more so the case at Ypres. The salient that was formed at Ypres, a military term that defines a section of front line the protrudes into the enemy territory and can be attacked from the front and both sides, and in some case shot at from behind, ensured that the area suffered from persistent and heavy shellfire within a smaller geographic location than at any other point on the line.[282] It is from the shell devastated landscapes of Passchendaele that some of the most enduring elements of public imagination of the western front are first established. Siegfried Sassoon, in his oft quoted poem *Memorial Tablet*, spoke of the 'bottomless mud' that became synonymous with the Passchendaele landscape and experience.[283]

In another of the more studied artistic responses to the landscapes of the Western Front the official war artist Paul Nash immortalized some of the transient landscape features of the Ypres Salient. Included within these were places in eponymous paintings such as *Caterpillar Crater*, *Along the Menin Road* and other geographically

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[282] Doyle and Walker, *Trench Talk*, pp. 104-105.
[283] Siegfried Sassoon, 'On Passing the New Menin Gate', *The War Poems* (London & Boston: Faber and Faber, 1983), p. 137.

locatable sites. But, perhaps his most well known paintings captured an element of the experience of being in the landscape, a more general wartime landscape. One such painting that captured the Western Front landscape was *Void*. In this composition Nash captured not only the landscape but also the lack of landscape that came to define the Western Front. It was this very quality that Paul Gough, utilizing the work of Nash's biographer Anthony Bertram in doing so, identified. For Gough, Nash "knew how to populate emptiness": his work expresses "an intense awareness of man, not in his person but in his effects, in the presence of the absent".[284]In *Void* Nash captures the emptiness, but also the implied fullness, of the Western Front landscape. There are three elements that make up the discernible features of the landscape: trenches, shell holes and the shattered stumps of trees. Gough further recognizes within the landscape paintings of Nash the *leitmotif* of the Western Front landscape as "scattered shell-holes, tree stumps, an infinite vista of mud and mire – a wasteland inimical to human life".[285] Nash's paintings, including *Void*, used the manmade landscape of the Western Front to convey the human experience of the war.

There are, of course, more detailed and expansive readings of the paintings of Nash that explore the imbued meaning of these forms, but for the purposes of this study a brief art historical understanding of the approach reveals a similarity with the IWGC architecture.[286] The Western Front landscape paintings of Nash and the cemeteries of the IWGC that reflect those graves lost to shellfire adopt a similar approach in the use of landscape to convey war experience and to locate the lost. Nash's ironic

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[284] Paul Gough, *A Terrible Beauty: British Artists in the First World War* (Bristol: Sansom, 2012), p. 161.
[285] Ibid, p. 159.
[286] Ibid, pp. 127-164.

use of the word 'void' is as relevant to the landscape he captured as is it to the cemeteries of the IWGC that act as proxy grave markers for those known to be buried nearby but whose graves have been lost.

Mass burial sites such as Zivy and Lichfield Craters are relatively infrequent with the IWGC; considerably more frequent are those sites that reflect the space of an original cemetery that was subsequently destroyed by shellfire. The result of this destructive process was that soldiers were known to be buried in a distinct area, but the exact location of their grave was subsequently lost. Those burials that fall into this category do not constitute the title 'missing', because this is reserved for soldiers where no trace of their place of burial exists.

Within the IWGC cemetery designs there are several forms of 'lost' burials. Firstly, there are those sites as described above where the envelope of the cemetery remains, but the exact locations of burials is lost. Secondly, there are those cemeteries that were lost to shell fire. These cemeteries had known burials in them, but they were subsequently lost. In such a case a Special Memorial is placed at the nearest cemetery as a form of cenotaph to the men buried in that cemetery. This form of commemoration is believed to have first been used at Duhallow Advanced Dressing Station Cemetery, where it was used to create special memorials for those named but lost burials from Fusilier Wood Cemetery and Malakoff Farm Cemetery.[287] Finally, there is the range of unidentified or part identified burials within any given cemetery. These take the form of headstones with varying inscriptions from the completely unidentified 'Known Unto God' to stones that bear regimental

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[287] Franky Bostyn, *Passchendaele 1917:The Story of the Fallen and Tyne Cot Cemetery* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2007), p. 279.

or rank information only. Of all the varying types of lost graves that can be situated within a cemetery it is only those unidentified or part identified headstones that go towards making up the names on the memorials to the missing. This section will explore the first two of those types of cemetery; in addition, it will look at the use of battlefield landscape motifs within the design of these sites.

A short distance from Ypres, indeed within sight of the ramparts  that surrounded the town, is the IWGC Hedge Row Trench Cemetery.  The IWGC Historical Information notes that;

> Hedge Row Trench Cemetery was begun in March 1915 and used until August 1917, sometimes under the name of Ravine Wood Cemetery. The cemetery suffered very severely from shell fire, and after the Armistice the positions of the individual graves could not be found or reconstructed.[288]

The differing name of the cemetery is not unsurprising: the trench maps of early 1917, identify the trench as Hedge Lane; on others there is no trench name. The nearest identifiable location to the site is that of Ravine Wood. The flexibility of naming protocol is borne out in Chasseaud's work; he mentions a network of trenches in the area that have varying derivations of Hedge Row, Street, Land and Sap at different periods.[289]

Within the a few hundred metres there are other two IWGC sites: First DCLI Cemetery, The Bluff and Woods Cemetery. Within a mile radius from Hedge Row

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[288] CWGC Historical Information, 'Hedge Row Trench Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[289] Chasseaud, *Rats Alley*, p. 310.

trench there are three other cemeteries, including Spoilbank Cemetery, which acted as a concentration cemetery for the area around the battlefield location The Bluff. The combination of these five other cemeteries contain 1,452 burials. Yet the IWGC made the decision to retain a cemetery with no known grave locations, just the knowledge that somewhere in the envelope of land were the remains of these bodies. Moreover, the historical information suggests that an attempt was made to reconstruct the cemetery according to the original layout; however, this was impossible owing to the level of destruction to the site.

The location of the cemetery is at the junction of what was nominally Hedge Row Trench and another trench. Indeed, as with other sites in the previous chapter, the cemetery perimeter wall directly aligns with the geometry of the trench of the same name. This connection with the battlefield geometry is particularly important to the cemetery as it is the only aspect of the original cemetery that remains. The decision to retain a burial plot required that the spatial relationship between battlefield and memorial spaces remained the same. As with Zivy and Lichfield Craters, the multi-vocal nature of the space, is emphasized by the design decisions of the Junior Architect, J. R. Truelove.

The layout of the grave markers is the most intriguing aspect of the design. The historical records show that the original cemetery was destroyed by shellfire, though the landscape did not retain any obvious scarring. This is likely due to the continued fighting over the same ground which ensured that the shell hole created in the destruction of the cemetery did not survive itself in the ever-changing topography of the Ypres Salient. With the loss of the original layout, but a defined envelope within

which to work, Truelove's response was to invoke the geometry of a shell hole in the layout of the grave markers, forming a large, single stone width circle of graves. It is of particular interest to consider Hedge Row Trench cemetery in the context of Blomfield's desire to retain the circumstance of death. Truelove's design does not explicitly capture the circumstance of the deaths, but
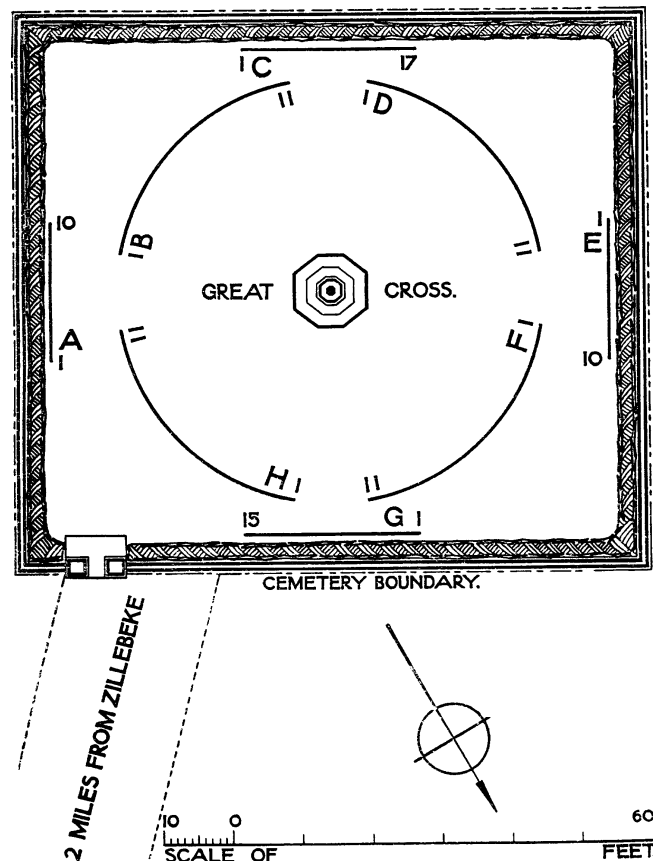
*Fig. 13 – Hedge Row Trench Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

it captures the essence of the circumstance surrounding the losing of these bodies. It captures the moment the soldiers laying within the original cemetery went from individual graves to an enforced form of mass burial. (Fig. 13)

For Geoff Dyer the theme of The Missing constitutes a large part of the experience of both the war and remembering the war. In the closing passages of his stream of consciousness record of a pilgrimage to the old Western Front he recalls: "I remember John Berger in a lecture suggesting that ours has been the century of departure, of migration, of exodus – of disappearance".[290] The act of disappearing or going missing was a defining feature of death in the First World War and the most well-known architectural works of the IWGC are Memorials to the Missing. At

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[290] Dyer, *Missing of the Somme*, p. 128.

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Hedge Row Trench Cemetery we see a different memorial to the missing, it is a memorial to the moment, to the act that caused these soldiers to become *the missing*.

The moment that is captured in the layout of the cemetery is not only a memorial to the men buried within, it is a memorial to the landscape. The history of the site is retained in both geometric alignments and the use of a design motif that directly reflects the defining moment of the site. Truelove's layout and inference of the shell hole also retains that story of the cemetery; the architectural treatment is one part of the whole story of the cemetery at Hedge Row Trench, but within that treatment are contained the other parts of the site history.

Also in the Ypres Salient and a few miles from Hedge Row Trench is a much larger IWGC cemetery, Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm). The CWGC historical information is unusually detailed in regard to the wartime history of the cemetery:

> Railway Dugouts Cemetery is 2 Kms west of Zillebeke village, where the railway runs on an embankment overlooking a small farmstead, which was known to the troops as Transport Farm. The site of the cemetery was screened by slightly rising ground to the east, and burials began there in April 1915. They continued until the Armistice, especially in 1916 and 1917, when Advanced Dressing Stations were placed in the dugouts and the farm. They were made in small groups, without any definite arrangement and in the summer of 1917 a considerable number were obliterated by shell fire before they could be marked. The names "Railway Dugouts" and "Transport Farm" were both used for the cemetery.
>
> At the time of the Armistice, more than 1,700 graves in the cemetery were known and marked. Other graves were then brought in from the battlefields and small cemeteries in the vicinity, and a number of the known graves destroyed by artillery fire were specially

> commemorated. The latter were mainly in the present Plots IV and VII.
>
> [...] Other special memorials record the names of 72 casualties buried in Valley Cottages and Transport Farm Annexe Cemeteries whose graves were destroyed in later fighting.[291]

The CWGC description of the cemetery clearly identifies the multiple levels of history and memory within its creation and expansion prior to the architectural treatment. The plan of Railway Dugouts displays how the architecture has retained the varying stages of this history; the straight lines of consolidated burials juxtaposed against the haphazard wartime burials. The features of particular interest for this section, however, are those graves that represent both the known graves that were destroyed by shellfire within the original confines of the cemetery and the two special memorials to Valley Cottages Cemetery and Transport Farm Annexe.

The entrance to Railway Dugouts is through two arched gateways. There is also the addition of a level change between the road and the interior of the cemetery. Upon entering the cemetery the visitor walks into the centre of a raised circular plot, around the edge of which are the special memorials to those burials lost in shellfire from the cemetery. The raised circular plot also shapes the boundary wall, which follows the curve of the outer lip. Flanking the entrance way are the special memorials that mark the lost graves of Valley Cottages Cemetery and Transport Farm Annexe. These, too, are arranged in a circular form, though the shape of the plot is created by two concentric circles of grave markers rather than a single line.

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[291] CWGC Historical Information, 'Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm)' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

As with Hedge Row Trench, the inference of the special memorial sites is that of the event that caused them to become lost graves. (Fig. 14)


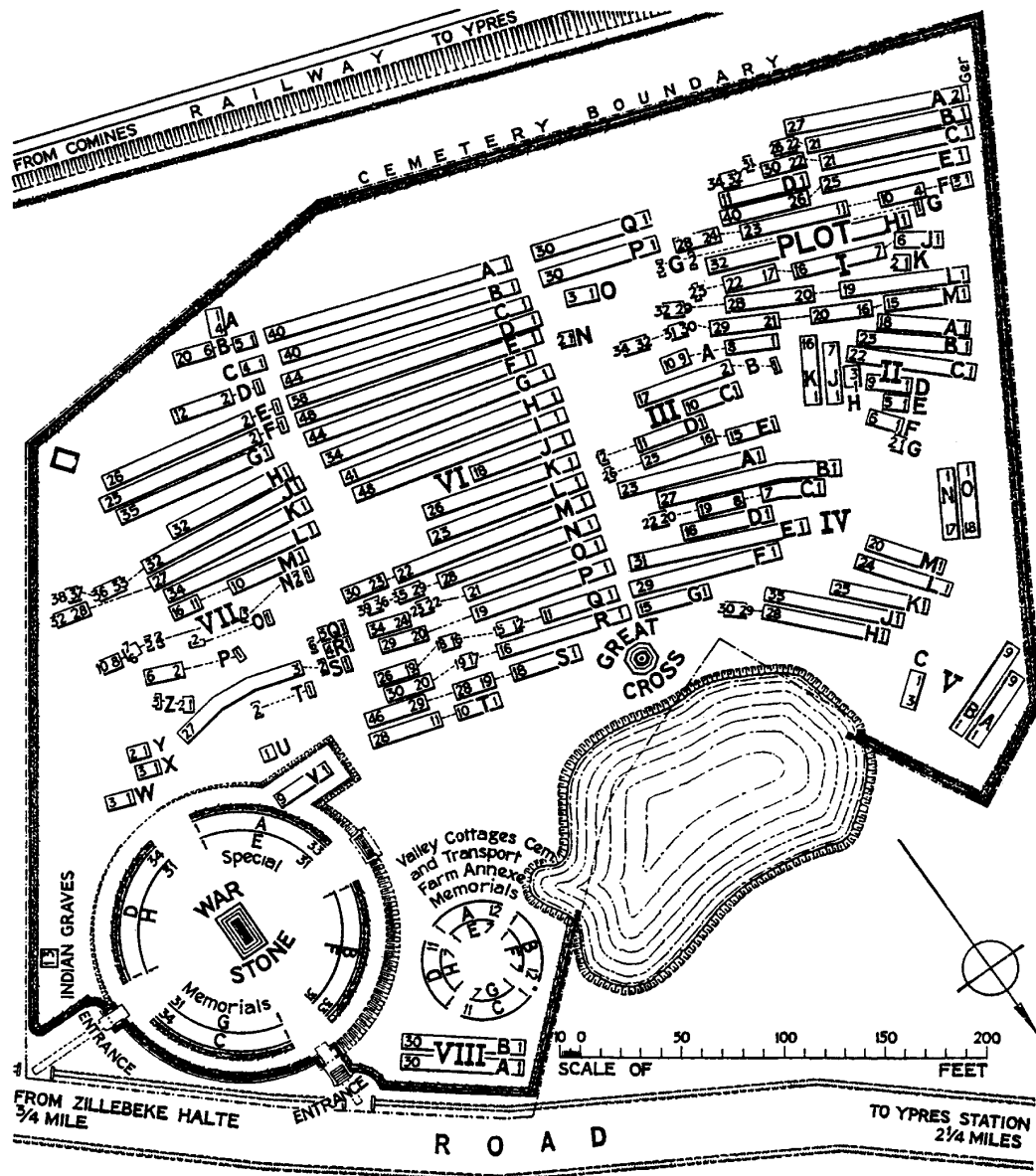
*Fig. 14 – Railway Dugouts Burial Ground Plan (CWGC Archive)*

At both Hedge Row Trench and Railway Dugouts we see the architect's use of the grave markers to reflect the event or moment that occurred that caused not the existence of the graves, but the loss of the graves. In both instances, the architectural feature created reflects not the death of the soldiers, but the landscape that caused

their burials to become unidentifiable. Again, in both instances the architectural feature that reflects the defining motif of the wartime landscape is the defining architectural feature of the cemetery. At Hedge Row Trench the shell hole form defines the entire space, whilst at Railway Dugouts it is the first architectural feature that the visitor encounters. In comparison with the sites at Railway Dug Out Burial Grounds and Hedge Row Trench there is one striking crossover; the architect for both sites was Reginald Truelove.

In both these cemeteries the inclusion of the shell hole motif within these cemeteries is created by the layout of the affected headstones within each cemetery. In other IWGC cemeteries we see the shell hole or mine crater motif within the other architectural aspects within the design.

On 7th June 1917 the British Army launched an offensive on the Messines Ridge, a stretch of high ground that ran from near the Franco-Belgian border to the outskirts of Ypres. The attack was to begin with the explosion of 19 mines located at various points along the ridge.[292] In their report on the archeological project, focusing on the area around Ploegsteert, specifically the mining actions, Brown and Osgood note that "[i]n diaries, aerial photographs and indeed a visit to the area today, it is the mine craters that dominate. The mines are the footprints of the Battle of Messines".[293] In his account of the fighting in the area Private Edward Lynch described the moment the mines were blown and explicitly captured the devastating impact on both German trenches and the landscape;

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[292] Martin Brown and Richard Osgood, *Digging Up Plugstreet: The archaeology of a Great War battlefield* (Yeovil: Haynes Publishing, 2009), p. 11.
[293] Ibid, p. 91.

> …there to the north on the crown of the great black dome we know
> is Messines Hill, we see a movement as of an enormous black tin hat
> slowly rising out of the hill. Suddenly the great rising mass is shattered
> into a black cloud of whirling dust as a huge rosette of flame bursts
> from it and great flames lick, dancing and flickering. High up in the sky
> above the explosion we see a bank of dark clouds turn red from the
> reflection of the terrible burst below. A minute or so later, we get the
> appalling roar, drowning even our guns' firing, as the sound of
> nineteen great mines going up bursts upon our ears. The ground
> rumbles, shivers and vibrates under us.[294]

The impact is emphasized a few pages later as Private Lynch and his comrades reach

the brow of the Messines Ridge:

> Over dozens of broken, smashed trenches. Dead Fritz are in their
> hundreds. We come to a mine crater. A huge hole a hundred yards in
> diameter and thirty yards deep. The enemy trenches for nearly a
> hundred and fifty yards on either side are blotted out, completely
> filled in […] Forward more trenches and smashed dugouts […]
> Through the crumbled heap of Messines we move.[295]

In his study of the battle Ian Passingham captured several references to the

destructive force of the mines and specifically of the act as a landscape experience,

mentioning that such was the force of the explosions that many German defenders

believed it to be "the beginning of a natural earthquake".[296]

One of the mines blown on the day was located at the trench map position of

Ontario Farm, one of the many fortified farmsteads in the area and located a short

distance from the village of Messines. Passingham describes the geological difficulties

encountered in setting this mine owing to the 'fast running sand'.[297] Such was the

geology of this specific site that once the mine had exploded it "left no crater, just a

circular, pulpy looking patch that bubbled slowly for days like porridge coming gently

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[294] E. P. F. Lynch, *Somme Mud* (London: Transworld, 2008), p. 183.
[295] Ibid, p. 187.
[296] Ian Passingham, *Pillars of Fire: The Battle of Messines Ridge, June 1917* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 92.
[297] Ibid, p. 63.

to the boil".[298] The impact on the landscape, captured in these excerpts is undeniable; the action at Messines Ridge caused an irreversible change to the landscape, the craters left behind indelibly stamped themselves in the memory of those who fought.

A few hundred yards from the location of the Ontario Farm mine is the IWGC Messines Ridge British Cemetery. (Fig. 15) Designed by Charles Holden and Wilfrid Von Berg, this is one of the later cemeteries of the Commission. The Historical Information for the cemetery provides an interesting piece of information regarding the location of the site:

> MESSINES RIDGE BRITISH CEMETERY, which stands on ground that belonged to the 'Institution Royale' (the Cross of Sacrifice is on the site of the Institution's windmill), was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefield around Messines and from the following small burial grounds.[299]

Indeed, the map of 17 June 1916 shows the *Moulin de l'Hopsice* at the location of the cemetery, though the exact location appears to be closer to the location of the war stone in
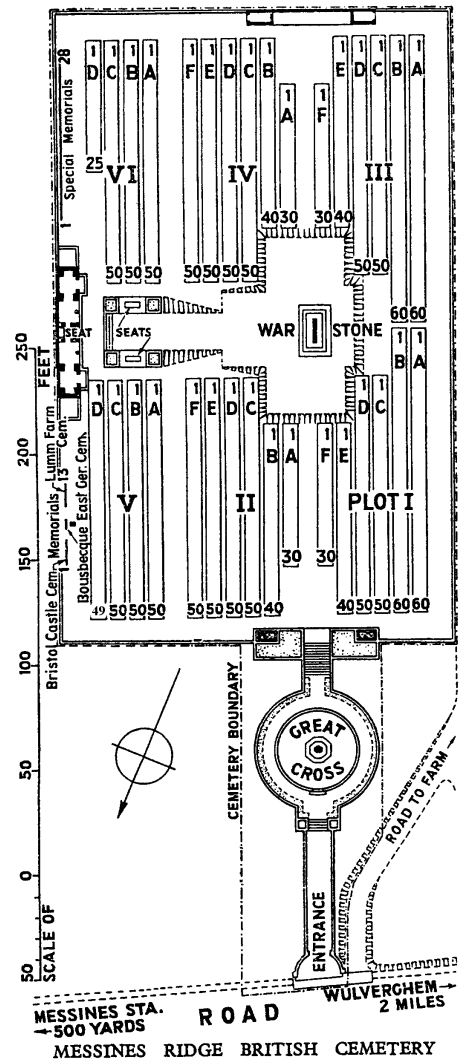


*Fig. 15 – Messines Ridge British Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

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[298] Ibid, p. 90; including quote from Alexander Barrie, *War Underground: The Tunnellers of the Great War,* 2nd edition (London: Tom Donovan, 1988).

[299] CWGC Historical Information, 'Messines Ridge British Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

the centre of the cemetery. That the cemetery was built after the war from individual graves and from the concentration of nine other cemeteries confirms that this location was both considered and that the alignment with the windmill feature was intentional on the part of the architect. However, it is not the alignment between the architecture and the pre-war landscape that is of particular interest at this site, rather it is the entrance to the cemetery.

In his biography of Charles Holden, Eitan Karol explains the entranceway to both Messines Ridge and Buttes, another memorial to the New Zealanders designed by Holden:

> At neither Messines Ridge or Buttes is the cemetery entered directly from the road. Rather Holden created a transitional space linking the sacred and the profane. At Messines Ridge one enters the precinct, walks down an avenue, around the raised planted mound on which the Cross of Sacrifice stands, and only then does one enter the cemetery itself.[300]

For Karol the most interesting part of the design layout is the Memorial to the Missing pavilion found within the cemetery. Whilst he noted with interest the transitional space between the entrance and the cemetery, there is little attention paid to an interpretation of this architectural feature.

The central mound that Karol describes is also a memorial to the missing. The retaining wall of the mound also forms a flat surface upon which the names of members of the New Zealand regiments killed in the fighting for the ridge are remembered. The position of the Cross of Sacrifice is formed by a retaining wall of

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[300] Karol, *Holden*, p. 242.

concrete block work, gris-de-poulseur rubble brick and Portland stone, and is topped by a planted mound. The visitor approaches the mound through a sunken walkway that uses the same blend of materials and with the addition of a box hedge along the lip.

The impact upon the visitor is that, as at Carnières, the cemetery and the surrounding landscape are entered and viewed from a trench eye level. In addition, the horizontal use of material and the contrast gives a sense of stratification to the architecture that is reminiscent of subterranean earth works. These are contributing factors to the direct sense of connection between the architecture and the landscape, but the most powerful of these is the Memorial to the Missing mound. Upon approach the mound pushes up out of the constructed landscape of the cemetery; the horizontal lines of the walls and horticulture contrasting with and exaggerating the curve of the central mound. It is Private Lynch's description of the Messines mine explosion captured in architectural form. The entrance trench



*Fig. 16 – Messines Ridge British Cemetery Entrance + Cross of Sacrifice*

terminates at the base of the mound, an alcove within the inner retaining wall containing the memorial inscription. This alcove is surmounted by stone block work that curves in the opposite direction to that of the mound, heightening the sense of upward movement. Finally, the planted mound, when seen from the level of the cemetery, echoes both Passingham's and Barrie's descriptions of the result in the landscape of the Ontario Farm mine. (Fig. 16)

There is nothing of note regarding this layer of landscape memory within the Messines Ridge authorisation forms submitted by Holden.[301] However, beyond the visual interpretation of the architecture there are two features that suggest that Holden and Von Berg had an understanding of the wartime landscape and the importance of the defining features of that landscape. Firstly, the considered position of the former windmill within the cemetery design is evidence of an understanding of the landscape. The windmill was no longer in situ by the end of the war, having been destroyed at a point prior to this. However, the remains were marked on the trench maps and suggest that they were one of the few physical features that could be used to locate either the enemy or one's own position in the landscape. That the cemetery is sited with the windmill position forming its central axis is evidence that this understanding of the landscape was through the trench maps, rather than the ground. Secondly, the cemetery was created after the Armistice from several other smaller cemeteries and outlying graves. The majority of these burials are from soldiers killed in the attack on 7 June 1917. Nearly two-thirds of the burials are unidentified and special memorials commemorate a number of these believed to have been buried within the original smaller cemeteries. The act of using a post-war

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[301] CWGC, 1/1/7/B/60, Holden, Major Charles.

concentration cemetery that represents a number of special memorial burials is in keeping with the other examples of shell hole and mine crater motifs being used within cemeteries.

The area around Messines, all the way to Ploegsteert, a town on the Franco-Belgian border the area, had been known as a quiet place in the line; a 'cushy spot' in Tommy vernacular. [302] As Stichelbaut noted of a comparison between aerial photographs of the Messines area prior to the huge landscape changes caused by 7 June 1917, "although the field systems are still visible, there is now much greater shell damage as the sector begins to lose its 'quiet' tag".[303] The period from mid 1917 until the end of the war witnessed the further destruction of the landscape. With shellfire came the inevitable swathes of missing. The post-war response to this was the creation of a Memorial to the Missing between Ploegsteert and Messines near to the hamlet of St Yvon. To the north of this hamlet two mines had been detonated as part of the attack on Messines Ridge.

The Memorial to the Missing at Ploegsteert was one of the sites selected to be put out to open competition. It is not clear as to the stipulations regarding the architects, specifically whether they had to have served in the Army during the war, as the Junior Architects had been required to. However, the three shortlisted candidates for the memorial to be built at Louveral under open competition, H. Chalton Bradshaw, William Godfrey Newton and John Oscar Cheadle, had all served during the war. Indeed, it was Bradshaw who also won the competition to design the memorial at Ploegsteert. Bradshaw was another of the architects involved with the

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[302] Doyle and Walker, *Trench Talk*, p. 241.
[303] Brown and Osgood, *Digging Up Plugstreet*, p. 73.

IWGC project to have a connection with the Liverpool School of Architecture. He had been a Rome Scholar, where he completed the works of Lutyens at the British School, and went on to design other war memorials, most notably the Guards Division memorial with sculptor Gilbert Ledward at Horse Guards Parade, London.[304]

The memorial at Ploegsteert is located a short distance from the two mines at St Yvon and on the road to Messines. This road effectively charts the direction of the attack on 7 June 1917. Whilst the cemetery surrounding the memorial provides an interesting case study on the IWGC approach to land acquisition and the retaining of wartime sites, the parallel between the memorial form and the landscape is of particular interest in this section. In 1918 Bradshaw married the archaeologist Mary Taylor. The post-war archeological fraternity was beginning to adopt some of the lessons of the First World War in regard to the interpretation of land, most notably aerial study and interpretation of the landscape. In her biography of O. G. S. Crawford, an early exponent of aerial archeology, Kitty Hauser noted that;

> At particular times of the day when the sun is low, the contours of trenches and craters from the Western Front can still be seen pockmarking the fields of Flanders and Picardy. Seen from the air, in certain seasons ghostly lines of the old front line wind across the landscape. When the fields of Thiepval are under plough in the winter, the trench lines of the Leipzig Redoubt show up pale against the dark soil […][305]

These ghost landscapes existed and were visible, tangible, from above. But the bird's-eye view not only unlocks the hidden histories of a landscape, it became one of the

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[304] Stamp, *Silent Cities*, p. 22.
[305] Kitty Hauser, *Bloody Old Britain: O. G. S. Crawford and the Archaeology of Modern Life* (London: Granta, 2008), p. 26.

most important views of the wartime landscape. The soldier in his trench, unable to visually engage with much of the surrounding landscape, interpreted the land by trench map. These trench maps were the result of a mixture of aerial photography and ground survey. For Hauser, the aerial photographs of the First World War revealed far more than simply the strategic locations of enemy troops or artillery, they "made the terrain legible…aerial photographs revealed networks, distances and connections that existed but which couldn't be seen by earth bound mortals".[306]

The idea of a memorial that considered the vertical aspect of the battlefield landscape is of particular interest at Ploegsteert. As we have seen, many of the craters and shell holes of the Messines Ridge landscape, were backfilled after the war and reverted to agricultural land. Even the architecture of the Messines Ridge British Cemetery was intended to evoke the landscapes of the battlefield from a trench perspective. The memorial at Ploegsteert takes the form of a "circular building open in the centre, but the panels round the inner walls would be protected by a cloister".[307] It is the only IWGC Memorial to the Missing that adopts this form. Seen from above, the memorial outline echoes that of one of the many mine craters that defined the landscape of the area during the last two years of the war; the names of the missing are enclosed in this architectural representation of a mine crater, reflecting the likely fate of many of those commemorated.

Bradshaw served with the Royal Engineers in the 510th Field Company. His work would have required an intimate understanding of the battlefield his division were operating in. This knowledge would have been accrued by physical investigation of

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[306] Ibid, p. 36.
[307] CWGC, WG 219/2/16 Memorials to the Missing Competition File.

the places and spaces and by the examination of trench maps and aerial photographs. The ability to transfer the vertical information of the photographs and maps to the horizontal experience of no-man's land would have been essential. The combination of Bradshaw's personal experience of being in and interpreting the wartime landscape, his marriage and the undoubted resultant exposure to interwar archaeological trends, and the unique use of a circular architectural form in a wartime landscape defined by mine craters make a compelling case for an interpretation of the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing as a vertical memorial to the landscape.

The crater motif encapsulated at the Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing differs from other examples in that it uses a freestanding architectural form to create the space, rather than the layout of the grave markers. Whilst it is unique in that sense, it is not the only example of IWGC architecture other than grave markers being used to encode a cemetery space with a *leitmotif* of the battlefield.

Heading out of Ypres via the Menin Road the history of the Great War landscape is visible at every mile. For those who know it, the names resonate with wartime memory, albeit now received memory. A little way down the road is the village of Hooge. During the war the village was pulverized to non-existence. Stichelbaut in his interpretation of an aerial photograph from 9 June 1917, says of the role of craters in this landscape that:

> The British crater of 19 July 1915 was pumped dry, and on this aerial photograph from 9 June 1917 the entrances to underground shafts can be seen. A great deal of activity is also visible in the four German mine craters of 6 June 1916. The aerial photograph also shows two

mine craters that exploded in front of the German line in February or March 1917. The crater rim, from which there must have been an excellent view of the surrounding landscape, is equipped with four small fighting positions.[308]

It is clear from both the photograph and Stichelbaut's interpretation that within this landscape the crater was the defining feature in both attack and defence. In his guidebook to the area Nigel Cave quotes the description of the Hooge landscape by a British Officer, Billy Congreve:

> At the end of trench, nearest the crater, I had a most wonderful view of Bellewaarde Farm and Y Wood. No wonder the Germans wanted the place – it's a strong little position. To get into the crater from here was not easy, as no trench had been completed into it. However, by keeping low one could get into it at the back. It was a sight I shall never forget. The hole was huge, at least forty yards in diameter and thirty feet deep, but these figures give no idea of what the place looked like. The earth had been thrown into a high 'lip' all round […] from each side of the crater, one obtains a good view of the lake and the chateau. In fact it's a most commanding point and our being there must irritate the Boche.[309]

Congreve's description reiterates Stichelbaut's interpretation; the battlefield of Hooge was defined by its craters. The cemetery known as Hooge Crater Cemetery was first established in October 1917 by the Burial Officer of the 7th Division, though the vast majority of the 5,916 graves are from the concentration of a number of smaller outlying cemeteries and recovered individual bodies. In total there were ten smaller cemeteries concentrated into Hooge Crater Cemetery.[310] As we have seen with those other sectors of the battlefields dominated by craters, there is a high percentage of the burials that remain unidentified. The precinct of the cemetery

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[308] Stichelbaut, *Great War from the Air*, p. 144.
[309] Nigel Cave, *Sanctuary Wood and Hooge*, (London: Leo Cooper, 1993), p. 46.
[310] CWGC Historical Information, 'Hooge Crater Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

takes on particular significance in that owing to the post-war expansion it now covers a large section of the ground that was fought over in the many and various attacks to capture and recapture the craters of Hooge. According to Cave, the Bond Street communication trench ran through this space, though there is no apparent geometric alignment with any aspects of the architecture.

For both Stichelbaut and Cave the defining aspects of the Hooge wartime landscape were the mine craters and the view of the battlefield these craters afford. At Hooge Crater Cemetery we see an architecture that evokes these two key aspects. The built architecture within the cemetery is made up of three distinct aspects: an entrance way, transitional space and burial plot. The transitional space is in itself split into two distinct spaces; a lawned area leading into a paved area that contains the Cross of Sacrifice. This paved area takes the form of a plateau and it sits at a ninety-degree axis to the central axis of the cemetery. The plateau is flanked by two pavilions and is raised by a small red brick wall and three steps from the burial plots. Indeed, in his description of the cemetery, Guerst states that "the plateau offers a fine view of the cemetery and the surrounding landscape".[311] The connection between the defining aspects of the wartime landscape and the architectural intervention indicates a consideration of the role of the cemetery within the landscape, beyond the housing of burial plots, to be expanded on in a subsequent chapter. (Fig. 17)

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[311] Guerst, *Lutyens*, p. 330.

The architects at Hooge Crater, Lutyens and Rew, used the first transitional space to create a distinct connection between the battlefield landscape and the memorial landscape. The primary axis of the cemetery runs from the entrance way to a viewing platform at the opposing end. Along this axis can be found the War Stone, Cross of Sacrifice and primary circulation routes; all the key elements of the cemetery layout can be found on this axis. The first piece of architecture encountered, however, is the framing for the War Stone. This frame takes the form of a stylised crater, sunk into the lawned area and established with the use of concrete block work to form the lip. There are similarities in the approach used at Hooge Crater to that of Railway Dugouts, notably the use of the centralised War Stone within the crater motif. In both these cemeteries the shell hole and crater motif form the entrance space to the rest of the cemetery.

Unlike previous cemeteries that used the *leitmotif* of either the shell hole or mine crater, at Hooge this symbolic crater is not used to represent directly the loss of buried bodies, such as at Railway Dugouts, nor is it used to reflect an actual crater void, as at Zivy and Lichfield Craters. Instead, the architectural crater designed into the cemetery is a memory of the
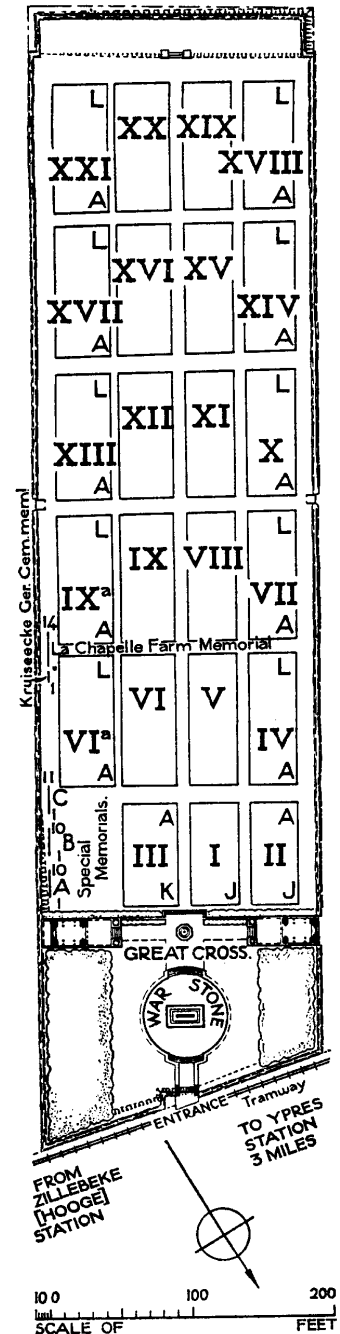


*Fig. 17 Hooge Crater Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

landscape and, by extension, a memory of the experience of that landscape. Placed where it is in the transitional space prior to the burial plots, it connects the visitor with the wartime landscape and experience enclosed within the walls of the cemetery. The use of the crater motif within the cemetery provides further evidence of the intent of the IWGC architects to connect the memorial spaces of the cemeteries with the experience and landscape of the war.

## 2.2.3 Direct Motif

Within the group of cemeteries that utilise either shell hole or mine crater motifs within their designs, we also see a sub-group emerge. Both sub-groups recognise the importance of either the shell hole or mine crater feature in the experience and understanding of the wartime landscape. Whereas one of the subsets uses the primary motif of the shell hole or crater within its design, there is no direct spatial link between the motif and the actual landscape feature. The second subset, however, combines both motif and spatial connection. In this respect, the second subset can be considered as a direct motif of the battlefield. There is still a distinction between these sites and those at Zivy and Lichfield Craters as they do not use the physical void of the crater or shell hole to create the cemetery space; however, these cemeteries use the footprint of the landscape feature to influence the architectural treatment of the space.

The ability of the IWGC cemeteries to not just retain the history of the site but to use the architectural treatment to infer something of the circumstance of both those buried within and those who experienced the locale during wartime is evident at one

of the cemeteries contained with Newfoundland Memorial Park on the Somme. The smallest of those cemeteries within the boundaries of the park, Hunter's Cemetery, contains forty-one burials. According to the historical information held by the CWGC the name derives from the Chaplain to the Black Watch, who themselves had several battalions involved in the attack and capture of Beaumont Hamel, just beyond the park boundary, in November 1916.[312]

Designed by A. J. S. Hutton, and as at the previously mentioned London Cemetery, and Zivy and Lichfield Craters, Hunter's Cemetery represents a number of burials within a single shell hole. However, the fundamental difference between these sites is the established identities of the burials within Hunter's Cemetery. The forty-one burials ensured that the cemetery went above the threshold for the inclusion of a Cross of Sacrifice within the cemetery; Hutton used this to great effect within the design.

The cemetery takes the form of two concentric circles. The outer circle is created by the boundary wall, the inner circle is formed by a wall that in turn creates the mound upon which the Cross of Sacrifice is positioned. Uniquely, Hutton used this inner wall to set the gravestones into. It is the only IWGC cemetery containing known burials that has no free-standing gravestones. There are two distinct motifs captured in Hutton's design, firstly the circular layout which retains the geometry of the original shell hole and also the history of the cemetery. The second motif is more closely aligned with the creation of the distinct landscape and the shell hole upon which the cemetery is based. As at Messines, a sense of upward movement

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[312] CWGC Historical Information, 'Hunter's Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

within the architecture suggests the dome of earth created as a shell explodes. The entrance gateway within the perimeter wall features a curving detail that draws the eye upwards; this motion is continued by the centralized Cross of Sacrifice. Unfortunately, as with many other authorisation sheets, the architect has left little clue behind as to how much of this was intentional. In addition, considered in the context of the overarching intention of the IWGC and that the two motifs are recognisable within other cemeteries also related to shell holes and mine craters, it is likely that these two motifs were considered by Hutton.

As at Hedge Row Trench Cemetery, Hunter's Cemetery uses a combination of the wartime history of the site and the original landscape feature to inform the architectural treatment. In the case of Hunter's Cemetery it is by way of a direct motif of the landscape within the architectural designs to retain the otherwise temporary geometries and forms of the battlefield.

Where the body has been lost, the architecture reflects the aspect that has not been: the landscape within which the body still lies. There is a direct correlation between those sites that experienced landscape upheaval which subsequently defined the experience of the landscape in these sectors and the architectural treatment of the commemorative places of the men lost in this upheaval. Whilst this connection may have been direct, as in with that of the trench burial cemeteries such as Devonshire Cemetery, or the shell hole cemeteries, such as Hunter's Cemetery, it is often implicit. To understand the connection between the cemetery space and the wartime landscape the visitor must understand both. At Lichfield and Zivy Craters

there was a more explicit sense of battlefield retention in the vast voids of the two respective craters worked into the memorial space.

This discovery, or more specifically, re-discovery, enables us to view the architectural interventions of the IWGC as a memorialisation of the landscape. The names of the fallen soldiers are remembered within these sites; however, the architecture uses the motifs of the landscape to lift the visitors' gaze to beyond the boundary of the cemetery and out into the fields where the men still lay.

## 2.3 Material Culture and Layout: Retaining the Battlefield Within the Cemetery Walls

In the previous two chapters this thesis has looked at the way the architecture and broader design process of the IWGC sought to retain a connection between the memorial space and the battlefield landscape. This chapter will explore other approaches used by the IWGC to retain direct battlefield reference within their sites. It will do this in the consideration of both the Kenyon and Bloomfield reports, but as with the previous chapters, the predominant resource used to explore this will be the cemeteries of the IWGC.

On the old Western Front place is an essential part in the memory narrative, of both the war and the subsequent mythology surrounding deaths in battle. This chapter will begin by positioning the IWGC cemeteries as an aide to our understanding of, and our relationship to the First World War. The strongest form of this spatial memory is at the exact point in the landscape that a specific event occurred. This chapter will look at the immediate response to this need, specifically in the context of death. It will firstly examine the memorial interventions that sought to represent a specific location of death, namely those privately erected memorials, and will place the IWGC design decision regarding RE Grave, Railway Wood in this context.

Secondly, the chapter will look at how, on rare occasions, it was possible for the IWGC architects to include original remnants of battlefield material culture into their designs. Specifically, it will show the IWGC sensibility to place and the role of these retentions in carrying out the suggestions of Blomfield's 1918 memorandum.

Finally, this chapter will look at the retention of original cemetery layouts within the final architectural treatment. It will show how the IWGC policy of retaining original burials, after the retention of battlefield material culture, allowed for the next best element of this connection with the physical spaces of the battlefield. Indeed, the concentration of outlying graves to nearby cemeteries attests to the importance of place in the overarching design policies of the Commission. The chapter will go on to discuss the treatment of original cemetery layouts as a way of retaining the battlefield and indirect association with place. An important distinction to note from the design elements and cemeteries that will be discussed in Chapter 6; whilst there is a discussion regarding the relationship between the internal and external spaces of the cemeteries, the primary focus is the architectural treatment and memorial considerations with the specific place of the cemetery confines.

## 2.3.1 The Role of Place in the Memorialisation of the British Dead

In *Voir le Grande Guerre* Annette Becker described the role of the visual in the history of the First World War.[313] For Becker, the photo acts as a narrative aid in the grammar of war, experience and memory, allowing the three separate elements to interact with each other. In an earlier work, Becker identified both the spatial appropriation of mourning, and that the English memorials were "built in memory of both the war dead and the war itself".[314] In the context of these conclusions the cemeteries of the IWGC, in the same way Becker considers the photograph, can be regarded as *aide memoires* to the broader spaces and more specific places connected

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[313] Annette Becker, *Voir le Grande Guerre: Un autre récit 1914-2014* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2014).
[314] Annette Becker, [Trans. Temerson, C.], *1914-1918 Understanding the Great War* (London: Profile Books, 2002), p. 187.

to the war, the experience of war, and the memory, rather than the memorialisation, of the war. In fact, the architecture of the cemeteries distils these three elements into a single space using the place as the nodal point for the contrasting layers of memory. In this respect the direct connection with the point in the landscape inherent in the cemeteries makes them a more powerful conduit than the photograph in their ability to bring these layers together.

There are a few places along the old Western Front where the marked burial spot is coterminous with the place of death. There is an outlying grave of three soldiers behind Leuze Wood, the same Lousy Wood of Von Berg's experiences. Indeed, the three soldiers are from the 2nd Battalion, London Regiment, the same division and in the same attack as Von Berg's own LRB. This isolated grave, whilst coming under the protection and maintenance of the War Graves Commission, was treated with a private memorial plinth. Indeed, it is likely that the private memorial erected at Faffemont Farm was the reason the three soldiers buried there were not concentrated into a nearby larger cemetery.

This early intervention by grieving families to retain the site of death or burial was not uncommon. For many of those private memorials that were erected on the old Western Front they represented the last known place on earth the grieving family's relative had been seen, or the last known whereabouts of his body. In a war that created vast numbers of missing, these memorials became personal cenotaphs in lieu of an actual grave. In his booklet of private memorials on the Western Front, Barrie Thorpe catalogued thirty-six extant private memorials, only four of them related to an actual grave. One such example from the other three other instances of isolated

graves being retained is that of Lieutenant Anthony George Atwood Morris, who

was killed with the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment in the fighting of October

1914. Thorpe captures the unique chain of events that led to Morris' private

memorial being established;

> Morris and his men were buried in the churchyard but after the War, when the others were reburied in Meteren Military Cemetery, his parents decided to take his body home for burial. In fact, they reached Calais before learning that this was not permitted. They returned and buried their son temporarily with his men while they bough two hectares of land encompassing the spot where he was killed.
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Morris built an elaborate open sided building of brick with a tiled roof and a large clock which had come from their stables in England, in which to bury their son.[315]

Of particular interest in this extract is Thorpe's inference that the IWGC were

supportive of the decision to move Morris' body back out of the concentrated burial

plot and back to the original site.

However, despite the erection of private memorials over the graves of the six

soldiers in question at Faffemont Farm, Meteren and La Haute-Maison, it is not clear

how close the place of burial is to the point of death. Of all the private memorials,

the closest example of an isolated grave reflecting not just the place of burial but the

point of death in the landscape is that of Captain Cecil Tidswell of the Royal Flying

Corps, who is buried near Etricourt. The family of Captain Tidswell purchased the

plot of land, despite pressure from the IWGC to concentrate his burial into a local

cemetery, and erected a private memorial to him. The original burial site, according

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[315] Barrie Thorpe, *Private Memorials of the Great War on the Western Front* (Reading: Western Front Association, 1999), p. 79.

to Captain Tidswell's father and quoted in Thorpe, was "where he fell in his burnt and wrecked machine by the Germans".[316]

Indeed, in all cases where an isolated grave remains a private memorial was erected in advance of IWGC architectural treatment in the area. There are, of course, also those private memorials that do not directly commemorate a burial, rather they are capture the relationship between place, location of death and memorialisation. Often the locations of such private memorials reflect the last known location of an individual soldier prior to their body being lost in the *mêlée* of battle. The memorial marker to Captain Herbert Meakin at Lesboeufs on the Somme is just such a memorial. Erected by his family, the memorial stone is placed at the point in the battlefield that Captain Meakin's comrades last recalled seeing him. Whilst there is a direct relationship between memorial and point of death it is in lieu of the body, the memorial functioning as a cenotaph at the believed location of death. In spite of the intention of both the IWGC and the spate of private memorials that were erected in the post-war years, many of these memorials directly related to a known burial mark the original burial point, rather than the point of death. Those memorials that mark the point of death are used to symbolise a grave marker where there is no known grave upon which a memorial could be placed.

The previous chapter focussed on those cemeteries that were created from the explosions of mines, the work of Royal Engineer tunnelling companies. It is, then, apt that this chapter begins with a cemetery designed to commemorate a group of these miners killed in 1917 near Ypres. A short distance from the site of Hooge Crater

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[316] Ibid, p. 101.

cemetery, next to the woodland that existed in the same spot during the war, is R.E. Grave, Railway Wood.

The site is notable for two specific reasons; it is the smallest independent IWGC site, commemorating twelve burials and secondly it is one of the rare instances on the old Western Front where the IWGC adopt the name grave and not cemetery. The nature of the action that caused the deaths is recounted in a series letters of one of the men on the memorial, Lieutenant Charles Boothby. The mine that exploded on 28 April 1916 enclosed Boothby and his comrades within the tunnel in which they had been working. A letter received by his family after his death, a fellow officer of the unit, Major J. M. Bliss, apologised that Lieutenant Boothby's body could not be recovered.[317] Owing to the nature of tunnelling operations, however, the exact location of the explosion and subsequent caving in of the tunnel took place, indeed a map and exact location of the site is recorded in the 177th Tunnelling Company War Diary, as duplicated in the published letters.[318] This enabled the site of 'burial' to be identified and the marker place above the spot regarded as a grave marker and not a memorial. It is the only IWGC site where a Cross of Sacrifice is used in preference to individual grave markers. In addition, it is the only IWGC where indirect burial is treated in the same manner as a formal burial, much like the private memorials discussed earlier. Indeed, the use of the term grave in the title is reflective of this tension. In almost all other cases within the IWGC such a death would have been recorded as missing, rather than a burial.

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[317] Arthur Stockwin (ed.), *Thirty-Odd Feet Below Belgium* (Tunbridge Wells: Parapress, 2005), p. 88.
[318] Ibid, p. 104.

## 2.3.2 Cemetery Design and the Inclusion of Material Culture of the Battlefield

Previously we have looked at how the cadre of Junior Architects used the built architecture of the cemeteries to retain specific geometries and spaces. The designs reflected both the exact geometric alignment as well as inferred spaces. In every case the architect was required to recreate the alignment or space through the built architectural intervention. Their designs reconstructed geometries and spaces, and in turn they reflected the experiences of the original battlefield. Whilst the architects of the cemeteries studied within the first two chapters sought to rebuild aspects of the Western Front landscape in order to retain the battlefield. In the cemeteries we will look at in this chapter we will see how the Junior Architects retained extant elements of the battlefield within their designs.

There are two distinct ways in which the architects of the IWGC sought to preserve the battlefield within the architectural treatment of the cemeteries; firstly by retaining battlefield objects and secondly by retaining the original sporadic cemetery layout. This section will explore both aspects to show another way in which the architects of the IWGC designed Blomfield's desire to retain the history and circumstance of these places into the architecture.

Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest commonwealth war cemetery in the world. It is the final resting place for 11,956 soldiers and an additional 34,949 names are remembered on the memorial to the missing that forms the rear perimeter wall. The IWM historian and noted author of battlefield guidebooks, Rose Coombs, states that the cemetery was first established by men of the 50th (Northumbrian) Division

sometime in 1917.[319] The exact reasoning behind the name Tyne Cot is unclear, though the extensive study of the establishment and naming of the cemetery by Franky Bostyn suggests that the name refers to a barn that was near to the location of the central bunker in 1915 and not the bunker itself.[320] In his 1944 memoirs, Sir Herbert Baker, one of the Principal Architects made reference to an interaction with King George V, in which the king is said to have suggested in no uncertain terms that the bunker should be retained. It is not clear whether King George had architectural treatment in mind, but the outcome was that within the flagship cemetery of the IWGC the architecture retained an extant aspect of the Great War landscape.

The majority of Tyne Cot cemetery is made up of smaller cemeteries and individual burials that were concentrated from the surrounding fields. However, the central architecturally treated bunker was also adjacent to the original Tyne
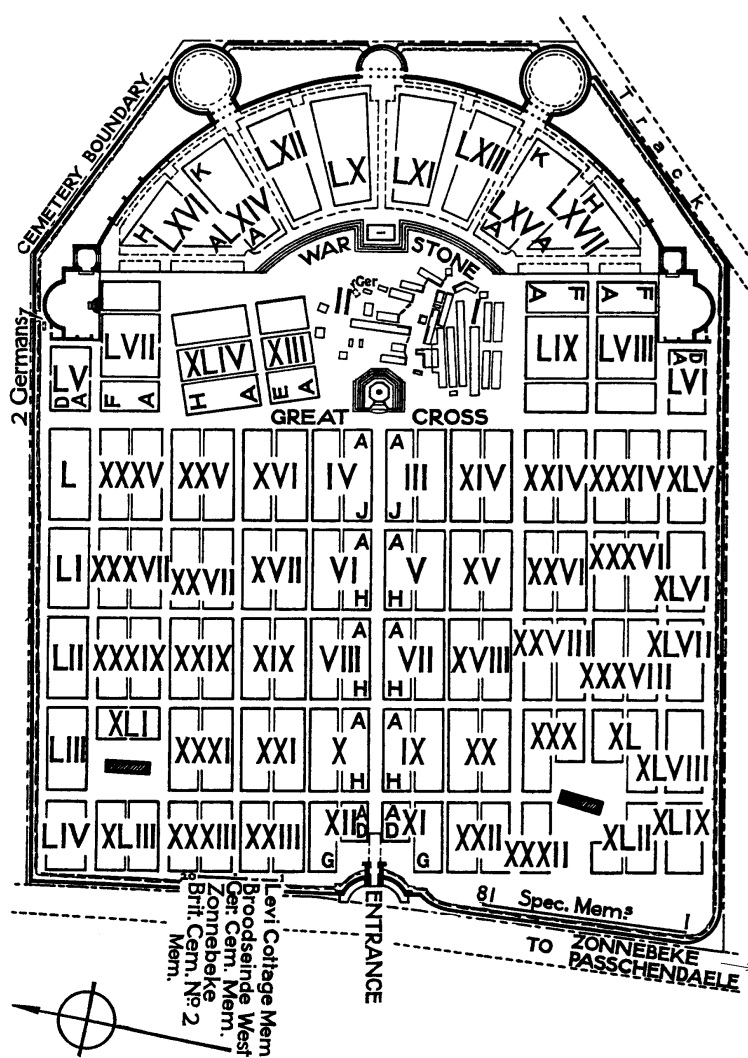
Fig. 18 – Tyne Cot Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)

[319] Rose Coombs, *Before Endeavours Fade* (Plaistow: Battle of Britain Prints International Limited, 1976), p. 40.
[320] Bostyn, *Passchendale*, p. 215.

Cot cemetery, a cemetery that housed the bodies of around 343 men.[321] Within the rigid rows of graves that form the vast majority of the cemetery, the original cemetery sits diametrically opposed in form. The original, haphazard creation of the graves has been permanently retained in the stone grave markers. (Fig. 18)

In his autobiography Herbert Baker makes reference to the architectural treatment of Tyne Cot cemetery:

> It was laid out around the graves of those buried on the field of battle near the biggest of many blockhouses. I was told that the King, when he was there, said that this blockhouse should remain. He expressed a natural sentiment, but in order to avoid the repellent sight of a mass of concrete in the midst of hallowed peace, which we wished to emphasize, a pyramid of stepped stone was built above it, leaving a small square of the concrete exposed in the stonework; and on this we inscribed in large bronze letters these words, suggested by Kipling, "This was the Tynecot Blockhouse." On the pyramid we set up on high the War Cross: thus from the higher ground at the back of the cemetery the cross can be seen against the historic battle-fields of the Salient, Ypres, and far and wide beyond.[322]

The subtle shift in language from first to third person in Baker's earlier description of his involvement with the design of the Indian memorial at Neuve Chapelle, the Memorial to the Missing at Tyne Cot and the architectural treatment of the bunker and cemetery at Tyne Cot suggest that the Junior Architect was given the responsibility of this particular aspect of the architectural treatment; the use of the term 'we' reflecting the design team rather than his individual input. This would not have been unusual in a larger cemetery, where Principal Architect involvement was

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[321] CWGC Historical Information, 'Tyne Cot Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[322] Herbert Baker, *Architecture and Personalities* (London: Country Life, 1944), p. 91.

often greater. In the case of Tyne Cot it is perhaps to be even more expected owing to the inclusion of the vast memorial at the rear of the cemetery.

The Junior Architect at Tyne Cot was John Truelove. Truelove had fought at the Third Battle of Ypres, or Passchendaele as it is colloquially known. The subtext of Baker's memoir, including the obvious weighting he ascribes to the design of the memorial over the cemetery, suggests that Truelove was responsible for the central feature of the retained cemetery and the subsequent architectural treatment of the blockhouse. Indeed, the 'pyramid' that Baker refers to does not have any specific commonality in terms of architectural vocabulary with the memorial just a few metres away. Its white block work, reminiscent of other IWGC cemeteries, such as the nearby Passchendaele New British Cemetery by Holden and Von Berg, is at odds with the dressed flint walls and Neo-Classical pavilions of the memorial.

In addition to the central architecturally treated blockhouse, Truelove's plan preserved two undressed blockhouses at the opposite end of the cemetery. Baker's obvious distain for exposed concreted is made clear in the excerpt, so it is unlikely that he would suggest the retaining of these untreated blockhouses. Practically such blockhouses would have been difficult to remove and it may well have been decided at on a financial basis that they should remain, however, the treatment thereafter is a conscious decision. The little written evidence available combined with the visual evidence of the extant architecture suggest that Truelove was not only the architect behind the retained, architecturally treated blockhouse and the retained architecturally treated battlefield cemetery, but also for the inclusion of the untreated, raw architecture of war in the shape of the two exposed blockhouses.

Truelove's treatment of the central pillbox gave it a distinct architectural language, other than that of the memorial and perimeter wall. Despite this, the pillbox functions as a fulcrum for the remainder of the design. The central axis from the lych-gate entrance to the centre of the curve of the memorial wall passes directly through the position of the pillbox. The geometry of the whole cemetery is defined by the preservation within the design of a piece of the original battlefield.

The retention of the three pillboxes creates a dynamic relationship between the architecture and the history of the site. In their account of the battles in and around Passchendaele in the summer and autumn of 1917 Prior and Wilson highlight the role of pillboxes in slowing the allied advances. One particular example tells how one ANZAC Corps in an attack on 12 October 1917 became caught in the muddy, shell-holed space between pillboxes and that subsequently this "host of pillboxes cut them down in swaths".[323] At Tyne Cot Cemetery the space between the two pillboxes contains the vast majority of burials, echoing the battlefield history of both the specific location and more generally the experience of fighting in the Third Battle of Ypres.

The decision to retain both pillboxes, most likely by Truelove, also provides an example of the rare occasion where the spatial relationships between the battlefield and the cemetery precinct are not directly reflected in the geometry of the built architecture. Rather, the IWGC architecture frames the space within which the battlefield landscape, more specifically the spatial relationships of the battlefield

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[323] Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *Passchendaele: The Untold Story* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 167.

landscape, are retained. This IWGC approach to spatial memorials will be covered more extensively in a subsequent chapter.

Truelove's treatment of the central pillbox also provides an interesting perspective as to the intention of the site within the battlefield touring experience. A tendency with modern cemeteries studies and the incorporation of IWGC cemeteries into battlefield guidebooks and tours is an introverted perspective on the history of these sites. If we consider the role of the cemetery within the battlefield tour it is often as focal point for the result of battle. As Iles points out, guides will often pick out specific graves and draw the attention of the group to that grave or graves.[324] This same approach can be seen in the many modern guidebooks available for various parts of the former Western Front, where the history of the site is relayed through the stories of those buried within. Indeed, this is the principal narrative of the war cemeteries, that the only stories are those of the dead. The extensive Battleground Europe series provides two examples of such an approach. Firstly, in the guide to Monchy le Preux near Arras, one such reference, in this case to Tank Cemetery;

> One striking feature of the cemetery is the long trench grave by the wall where 64 men of the 7/Cameron Highlanders were buried lying on their sides, with one arm placed round the body of the man next to him.[325]

The excerpt contains a reference to the trench the men were buried in, but rather than consider this information as evidence of other narratives of memory contained within the cemetery, the author opts to sentimentalise the cemetery further.

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[324]Jennifer Iles, Exploring landscapes after battle: Tourists at home on the old front lines. In: Skinner, J. (eds.) *Writing the dark side of travel*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012) pp. 182-202.

[325] C. Fox, *Monchy le Preux, Arras* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2000), p. 154.

Likewise, in the volume related to Beaucourt on the Somme the description of Martinsart Cemetery provides an example of the 'celebrity' soldier being used as a focal point;

> The headstones are of an unusual red sandstone that was used as an experiment. There are a number of Royal Naval Division graves, including that of Lieutenant Commander F S Kelly DSO of the Hood Battalion, Freyburg's friend and fellow officer.[326]

In both cases, the stories of the dead, those buried within the confines of the cemetery become the focus. The gaze of the viewer is inward facing, in many cases it is inward and downward. Goebel, in his study of the parallels between Great War and mediaeval memory, identified the reason for individuals to be placed above others in creating a narrative of the war;

> The lionization of some individuals was a by-product of the construction of a larger narrative which reduced the complex nature of the conflict to statements comprehensible to a mass audience.[327]

To place this in terms of the cemeteries, the ability of these sites to add to the narrative is defined by the dead and their stories. However, a consideration of the design decisions made show how Truelove's treatment of the central pillbox created a viewing platform that lifts the gaze of the visitor beyond only the stories of the dead, to the fields beyond. It is Truelove's attempt to use the architecture to encourage visitors to contextualise the cemetery within the landscape and thus making it a clear part of the narrative.

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[326] M. Renshaw, *Beaucourt, Somme* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2003), p. 149.
[327] Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 121.

Tyne Cot provides three examples of ways in which the IWGC architecture retains a single point of the battlefield; in name, architecturally treated objects and other objects retained in original form. In regards to this study, the particularly important aspect of these forms of retention is that those evident at Tyne Cot Cemetery appear to have been instigated by Truelove, the Junior Architect, and not Herbert Baker, the nominal architect and author of the architectural design.

Of the three forms of retention seen at Tyne Cot the least common is that of the original object forming part of the architectural treatment. Very few cemeteries contain a physical feature of the battlefield in original form, which in this case is constituted by architectural remains and ruins of the battlefield. There are two other cases within the old Ypres Salient that utilize the original battlefield as a physical part of the design, at Bedford House Cemetery and Prowse Point.

Bedford House Cemetery was originally formed of a number of separate enclosures, the gaps in between being filled in the battlefield clearance and cemetery concentrations of the interwar years. The architect for the cemetery was Wilfrid Von Berg. This is an example where the Junior Architect was given the mandate to design the whole cemetery and is, as such, credited with authorship by the War Graves Commission. This, in and of itself, suggests much greater involvement of the Junior Architects in the design process of other cemeteries, indeed, enough so as to give the commission confidence in their abilities to execute a design independently from one of the Principal Architects. For this trust to be established it can be reasonably assumed that the proportion of responsibilities delegated to the Junior

Architects within the Principal Architect led cemeteries was much greater than the official history and authorship files suggest.

The historic records of the CWGC describe Bedford House, known as Chateau Rosendal prior to the war, as "a country house in a small wooded park with moats".[328] At Bedford House Cemetery, Von Berg retained the ruins of the original chateau within the overall design. Using the ruins as the focal point, Von Berg designed a cemetery that drew on the influences of Edwardian country estate gardens as well as the influence of the original chateau's landscaping. The cemetery is split into three distinct parts, with the house forming the centre point around which the divisions are made. The entrance way to the cemetery takes the form of a long, sweeping carriageway on the same geometries as the original chateau. Running through the cemetery is a water feature, made from the remaining parts of the original moat, and over which passes a footbridge. Within the expanse of cemetery, housing over 4,000 graves, Von Berg has incorporated two Neo-Classical *tempiettos*.

The architectural treatment of Bedford House is not so much defined by the language of the War Graves Commission, but instead it is a direct reference to the pre-war chateau and the war time ruins retained within the cemetery. Von Berg, not only retained the ruins of what was known as Bedford House, he used the cemetery as a memorial to the place, a place that retained echoes of its former parkland. In doing so Von Berg captured that very element that had been lost in the rebuilding of Ypres. He created a memorial to the lost architecture of the Salient: the countless homes, churches and other parts of the built heritage of Flanders that were reduced

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[328] CWGC Historical Information, 'Bedford House Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

to rubble.[329] As at Tyne Cot, the original feature is retained to provide an access point to the wartime experience of the landscape, but it also retains an access point to the pre-war landscape that can also never be recovered.

At Prowse Point, also located within the former Ypres Salient, another pillbox is retained in the design of the cemetery. In this instance, the retention is not so pivotal, the exposed part of the pillbox being merely a fragment of concrete roof protruding from the grass. It does not influence any of the axes of movement, nor the aesthetic of the remainder of the cemetery. However, in spite of its seeming lack of influence on any other aspects a design decision was made to include it within the confines of the cemetery space and to ensure its visibility remained. This is of passing interest and, unfortunately, no paperwork remains to give greater insight into the decision making process that led to the pillbox being both retained and exposed within the cemetery.

The CWGC historical records note of Prowse Point that:

> This cemetery is unique on the Salient for being named after an individual. It is the site of the stand by the 1st Bn. Hampshire Regiment and the 1st Bn. Somerset Light Infantry in October 1914, which featured the heroism of a Major Charles Prowse - later as Brigadier-General C.B. Prowse, DSO (Somerset Light Infantry), he would be killed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, whilst commanding the 11th Infantry Brigade (he is buried in Louvencourt Military Cemetery).[330]

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[329] Vlaams Architectuurinstituut have been involved in mapping the lost buildings as well as the reconstruction of the region.
[330] CWGC Historic Files, 'Prowse Point Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

It is interesting that the CWGC draw attention to the individual after who the cemetery was named and continue to tell the biography of the soldier in question. There is also mention of the importance of the site in regards to the war. There is, however, no mention of one of the principal architectural features of the cemetery.

Beyond the title of the cemetery and the connection with a battle action, the most significant retention at Prowse Point Cemetery is the pond just inside the entrance. The pond is created from the basement of a farm cottage on the original site. During the fighting of October 1914 the 1st Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry were based around the vicinity of the cottage and in makeshift trenches. It was the location of this cottage that came to be known as Prowse Point.[331] In addition to the actions of autumn 1914, the trench maps of 1918 also show a trench running into the remnants of the cottage and another passing alongside it.[332] Cowlishaw's decision to retain the footprint of the cottage within his design is significant. Firstly, without the inclusion of the cottage ruin into the design the title Prowse Point would be a spatial rather than physical link. Secondly, by retaining the cellar of the cottage, Cowlishaw has ensured that an original piece of trench, albeit under water, is retained in the cemetery precinct.

In the context of Blomfield's report Cowlishaw's design retained several aspects of the history of the site. Indeed, the retention of this site along with others within Ploegsteert Wood makes for an interesting case study in regard to the spatial connection. This study will feature in chapter six, focusing on the IWGC approach to spatial memorials. Given the clear intent of the architect to retain the original

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[331] TNA, WO 95/1499/1, 1 SLI War Diary October 1914.
[332] HMSO, Trench Map, Ploegsteert, 10-28SW4-6A, 19 September 1918.

Prowse Point it is surprising that the CWGC historical files focus on the individual and not the richness of memory retained by the architectural treatment.

The decision taken by Cowlishaw to retain the cellar by filling the volume with water is not the only instance where an original battlefield feature is retained by inclusion within the landscape architecture of the cemetery. In a cemetery that we have previously looked at, Railway Dugouts Burial Ground near to Ypres completes a triumvirate of shell hole motifs included within the design by retaining an original shell hole in the guise of a pond.

It is clear from all the examples that these features were not retained through necessity, but rather by choice and deliberate consideration by the architects. Beyond the inclusion in these designs of physical battlefield features, there is also the inference in the treatment of them, most notably in Truelove's viewing platform designed into the central pillbox at Tyne Cot, of a consideration towards interrelationship of cemeteries and how the spaces both within and between cemeteries formed part of the design process. This point will be explored in greater detail in chapter six.

### 2.3.3 Cemetery Layout as Narrative Aide

For Lutyens, the cemeteries of the Western Front were to be like open-air chapels to the cathedrals of the Memorials to the Missing.[333] Yet, in the cemeteries we see a subversion of the hierarchy associated with the church space, the altar acting as a

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[333] CWGC, Add 1/1/3, Memorandum by Lutyens; Graveyards on the Battle Fields, 28 August 1917.

central, focal point; the holiest of holies. The other spaces around becoming general spaces and certainly considered less holy than the altar. Within the cemeteries the altar created by Lutyens' War Stone becomes the general space and the holiest ground lies before each individual headstone. The connection between place and memory comes to define the experience of visiting a War Graves Commission cemetery.

The decision taken by the IWGC to bury or commemorate each man as close as possible to the location where he fell was likely to have been initially driven by the practicalities of the cemeteries and burial places they inherited when the DGRE became the IWGC. The combination of the role of Divisional and Corps Burial Officers alongside publications such as the official *Care of the Dead* booklet ensured that those deaths that occurred near the frontline were dealt with as promptly as possible.[334] This was important on two levels, firstly that of sanitation and secondly that of morale.

Beyond the inherent practicalities that would have been involved with consolidating all the cemeteries into centralised plots, the principal driving factor behind the IWGC approach is that of history and narrative. In her exploration of the role of visual material in understanding the war, Annette Becker discusses the use of photographs as narrative aids.[335] This idea of the narrative aid is something that fits with the intention of the decision to retain the cemetery sites and their subsequent architectural treatment. However, the role of history as a defining aspect of site was present whilst the war was still being fought. Indeed, within the *Care of the Dead*,

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[334] Anon., *Care of the Dead* (London: Eyre and Spottiswode, 1916).
[335] Becker, *Voir la Grande Guerre*.

published by the DGRE during the war, we find the importance of the idea of the battlefield burial as a touchstone for the broader narrative of the battlefield and the experience and history;

> Near La Boisselle, again, is a cross inexpertly made of two pieces of lath, and lettered in pencil: "In loving memory of 2nd Lieut. X., ---- Regiment, killed here, July 1st, 1916." It stands scarcely ten feet in front of the line from which our army advanced on that morning. You feel, when you see it, the thrill of the first moment of the long battle of the Somme – the subaltern giving the word to his men, and himself falling almost at once, and the men pressing on.[336]

The idea that a single grave or cemetery could tell the story of those who were 'pressing on' as well as those who fell is clear in other parts of the booklet. Even when recognising that it will not be practical nor possible to leave all bodies where they were originally buried, there is a desire to retain the narrative of the war as much as is possible. The previous excerpt continues;

> That is a special case of a grave on a site more monumental than Westminster Abbey itself. A few such graves, and some part of the trenches near them, will probably be preserved for ever (sic) by village communes or private owners of land, as memorials and relics of the great war (sic) […] the history of the war be left written in this way on the face of the country, - a long dotted line of graves representing a trench, a cluster of graves a skirmish, a dense constellation a battle…[337]

In these two excerpts it is clear that the forerunner to the IWGC considered the location of the graves to be paramount in the ability of the cemeteries to act as narrative aids for future visitors to understand the history of the battlefield landscape within which they were placed.

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[336] Anon., *Care of the Dead*, p. 7.
[337] Ibid, p. 7.

Whilst there is a clear recognition that this will not always be possible, there was at least an effort to retain some aspect of the circumstances of both experience and death to retain and promote a narrative of the war. In the cemeteries we looked at in earlier chapters, specifically those that were architecturally treated to reflect the trench burial nature of their creation, we see this balancing of the desire to retain the representation of a trench and something of the narrative. At places such as Devonshire Cemetery, the original trench was used, but the location of death for many of those buried there was at some point between the location of the cemetery and the no-man's land in front of it. The cemetery, as such, reflects part of the experience, but not the point at which the soldier fell.

In the earlier examination of Tyne Cot, one of the aspects of architectural retention of battlefield features was the inclusion within the treatment of battlefield burials. As has been discussed above, whilst these were not often the physical points on the battlefield where the soldier fell, the tension of war is still evident. Often haphazard in layout and asymmetrical to the remainder of the plot, and certainly to the majority of the IWGC portfolio of cemeteries, the battlefield cemeteries bear clear visual connection to the war.

At Tyne Cot the approach was taken by Truelove to replace the temporary grave markers, often made of wood and with a variation of marking techniques, with the Portland stone headstone. This simple act of replacement created a direct link between the geometry of the hastily created battlefield cemeteries and the permanent memorials of the IWGC.

During the war the DGRE, under the supervision of Ware, had been primarily concerned with the identification of individual burials. Official guidance likely written by staff of the DGRE and circulated across the whole army, such as *SS456 Burials in the Battle Area – Notes for Officers*, focused the attention on identification of the burial and the correct procedure to follow thereafter.[338] Likewise, the practical advice regarding burial that was shared at the Divisional and Brigade level focused on the positioning of a burial site in regard to the logistical requirements.[339] In both instances, the information imparted was not related to the laying out or management of a cemetery. Indeed, the *Care of the Dead* instructional booklet had inferred that many of these sites would likely only be temporary and thus the primary concern should be clear and robust identification.[340] This was not the case in cemeteries to the rear of the lines, where careful laying out and management were both considered. In the diary of Colin Rowntree, a member of a Graves Registration Unit, there are frequent references to pegging out new rows, plots and cemeteries in a range of places that are in the rear areas. Additionally, there are several mentions of the administration of running a cemetery, including one such intrinsically practical entry on 4 March 1917 where Rowntree delivers crosses for Bedford House and Railway Dugouts Cemetery.[341] There is another remarkable example of the nature of the work of the GRUs captured at around the same time. Amongst a number of entries that note the erecting of large numbers of crosses, writing up of cemeteries and other cemetery management roles, Rowntree noted on 17 March 1917 that he had "Found a new cemetery in Zillebeke village with about 50 or 60 names".

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[338] LIDDLE, Liddle/ww1/gs/0528, Evans, A T N, private papers, War Office, *Burials in the Battle Area – Notes for Officers (SS 456)* (London: HMSO, 1917)

[339] TNA, WO95/935/1, XVII Corps No. G.S.32, 21 January 1917, para 11 section B, Burial of the Dead.

[340] Anon., *Care of the Dead*, p. 10.

[341] Rowntree Family Collection, Colin Rowntree's Diary (Unpublished: 1918).

Unfortunately, there is no indication as to the title of this cemetery or whether it is one of the extant cemeteries in the area around Zillebeke. However, the entry is a clear indication that, despite the efforts of Ware and the practical interventions of GRU members such as Rowntree, the creation and development of unofficial cemeteries was still a necessary requirement of the frontline even as far into the war as 1917. It is in these unofficial, battlefield sites that much of the romantic imagery of the cemeteries as war memorials arose. In addition, the chaotic layout provided a clear visual distinction between the front line and behind the lines.

The architectural treatment of these front line cemeteries, whether the cemeteries had been physically on the front line or in the spatial front line created by indirect shellfire, captures the raw urgency of their creation. These were not places to be laid out, for neat rows of crosses, they were places that if a soldier dwelt too long in the process of burying a comrade he might require the same service being done for himself. It is not simply the case that the architect in question replaced the wooden grave markers with headstones in any given battlefield cemetery so as to retain a sense of authenticity. There are a range of variations to the approach that use Blomfield's same over-arching principle of capturing the circumstance and history of the cemetery, but do so with a variety of nuance according to the site. These cemeteries that retain the battlefield nature of their creation in the architectural treatment can be broadly divided into three groups; direct replication, partial replication and footprint. This section, then, will look at examples of each of the groups to show how the architects of the IWGC used the layout of cemeteries to convey the history of the site.

The example of Tyne Cot shows clearly the approach adopted by, in this case Truelove, but of the architects more broadly speaking in regard to the retention of battlefield layout. Interestingly, the relationship between the retained pillbox and the retained burial layout is defined by the graves. Indeed, the scattered graves that skirt the retained pillbox evoke the same relationship as Frank Hurley's photographs of the same pillbox shortly after the battles of October 1917.[342] The decision to retain the scattered battlefield burials adds a clear narrative of the place and adds both meaning and authenticity to the retention of the pillbox.

One particular example of the use of retained layout to show the history of the site can be found at Quarry Cemetery near to Vermelles in the Loos sector. (Fig. 19) The CWGC Historical Files have the following information on the cemetery;

> Quarry Cemetery was used from July 1915 to June 1916, and (for two burials) in August 1917. Its existence is due chiefly to the fighting at Fosse 8 and at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and it contains many graves of the dismounted Cavalry who occupied this sector in 1915-16. The cemetery, was severely damaged by shell fire.
>
> There are now over 100, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, 10 are unidentified and many of the graves, identified as a whole but not individually, are marked by headstones bearing the additional words "Buried near this spot".[343]

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[342] AWM, P04060.005, Hurley, F., Photograph, 'Retaliation Farm dressing station', 12 October 1917.
[343] CWGC, Historical Information, 'Quarry Cemetery, Vermelles' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

The function of the historical files is often to capture information about the setting of the cemetery, with the occasional reference to the cemetery design. However, in this instance the information it captures reveals a specific aspect of the design. The cemetery was heavily damaged by shellfire. As we have seen at cemeteries such as Hedge Row Trench in a previous chapter, this often obliterated sites beyond recognition. The topographic situation of Quarry Cemetery, however, meant



QUARRY CEMETERY, VERMELLES.
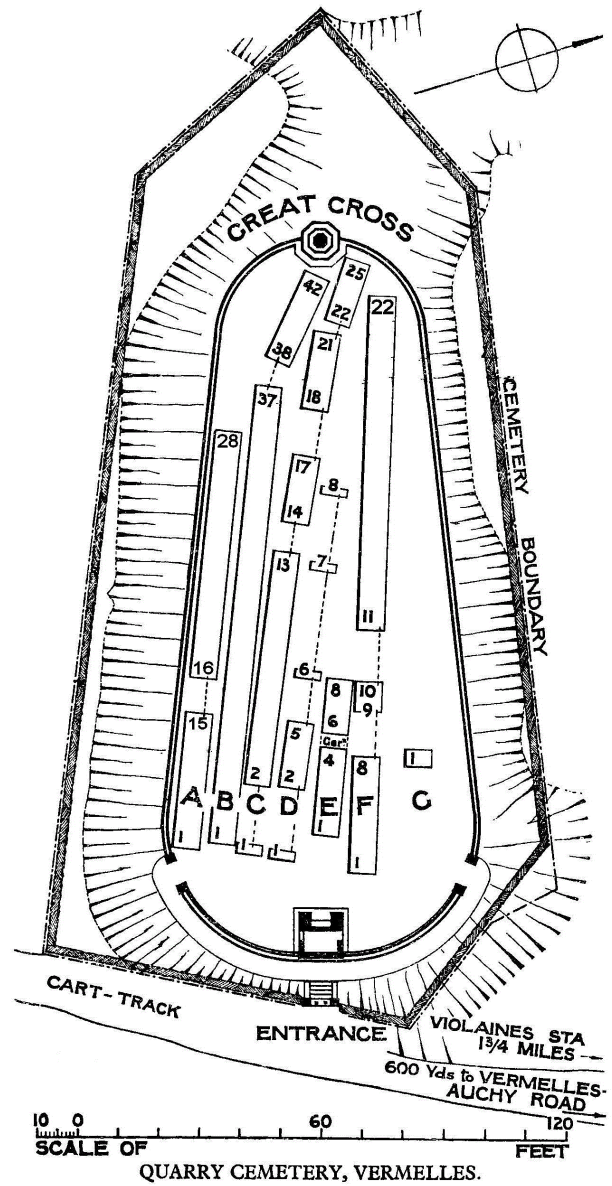
*Fig. 19 – Quarry Cemetery, Vermelles Plan (CWGC Archive)*

that despite incurring heavy shellfire, the perimeter of the cemetery was retained. The position of the cemetery defined both its creation and architectural treatment, it being located as one might expect, in a shallow quarry. Much like other battlefield created cemeteries, they often reflect a place near to the front line that would have been less likely to be harassed by shellfire; a sunken piece of ground provided just such a position.

The site retains the geometries of the battlefield by default. However, the architectural treatment has still sought to emphasise these geometries. The southern perimeter tracing the same path as Quarry Loop trench, the axis of the cemetery operating on the same as the trench network and the entrance to the cemetery being the point of convergence of three trenches.[344] In spite of these geometric alignments it is the treatment of the graves themselves that provides the most interesting aspect of the cemetery design.

Within the approval form for Quarry Cemetery are contained a number of elements that confirm an interpretation of the site that suggests the architect, in this case it was again Truelove, was both aware of the historical significance of the site and intentionally retained those aspects. It is worth quoting the remarks of Truelove at length in this instance, as they are a rare example of insight into the design process that many other approval sheets do not capture. Truelove wrote of his proposal for Quarry Cemetery:

> This little cemetery lies in a quarry near what was the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Its situation is in the middle of a wide expanse of arable land and land not yet re-claimed from devastation. There is no definite road or track leading to it. Access is obtained by walking over the fields. It is a very difficult cemetery to find since it lies below the level of the surrounding ground.
>
> It is proposed to leave the quarry very much as it is except for the planting of the slopes which will be left to the Horticultural Department. It is thought best to define what may be considered as the bottom of the quarry by a very low Basse Normandie retaining wall and to make up the irregular existing bank to this wall. The Cross sited in the position shewn will dominate the Cemetery and act as a guiding point to anyone visiting the cemetery.[345]

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[344] HMSO, Trench Map, La Bassee-S, 10-36C (44A) NW1 8A, 4 March 1917.
[345] CWGC, ADD 1/6/12 J.R. Truelove Files, Quarry British Cemetery, Vermelles Approval Form.

The three elements of Truelove's design approach that become clear from his remarks are that he was aware of the battlefield location of the site, he sought to retain what he could of the original site and that he considered the function of the architecture in the experience of pilgrimage. More than any other single document, this approval form gives an insight into the approach taken by a Junior Architect when treating a cemetery site. In regards to this section, Truelove does not make any reference to the layout of the headstones. This is not unusual as the headstones had a preset budget per headstone and, as such, would not feature in any discussion of design as it was an established figure. However, the number of headstones within a given site also informed the overall budget. This was also the case at Quarry Cemetery where Truelove expressed his hope that, owing to the constraints of the location he had outlined, the budget could be stretched to include a sheltered seat and tool shed.[346]

Truelove's suggestion that budget be found also highlights the IWGC's approach to funding the construction of cemeteries. The initial plan had been for a set figure per headstone that would enable the calculation of an individual cemetery budget. However, the initial figure was creating to higher construction costs and was reduced in October 1919 to £10 per headstone. A further amendment was made in that the cemeteries, organized by size or class in Commission terminology for the purposes of tendering, would have the respective budget pooled and shared out according to the specifics of each design. Again, the importance of the wall with the design was highlighted in the minutes of the October 1919 meeting that stated, 'it was considered that in most cemeteries an enclosing wall would be desirable, and

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[346] Ibid.

that every effort should be made to effect such economies as would admit it'.[347] This enabled a budget to be set for a group of cemeteries, which in turn enabled architects to request additional budget to the £10 per headstone guide, provided economies could be made elsewhere. One such economy was the introduction of a smaller sized Cross of Remembrance that was half the cost of the full-size version.

The combination of the historical information contained in the CWGC files and the awareness of the site shown by the architect provides evidence that the layout of the headstones within the cemetery cannot reflect the actual spot of burial, nor are they accidentally placed. This leads to the conclusion that the stones were laid out by Truelove in the manner in which the pre-shellfire cemetery appeared. Whereas at Hedge Row Trench Cemetery the architect sought to retain the history of the act that changed the cemetery from burial plots to a mass grave, Truelove used the architectural treatment of the headstones to retain the pre-shelling history. Unlike at Hedge Row Trench, the topography at Quarry Cemetery would have limited the displacement of burials to within the quarry. Indeed, it is precisely this topographic aspect that gives its name to the cemetery, the surrounding trench network and ultimately provides the authenticity to the site. Truelove's decision to replace the headstones in the original layout enhanced the authenticity of the cemetery and the act of visiting.

Another Quarry Cemetery, this time further south in the heartlands of the Somme battlefields, provides a further case study of the IWGC approach to retaining battlefield cemeteries. Quarry Cemetery at Montauban is a combination of battlefield

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[347] CWGC, WG 650, Minutes of Commission Meeting No. 15, 1 October 1919.

and concentration cemeteries, and it is this distinction that warrants further investigation. The CWGC historical files contain the following information;

> Quarry Cemetery was begun (at an advanced dressing station) in July 1916, and used until February 1917. The Germans buried a few of their dead in Plot V in April and May 1918. At the Armistice it consisted of 152 graves in the present Plots V and VI. It was then increased when graves (almost all of July-December 1916) were brought in from the battlefields surrounding Montauban and small burial grounds, including:-
> BRIQUETERIE CEMETERY No.3, MONTAUBAN[…]
> CATERPILLAR WOOD CEMETERY No.2, MONTAUBAN […]
> GREEN DUMP CEMETERY, LONGUEVAL […]
> QUARRY SCOTTISH CEMETERY, MONTAUBAN […]
> Other special memorials commemorate 19 soldiers buried in Quarry Scottish Cemetery, Green Dump Cemetery and Caterpillar Wood Cemetery No.2, whose graves could not be found on concentration.[348]

The information contained within the historical files is telling in that as much emphasis is placed on those cemeteries that were absorbed into Quarry Cemetery as the original cemetery itself. However, within the architectural treatment of the cemetery this same balance is not quite so visible. The original cemetery, as outlined in the history is to be found it two distinct plots. Within these plots the architect, A.J.S. Hutton, has retained the original battlefield layout. Those cemeteries that were brought in from other parts of the battlefield, in contradistinction to the original plots, have been laid out in straight lines and at right angles to the battlefield burials. This laying out creates a clear visual distinction between the two spaces, retaining the authenticity of the original plot.

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[348] CWGC Historical Information, 'Quarry Cemetery, Montauban' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

However, the information contained in the historical files, which is available in the cemetery through the cemetery register, provides another function for the cemetery. In his walking guide to the battlefields of the Somme, Paul Reed identifies the inherent link between Quarry cemetery and the dawn attack at Longueval on 14 July 1916.[349] Indeed, his walking trail begins and ends at the cemetery as the principal point of access for engaging with the old battlefield.

The attack on 14 July 1916 had been undertaken by the 9th Scottish Division over the ground between the cemetery and the village of Longueval. Indeed, this battle became the defining point for the South African brigade that made up part of the division and the memorial park at Delville Wood, of which a future chapter will explore in more detail, is connected to this attack. Not known for their reversion to hyperbole, the divisional history stated of the ground that "the great majority of the killed and missing, 569 in all, left their bones in the blood-soaked undergrowth of the orchards of Longueval".[350] In the story of the attack the Quarry, after which the cemetery was named, appeared on maps circulated to inform the public along with places such as Flatiron Copse, Caterpillar Wood and other key points on the battlefield.[351] It was understandable that the Quarry was used as reference point for the general public and as a cemetery for the soldiers, it was, after all, one of the few identifiable features within the rolling no-man's land between Montauban and Longueval.

[349] Reed, *Walking the Somme*, pp. 163-173.
[350] John Ewing, *History of the 9th (Scottish) Division* (London: John Murray, 1921), p. 138.
[351] 'The Defence Systems North of the Somme', Map, *The Times*, 2 August 1916.

As Ewing's history of the division suggests, Quarry was just one of several places in which the men of the 9th Scottish Division had buried their dead. The CWGC historical information shows the number of organized burial plots, official or otherwise, that were absorbed into Quarry Cemetery. Additionally, there were individual burials concentrated into the nearby Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, the principal concentration cemetery on the southern and western side of Longueval.[352] Many of the cemeteries were absorbed into Quarry are related to the fighting that took place either in the fighting of 14 July or the weeks afterwards.

The IWGC approach to the concentration of whole burial sites into another ensured that the remaining cemetery spaces become outward facing, looking beyond the walls of the cemetery to the places that no longer exist. In psychogeographical terms Quarry Cemetery retains a geographical space through creation of a network of places. These places, of course, do not all exist, but are retained in the architectural treatment and historical narrative retained by the IWGC. The theory of ley lines, developed by Alfred Watkins to explain the relationship between ancient sites, can be adapted in this context to create a network of memory that connects the extant cemetery with the places of those that no longer exist.[353] In doing so the Quarry Cemetery retains a layer of meaning within the landscape beyond the extant architecture. Through this, the cemeteries at Caterpillar Wood, Green Dump and the others, retain a place in the memory of the landscape, even if their exact locations are imagined.

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[352] CWGC Historical Information, 'Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[353] Alfred Watkins, *The Old Straight Track* (London: Abacus, 1970)

By ensuring that the history and memory of the original burial sites is contained within those cemeteries that remain, the IWGC retained the link with all the original places of burial. The architectural treatment of the cemeteries, in this case Quarry Cemetery, helps to define the distinction between original and concentration, whilst simultaneously retaining the authenticity of those cemeteries that were absorbed. The policy of concentration was a necessary one, given the scale of burial sites along the old Western Front. However, the decision by the IWGC and by the individual architects in the ways in which these cemeteries were to be concentrated has retained a network of memory across the landscape.

The two Quarry cemeteries show two distinct approaches to retaining original battlefield layout. The intention of retaining the battlefield layout creates both a visual link with the experience and landscape of war, and also used the process to retain a relationship with the 'lost' burial sites. North of the Somme, on the Franco-Belgian border, William Cowlishaw also used the practice of direct replication of an original site to retain the authenticity of a site. At Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery Cowlishaw created a cemetery space that, like Quarry Cemetery in Montauban, was to be a central cemetery to absorb a number of smaller regimental cemeteries. It is interesting to consider the memorial context of Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery, in that with a few hundred yards are to be found three other IWGC cemeteries. The intention of the creation of a new cemetery within the wood can be considered, then, as an approach by the IWGC to keep the other cemeteries within the wood, such as Rifle House, in original format and to retain as many burials within the confines of the wood as possible. As the CWGC historical files outline;

> Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery was made by the enclosure of a number of small regimental cemeteries.
>
> Plot II was originally the SOMERSET LIGHT INFANTRY CEMETERY, made by the 1st Battalion in December 1914. […]
>
> Plot IV, the BUCKS CEMETERY, was made by the 1st/1st Buckinghamshire Battalion, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, in April 1915. […]
>
> Plot III contains 16 graves of the 1/5th Gloucesters, made between April and May 1915, and in Plots III and I there are 12 graves of the 8th Loyal North Lancs from October to December 1915. However, these plots were known as CANADIAN CEMETERY, STRAND, from the 28 Canadian graves of June to October 1915 in Plot III, and from the trench running nearby.[354]

Unlike other concentration cemeteries, Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery contains three original battlefield cemeteries. The historical information, however, is unclear as regards the graves contained within Plot I. It is likely that this plot is a combination of original burials and some concentrated in from elsewhere in the wood. The *White Cross Touring Atlas of the Western Battlefields* has nine cemeteries located within the woods, of which three still exist independently and three are enclosed at Ploegsteert Wood.[355] A further cemetery, New Cemetery, Ploegsteert Wood, was concentrated into Strand Military Cemetery on the northern outskirts of the wood. It is possible that the two outstanding cemeteries, Mud Lane and Mud Lane No.2, were concentrated into Ploegsteert Wood, though there is no clear evidence for this. It is likely that Plot I of the enclosure is an original, unnamed cemetery.

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[354] CWGC, Historical Information, 'Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

[355] Alexander Gross, *The White Cross Touring Atlas of the Western Battlefields* (London: Geographia, c.1920), p. 43.

The architectural treatment of the enclosure has retained not only the battlefield layout of the original plots, but allowed each plot to retain its independence within the design. The enclosure, created by the combination of a perimeter wall and hedge, follows the shapes created by the individual cemeteries. Indeed, the perimeter wall, at one point, follows the geometry of Fleet Street trench, which passed between the Somerset Light Infantry Cemetery, the current plot II, and the unnamed cemetery that forms the current Plot I. The most noticeable aspect of the architectural treatment that sought to ensure the independence of the original burial plots, however, has been lost through subsequent alterations. The current entrance to the cemetery is from the path through the wood at a point on the eastern edge of the cemetery, which takes the visitor directly into the former Bucks Cemetery. The original entrance was on the northern edge, on the side of the Strand trench and created an axis with the Great Cross that clearly separated plots I and III. In plan form this distinction is still clear, however, the alteration makes this less evident at ground level.

It is clear from the original plan that Cowlishaw had considered how each individual cemetery could retain its own narrative within the creation of a new enclosed, larger cemetery. As at Quarry Cemetery, Montauban, the cemetery architecture captures the memory of multiple places in one unifying space.

All three of these cemeteries have used a form of direct replication of the battlefield burials to retain a clear connection with the experience and landscape of the war. That all three cemeteries were designed by different Junior Architects is further evidence that there was an IWGC policy in regards to retaining the battlefield layout

wherever possible. Indeed, whilst these three cemeteries provide interesting case studies, this approach can be seen at many other CWGC sites all along the Western Front.

## 2.3.4 Partial and Indirect Retention of Original Cemetery Layouts

The previous section explored how the IWGC architects sought to retain the original battlefield layout of cemeteries. This section will look at the IWGC response to architectural treatment where direct retention of the layout was not possible and how the Junior Architects worked to ensure that the narrative of the original space and the landscape was retained through other means.

On the outskirts of Ploegsteert Wood is the memorial that was looked at in a previous chapter. The Ploegsteert Memorial to the Missing sits within the Berks Cemetery Extension. The cemetery is an extension of the Hyde Park Corner (Royal Berks) Cemetery, which was begun in 1915 on the opposite side of the road. The extension was, according to the CWGC Historical Files, 'begun in June 1916 and used continuously until September 1917'.[356] After the war Armentieres was initially chosen as the site for the Memorial to the Missing in the area, however, owing to land acquisition and diplomatic issues at other proposed sites the memorial was moved to Belgium and the site at Hyde Park Corner was chosen.

Shortly after the memorial was completed, in 1930, the IWGC were forced to extend the cemetery to absorb an additional 480 graves into the site. The

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[356] CWGC, Historic Information, 'Berks Cemetery Extension' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

commission had failed to come to an agreement with the owner of the nearby Rosenberg Chateau that had been the site of two cemeteries since the fighting of 1914. In an article in *The Ypres Times* the issue between the landowner and the commission was outlined as follows;

> The cemetery concerned, in which circumstances have militated against acquisition, is Rosenberg Chateau Cemetery and Extension, Ploegsteert, situated about nine miles from Ypres and about five from Armentieres. It stands immediately within the grounds of the former chateau (completely destroyed during the war), which the owner desires to rebuild. It is his contention that the presence of a cemetery in close proximity to his house would materially detract from the amenities of the latter.[357]

Despite strong objections from the Commission, the Anglo-Belgian Joint Committee and the Minister of the Interior, it was felt that the landowner was strictly within his rights to ask for the removal of the cemeteries according to Belgian law. The tone of the article, written by a Henry Benson and seemingly syndicated to other newspapers, took on a position of indignance regarding the issue from the outset, opening;

> In closing a British War Cemetery, dating from 1914, and removing the bodies of our glorious dead interred therein to a similar cemetery in the immediate vicinity, the staff of the Imperial War Graves Commission in Belgium has just been called upon to execute what it rightly regards as the most regrettable of the many grim tasks which, for more than a decade, have constituted its daily round.[358]

The article is written in a tone that seeks to show outrage and yet reassurance to those family members who had relatives buried in Rosenberg Chateau and Extension cemeteries. The emotion attached to the removal of the bodies is steeped in the

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[357] H. Benson, 'War Cemetery Closed', *The Ypres Times*, Vol. 5 No. 2(April 1930), p. 51.
[358] Ibid.

language of sacrifice and the site is referred to in historical terms, it is an indication

of how raw the issue of burial and the dead remained even into the 1930s. Indeed,

Hansard entries from the early 1930s still make reference to several questions

relating to the war cemeteries, such as a question to the house about the 'battered

state of the Union Jack' at Etaples British Cemetery, and another raised regarding an

inquiry into illicit exhumations and repatriations of war graves.[359]

Public awareness and the emotion attached to the exhumations and reburials of the

Rosenberg Chateau cemeteries required that the IWGC could not simply

concentrate the burials into one of the open, larger cemeteries. There were two

principal reasons why this could not be done. First, all the larger and open

concentration cemeteries were too far removed geographically from the original

burial sites. This, as we have seen with so many of the battlefield cemeteries we have

looked at, went against the principles of the IWGC and keeping men buried as close

as possible to the place of their death. The problem of proximity opened up another

challenge in that the majority of cemeteries in the Ploegsteert area were completed

and those that were designated as 'open' were intended for outlying individual graves

that were discovered. In addition to the relative small scale of many of the

cemeteries in the area, those that remained open, such as Prowse Point, could not

have accommodated such a significant number of reburials without a redesign of the

otherwise completed architectural treatment.

The delay in siting the Memorial to the Missing, in this case, provided the IWGC

with a site that was local to the original burial sites and was able to accommodate

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[359] Hansard, War Cemetery, Etaples, HC Deb, 3 June 1930, vol 239, cc.1952-3; and
Hansard, War Graves, France and Belgium, HC Deb, 23 June 1931, vol 254, cc. 212-3.

such an expansion. Unfortunately, the CWGC file relating to the competition for the memorial has gone missing in the intervening years and, as such, little is known about the original scheme.[360] However, in a 1928 volume of *The Ypres Times* a brief article gives an overview of Bradshaw's plan for the memorial. Predominantly focusing on the memorial, the article also suggested at the layout of the whole site;

> Facing the road, three bays of the colonnade are left open to for the principal entrance, and on each of the sides are openings which conduct on the one side to the Hyde Park Corner (Royal Berks) Cemetery, where is placed the Stone of Remembrance, and on the other to an avenue which is terminated by the Great Cross.[361]

From this brief description of the site and combined with site plan and extant architecture there is evidence to suggest that the IWGC, concerned that a resolution may not be reached with the landowner of Rosenberg Chateau, included the potential of two additional burial plots into the brief. If it was not included within the original competition brief, it seems certain to have been in a revised brief for the Ploegsteert site.

This interpretation of the site is also supported by the precedent set in the use of the Great Cross and War Stone in other memorial sites, most obviously at Thiepval where the Great Cross is used to create an axis for an avenue that divides to burial plots, one of unknown French Soldiers and the other of unknown British soldiers. The use of the cross within the precincts of the memorials to the missing, where it is used, is never isolated and at distance from the memorial or attached cemetery as it would have been at Ploegsteert. The single exception to this is at Faubourg d'Amiens

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[360] CWGC, WG 1687/4, Memorial to the Missing Competitions.
[361] Anon., 'Memorial to the Missing, Ploegsteert', *The Ypres Times*, Vol.4 No. 3 (July 1928), p. 80.

Cemetery and Arras Memorial, where the Great Cross is positioned beyond the walls of the cemetery and memorial. However, it remains architecturally framed by the reverses of the bays. This again points to the idea that the IWGC, aware of the likelihood of having to transfer the Rosenberg Chateau cemeteries, requested Bradshaw create a layout that could accommodate such a requirement.

The approach Bradshaw used was in keeping with both the cemetery at Thiepval and Hutton's at Quarry Cemetery, Montauban in that the axis created by the position of the Great Cross also created a visual gap between the plots. The denoting of difference in the case of Ploegsteert meant that the two original cemeteries retained autonomy within the greater precinct. They were placed at a distance from the original Berks Cemetery Extension plot and with clear distinction between the two Rosenberg Chateau plots. In addition, a special memorial marked five burials that were lost during wartime bombardments of the original Rosenberg Chateau plots. The use of special memorials, as we have seen in other cemeteries, was not unusual. However, in the case of the Rosenberg Chateau plots, the names commemorated were kept with the remainder of the original plots. The architectural treatment of the Rosenberg Chateau cemeteries displays how, even when the original layout has been lost, the principles of the IWGC ensured that as many of the original relationships were retained. The example of Ploegsteert shows not only the recognition by the IWGC of the importance of autonomy for the smaller cemeteries in the approach to place-centred memorialisation, but also how some of these aspects could be retained even in cases of cemetery transfer. The architectural treatment of Berks Cemetery Extension is evidence of architectural consideration in the retention of these nuances.

The transfer of Rosenberg Chateau cemeteries was the most extreme example of how the principles and architecture of IWGC dealt with retaining the original layout of a transferred cemetery. There were, however, other examples of partial transfer of burials out of a cemetery. This was often when non-British burials, such as French or Germans, were exhumed to be buried within their own cemeteries. In such cases the IWGC does not appear to have had a distinct policy and, as such, the architects had the final say on how this might be treated.

At both Blauwepoort Farm and Lancashire Cottage there were significant numbers of French and German burials, respectively. Blauwepoort Farm was created in November 1914 by a battalion of French Chasseurs Alpins and then subsequently taken over in February 1915 by the British, who used it for a further year.[362] Following the Armistice all French burials were removed leaving the architect, Cowlishaw, with the problem of a cemetery that, as a result, had large gaps between groups of graves and individual burials. In the earlier discussion regarding geometric alignment reference was made to the institutional drive by the Commission, under the guise of the head of Land Acquisition Major Ingpen, to keep the parcels of land required proportionate with the number of burials and to minimise flamboyant architectural gestures. In Belgium the position was particularly acute, causing Winston Churchill to remark in the House of Commons in relation to a question on private memorials on the Western Front that, "(t)he Belgian Government, on the other hand, has consistently insisted on all graves being concentrated".[363] In regard to a cemetery such as Blauwepoort Farm, these two positions did not align with the

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[362] CWGC, Historical Information , 'Blauwepoort Farm Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[363] Hansard, WAR GRAVES, HC Deb, 10 August 1920, vol 133, cc. 203-4.

IWGC approach to memorialisation. A principle that an earlier statement by Churchill in the same sitting had categorically stated the IWGC approach;

> Throughout this work the rule has been laid down that no bodies should be removed except in cases where such a step is absolutely essential owing either to the graves being isolated or to valid objections on the part of the French authorities to their being left where they are.[364]

The contradiction between these two positions is particularly acute in instances such as Blauwepoort Farm Cemetery, where the plot of land was defined by the irregular pattern of burials. This irregularity was only enhanced by the removal of the French graves from within the plot. That Blauwepoort Farm Cemetery exists is testament to which of the approaches was considered more important. The IWGC, despite concerns regarding land acquisition, considered that the soldiers should remain buried as close to their place of death as possible above any other policy. The design created by Cowlishaw also highlights another nuance in the approach to retention of not just site but of the cemetery layout as an important aspect of the history of any given site.

The irregular burials at Blauwepoort Farm mean that a greater envelope of land was required than if the burials had been formalised into regular rows. If the policy to reduce parcels of land had been deemed more important than the place of burial, cemeteries such as Blauwepoort Farm could have been concentrated into a smaller plot on the same site. The extant architecture of the cemetery, in this case, provides a clear indication of the primacy of historical narrative within the design and land acquisition policies and within the design process.

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[364] Ibid.

At Lancashire Cottage Cemetery the historical information held by the CWGC does not reflect the full history of the site. It states that the cemetery;

> …was begun by the 1st East Lancashire (who have 84 graves in it) and the 1st Hampshire (who have 56) in November 1914. It was used as a front line cemetery until March 1916 and occasionally later. The cemetery was in German hands from 10 April to 29 September 1918 and they made a few burials in it during that spring and summer.[365]

Of particular note is the mention of the few German burials that were made. This refers to the 13 German burials that remain in the extant cemetery. However, the work of Birger Stichelbaut has identified a much larger plot of German burials to the rear of the British graves.[366] An aerial photograph from 20 July 1918, toward the end of the period that Lancashire Cottage was in German hands, clearly shows a substantial German plot of burials.[367]

This information, in the context of the approaches taken with Blauwepoort Farm and Rosenberg Chateau Cemeteries, suggests that the remaining German burials within Lancashire Cottage are through design rather than fate. As has been shown throughout this thesis, the historical context of the site was considered paramount in the design process. The history of Lancashire Cottage as a cemetery and as a wartime landscape was one that had direct connection with the German army. The aerial photograph of July 1918 confirms the significant role of this site during the German occupation. According to the CWGC files, the cemetery was nominally

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[365] CWGC, Historical Information, 'Lancashire Cottage Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

[366] Birger Stichelbaut, 'Comines-Warneton 1914-2014: a landscape approach' in *Battlefield Events: Landscape, commemoration and heritage*, eds. K. Reeves, G. R. Bird, L. James, B. Stichelbaut, J. and Bourgeois (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 64-76.

[367] IWM, Box 236 1927 42B 28U 1917 and Box 207 306 206K 28U 1918; series of aerial photographs showing the evolution of Lancashire Cottage Cemetery.

designed by Charles Holden, though given the scale of the cemetery the design was likely undertaken by William Cowlishaw. Indeed, Cowlishaw was responsible for a number of cemeteries in the area under the nominal direction of Holden.

As at Blauwepoort Farm, Cowlishaw's design decisions ensured that the history of the site was retained. The inclusion of the 13 German burials, all from the period of German occupation, ensured that a layer of memory of both the cemetery and the landscape was retained. Of particular interest in this respect is Cowlishaw's positioning of the German graves. Unlike the British graves, which are spaced throughout the cemetery, but at a distance from the perimeter wall, the German headstones are directly against the rear wall. The location of the headstones within a CWGC cemetery is usually reserved for those graves that are connected to a special memorial. For example, the 5 graves from Rosenberg Chateau that were lost in the bombardment are placed against the perimeter, set back from the graves of those physically buried in the cemetery. In addition, this design statement in CWGC is used to show that these bodies are elsewhere in the surrounding landscape and, as at Quarry Cemetery, Montauban, connects the extant cemetery with those cemeteries that no longer exist. In the case of the German graves at Lancashire Cottage they create a spatial connection with the landscape beyond the rear perimeter wall and the area filled by the original German plot.

At both Blauwepoort Farm and Lancashire Cottage cemeteries Cowlishaw used architectural devices to retain aspects of the historic narrative and memory of each cemetery and the surrounding landscape.

Up to this point the layout considerations have been related to the internal architecture of the cemeteries and the varying forms of layout that were used by architects of the IWGC to retain aspects of the history of the respective sites. This final section will look at how the architects used the cemetery boundaries to retain aspects of the wartime landscape.

A short distance from Blauwepoort Farm can be found Woods Cemetery. Although nominally designed by Lutyens, the approval form states that the principal architect did not visit the site.[368] As with many CWGC sites, particularly those of under 1000 total burials, the true authorship of the cemetery is the Junior Architect, in this case Cowlishaw. Indeed, Guerst, too, agrees that Cowlishaw was the architect of Woods Cemetery.[369] In spite of the false attribution of authorship the CWGC Historical Files retain an interesting comment on the site, noting that:

> The irregular shape of the cemetery is due to the conditions of burial at the times when the front line was just beyond the wood. The views over the battlefield are extensive.[370]

This reference to the connection between the battlefield and the extant architecture is a rare recognition, albeit indirect, of the relationship between the cemetery space, and the landscape and memoryscape beyond. That Lutyens never visited the site makes clear that the design decision taken to retain the original plot was made by Cowlishaw. As at Blauwepoort Farm, the site was made up of irregular burials. Indeed, Cowlishaw's design sees the perimeter wall diverted to encompass three

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[368] CWGC, ADD 1/6/5, Lutyens' Cemetery Files.
[369] Guerst, *Lutyens*, p. 442.
[370] CWGC, Historical Information, 'Woods Cemetery, Zillebeke' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

outlying graves. Unlike the cemeteries explored in chapter 2, where the cemeteries were created by geometric alignment with battlefield features, Woods Cemetery retains an aspect of geometry specific to the burial of the dead in an exposed location. The geometry it connects with is not a physical aspect of the battlefield, but the visual. The remnant woods, in conjunction with the proximity to the front lines, created a geometry of safety for those tasked with the burials. In his design, Cowlishaw ensured that this unique feature of the cemetery was retained.

At Woods Cemetery the distinct geometry of the site was relatively obvious. The irregular shape of the site and burials lent itself to an architectural interpretation that retained the history of the cemetery. A few hundred yards from Woods Cemetery is another of the battlefield cemeteries that skirt the old frontline of the Ypres Salient, Chester Farm Cemetery. As at Woods Cemetery, the CWGC officially attribute Chester Farm Cemetery to Lutyens, assisted by Cowlishaw. However, as before, the size of the cemetery suggests that Cowlishaw was responsible for the design work that was, at best, approved by Lutyens.

The CWGC historic files have very little to offer beyond information regarding the units that created the cemetery, indeed, the approval form is similarly devoid of information other than the standard bureaucratic comments. However, the combination of the extant architecture, cemetery plan, and trench maps provides evidence of the connection between the landscape of the Great War and the memoryscape retained in the cemetery architecture. As with other cemeteries included in this chapter, the layout of the cemetery is significant in retaining the relationship.

As with the cemeteries at Blauwepoort Farm and Woods Cemetery, Cowlishaw's design retained the plots in the original battlefield layout, despite the asymmetry of the burial patterns. This asymmetry in itself is a significant indicator of the level of Lutyens' involvement with the designs of these cemeteries. Whilst Von Berg quoted Lutyens in a letter some sixty years later as having allowed the occasional piece of asymmetry into cemetery plans, the broad evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of Lutyens' desire for symmetry.[371] The plan of Chester Farm adds another perspective to the asymmetry in the layout of the cemetery.[372] The perimeter walls of Chester Farm Cemetery are built within the boundary of the cemetery rather defining the boundary. This is not the case in many cemeteries where the perimeter wall also defines the extent of the envelope of land. With the exception of the roadside wall, all the other perimeter walls run alongside, though not parallel with the site boundary, creating an asymmetrical plot. Of these perimeter walls, the most interesting is the north-eastern wall, which at roughly the centre of Plot III takes a slight deviation. Both the plan and the masonry attest that this deviation is not errant brickwork, but designed into the cemetery. Indeed, closer inspection of the 1917 trench map for the area shows that this deviation appeared on the original plot boundary.[373] All the perimeter walls run along the geometry of the original plot. The north-eastern wall was originally defined by a trench and the road created the angle within which the cemetery was created; the earliest burials can be found in Plot I at the roadside edge of the cemetery. (Fig. 20) The information noted in by the historical records states that;

[371] CWGC, ADD/1/6/11, Two Letters written by W. C. Von Berg in response to requests from the British Architectural Library.
[372] CWGC, Cemetery Plan, 'Chester Farm Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[373] HMSO, Trench Map, 10-28NW4 & NE3 - 4A 280117, 28 January 1917.

The cemetery was begun in March 1915 and was used by front line troops until November 1917. Plot I contains the graves of 92 officers and men of the 2nd Manchesters, who died in April-July 1915 and there are 72 London Regiment burials elsewhere in the Cemetery.[374]



CHESTER FARM CEMETERY, ZILLEBEKE
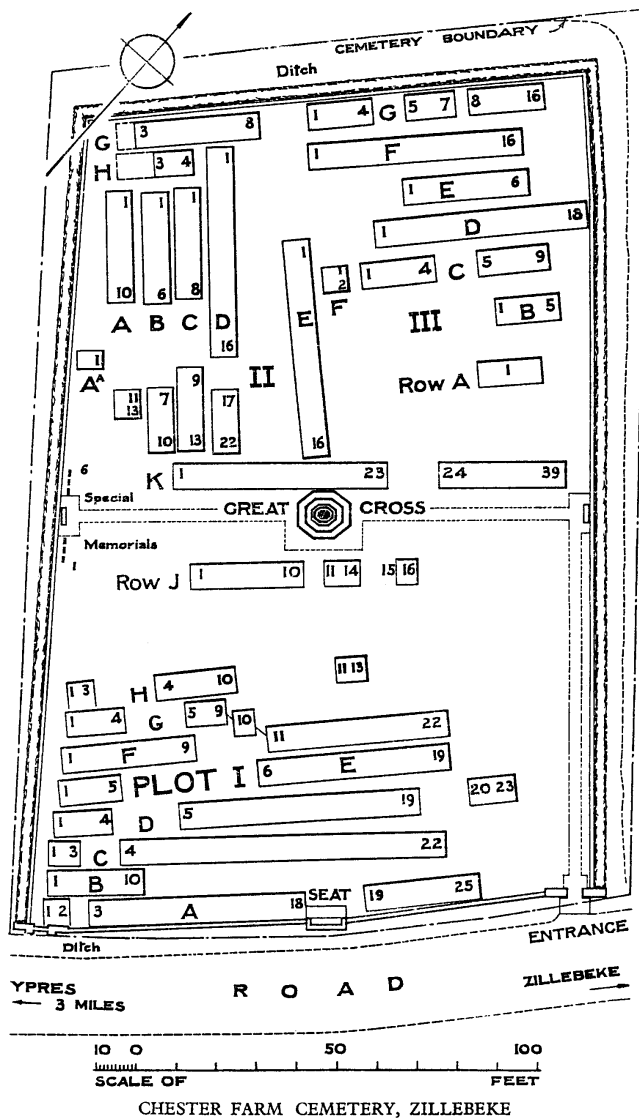
*Fig. 20 – Chester Farm Cemetery Plan (CWGC Archive)*

This effectively made Plot I a regimental plot within a larger cemetery, similar to those found within Ploegsteert Wood Cemetery. The history of the site is retained by Cowlishaw's decision to retain the battlefield layout, but also by the placement of the Great Cross in the centre of the cemetery to create a visual distinction between the two plots. Just as with the Rosenberg Chateau plots the Great Cross is used as a device to create distinction but not division. In his original design Cowlishaw also included a stone pathway that ran from the entrance in the eastern corner, where the road and trench intersected. This path ran along the trench line perimeter wall up to the distance of the Great Cross, whereupon it continued at right angles. The path spanned the cemetery to the opposite wall, creating a

374 CWGC, Historical Information, 'Chester Farm Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

horizontal axis with the Great Cross at its centre. This path was also included in the construction of the cemetery and can be seen in Sidney Hurst's photograph of the cemetery taken at some point in the mid 1920s.[375] As with the retention of the burial layout, the addition of the cross and path into the design enhanced the history and character of the site. Cowlishaw made one further addition to the cemetery. In the roadside perimeter wall he added a seat, located centrally on the axis of the Great Cross. Interestingly, Geurst suggests that this addition reinforces the symmetry of the site, however, the alignment of the cross and seat are at odds with the burial plan.[376] Rather than reinforce symmetry, this inclusion within the design reinforces and draws attention to the inherent asymmetry of the site. Cowlishaw's design for Chester Farm Cemetery used the architectural language of the IWGC to both make permanent and emphasise the original battlefield cemetery and the history attached to it.

All three forms of layout this section has explored show a clear intent by the architects to retain key elements of the individual sites that retained a direct connection with the original battlefield space. As we have seen in the geometric and spatial alignments of cemetery designs with battlefield features no longer in existence, such as trenches and craters, it is clear that there was enough flexibility given to the Junior Architects to ensure that the retention of place was central in the design.

In the case of places such as Tyne Cot this meant the inclusion of a large piece of the physical landscape being not only retained, but central to the design. The influence of

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[375] Hurst, *Silent Cities*, p. 55.
[376] Geurst, *Lutyens*, p. 244.

the battlefield landscape was also identifiable in the IWGC policies. Whilst there were discrepancies in the alignment of diplomatic and memorial intentions, more often the latter prevailed. The strength of extant architectural evidence shows that the battlefield landscape was central feature in the over-arching approach of the IWGC. In his report Blomfield had referred specifically to the landscape as a way of connecting the memorial space with the battlefield. In all the cemeteries within this chapter the inter-relationship between landscape, architecture and memory is irrefutable. To achieve this connection it was imperative that the architects of these sites knew and understood the wartime landscape, it is, therefore, unfeasible that the Principal Architects could have lead on the designs that captured these aspects of landscape memory. This adds further weight to the role and importance of the Junior Architects in creating a group of memorials that directly reflect the experience and memory of the war.

The use of the material culture of the battlefield within the cemetery designs created a tangible connection between the cemetery space and the landscapes of war and memory. Where the material culture had been subsumed by nature or reclaimed during reconstruction, the primacy of place is still evident in the designs. The resulting connection between architecture and memory enabled, and still enables, the cemeteries to act as a narrative aid for the understanding of the landscapes and the experience of those landscapes within and beyond the perimeter walls.

## 2.4 IWGC Design and the Preservation of Western Front Toponymy

The cemeteries of the IWGC reflect four distinct ways in which the act of building permanent memorials was used to retain the toponymy of the old Western Front. In previous chapters we have seen how the architecture has been used to retain geometric alignments with the former battlefields. For the purposes of this study, the direct geometric alignment of architecture and battlefield space can be regarded as the most important layer of memory retained within the architecture. With all the previously studied places, irrespective of how explicit the connection between architecture and geometry was, the title of the cemetery implied a level of connection between battle space and memorial space. This chapter will explore the connection between the naming of places and the role of the IWGC in ensuring that these toponyms remain as part of the memorial nomenclature.

There are approximately 267 IWGC cemeteries that retain an aspect of battlefield nomenclature. The Commission do not distinguish these sites from the remainder of the cemeteries and burial grounds, as such the figure of 267 is based on an interpretation of the sites. For the purposes of this study, to qualify as a cemetery that retains an aspect of battlefield nomenclature the title must reference either a specific battlefield feature, such as a trench, or use anglicised naming of civilian locations, such as a farm. In addition, the list of 267 includes sites that reflect the history of the war, such as those cemeteries named after regiments. It also includes cemeteries that have a toponymy of home placed upon them.

After establishing the prevailing desire to preserve the nomenclature of the trenches, this chapter will identify a taxonomy that shows how the naming conventions of the IWGC retained the varying elements of Western Front toponymy, and also how they reflect other aspects of the experience of fighting in the Great War. The chapter will look at the five specific areas of naming convention the cemeteries not named after the town they are in or near follow:

1. Plotting the front line – how the naming convention of the IWGC captures frontline locations

2. Beyond the front line – IWGC sites and understanding the deeper battlefield

3. The Military Landscape – battlefield features and locations that no longer exist other than in the cemetery nomenclature

4. Names – including cemeteries named after regiments and individuals, and

5. Transposed Toponymy – cemeteries that use place names and locations from home.

## 2.4.1 Naming, Memory and the Old Western Front

"Things are not quite real until they acquire names and can be classified in some way", states Tuan in his discussion of how meaning is attributed to place.[377] Tuan goes on to say of the naming process that, "part of the need to label experiences so that they have a greater degree of permanence and fit into some conceptual scheme".[378] In the context of the old Western Front these observations on the

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[377] Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 29.
[378] Ibid.

nature of naming are of particular significance. The very landscape being transient, even during the war, but most definitely once the war had finished.

For returning veterans the change in the landscape of their memory and experience with the post-war version was one of dislocation. In a real sense, their memories were lost in the landscape. John Pegum, in his study on veterans returning to the front highlights the return of the war poet Edmund Blunden in his 1932 loosely autobiographical novel *We'll Shift Our Ground, or Two on Tour*. Pegum notes the use of the word 'shift' in the title is emblematic of a larger issue for returning veterans, stating that;

> …it highlights the progression of sentiment of possessiveness that Blunden and many other ex-servicemen felt towards the landscape of their wartime experiences. The ground is, or rather was, 'ours.' Their ground, the landscape that made up the old trench lines, has been shifted, reduced to a fragmentary but persistent presence in the minds of ex-servicemen.[379]

This observation is also one that Bart Ziino's study of Australian interwar memorial cultures picks up on. Ziino includes a series of case studies of veterans who, having returned to the old front line, find it changed beyond all recognition, noting in particular that "former soldiers expressed disappointment and even a sense of deception in these experiences".[380]

With the loss of the physical landscape of the old Western Front, the necessity to retain nodal points of memory became increasingly more important. From an early stage the place names of the war became synonymous with its memory. Works such

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[379] Ibid.
[380] Ziino, *Distant Grief*, p. 169.

as John Oxenham's High Altars served to create a sense of sanctity to the central military locations, such as Vimy Ridge, Beaumont Hamel and Ypres. These, of course, are the place names associated with the reporting of the war. Oxenham also sought to memorialise in literary terms some of the more intimate, experiential vernacular of the war time landscape, naming one chapter after the infamous spot in the Ypres Salient known as Hell-Fire Corner.[381]

Whilst the names such as Ypres and the Somme became synonymous with the landscape of war to the British public at home, the experience of fighting the war created a very distinct vernacular that defined the landscape for those in it. In his section on the naming of the wartime landscape Ross Wilson identifies the process of what he terms '*tommifying*' the landscape:

> Just as the names of towns and villages of France and Belgium were anglicised by the troops, the trenches were also attributed names and titles to reflect their status, place and values amongst the soldiers. In contrast to behind the lines, to an extent the front offered a blank slate on which soldiers could place their own identities upon the landscape. The process of naming is one of the most profound aspects of the 'war culture' as it reflects the world the soldiers made on the Western Front.
>
> These names carried great meaning for those fighting in this landscape, reminders of home, warnings of danger, non-military identities and dark humour….Naming the trenches ensured a sense of familiarity with their surroundings and was a means of understanding the hostile, threatening landscape in which they were situated.[382]

The 'blank canvas' that Wilson notes served to create not just the vernacular of experience, but also that of the memory of the war experience, too. It is

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[381] John Oxenham, High Altars: The Battle-Fields of France and Flanders as I Saw Them (London: Methuen and Co., 1918), pp. 44-53
[382] Wilson, *Landscapes of the First World War*, pp. 166-167.

unsurprising, then, that the fledgling Imperial War Museum chose to gather some of the hand crafted signs used to identify this place naming process. Indeed, it is the loss of this vernacular rather than the anglicised place names that comes to define the approach of landscape memorial and of the emerging battlefield tourist industry.

In the April 1924 edition of *The Ypres Times*, the journal of the Ypres League, a prominent remembrance organisation, Henry Beckles Willson, the Town Major of Ypres and founder member of the league, captured the mood in an article entitled 'Signboards in the Salient':

> Many visitors to the greatest battlefield of the War report their perplexity in identifying sites of great exploits once so familiar to us all, largely owing to the natural reversion to local names of those places which must ever be immortal in British military history, such as Polygon Wood, Hellfire Corner, Salvation Corner, Clapham Junction, Maple Copse, Sanctuary Wood and so on, which should have sign-boards.[383]

This article chimed with many other articles proclaiming intentions for publications and interventions within the former Salient that appeared in the early issues of the journal. As early as March 1922 articles begin to mention the development of a "splendid and copiously illustrated Memorial Volume" to be published by the Ypres League that will "give for the first time in detail and in a single volume the full story of British regiments in the Salient".[384] There appears no evidence that this specific volume ever made it in to publication, but in January 1925 the Ypres League published the first guidebook aimed at re-acquainting the ex-serviceman with the landscape of his memory. *The Immortal Salient*, complied by two of the other key

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[383] Henry Beckles Willson, 'Signboards in the Salient', *The Ypres Times*, Vol. 2. No. 2 (April 1924), p. 53.
[384] Anon, 'Ypres: A Memorial Volume', *The Ypres Times*, Vol. 1, No. 3 ()April 1922), p. 83.

personalities in the Ypres League, Lieutenant General Sir William Pulteney and Beatrix Brice, used a mixture of military geography, cemeteries and historical context to provide a series of route itineraries.[385] Perhaps the most significant aspect is the intention that the guidebook was to be used in conjunction with the *Ypres League Map for Pilgrims* – a copy of which was included in a pocket at the rear of the guide. The Ypres League map appeared in the very first issue of the journal and appears to be one of the first initiatives of the League. Available as a separate map or as part of *The Immortal Salient*, the map was a combination of civilian geography and the '*tommified*' places of the Salient. In addition to mapping out the 'sites of great exploits' it mapped out the cemeteries of the IWGC. Importantly, by 1925 much of the concentration of cemeteries has been completed by the IWGC and, as such, the Ypres League map from *The Immortal Salient* is the first accurate mapping of the extant cemeteries.

Following the successes of the map and guidebook, by 1926 the Ypres League had also completed the signboard project, numbering 39. This project was to act as a catalyst for two further guidebooks. The first, *The Battle Book of Ypres* by Brice, published in 1927, was a detailed study of the '*tommified*' place names of the Salient.[386] The Battle Book of Ypres is important in that it considers the landscape of the Salient without becoming a guide for cemeteries and memorials. It is a pure piece of historic geography aimed primarily at members and other ex-servicemen. The second guidebook is a more condensed version of the Battle Book. *Ypres – Outpost of the Channel Ports*, written by the prolific Brice, was a pocket-sized brief history of Ypres during the war that also gave an oversight of the importance of each of the

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[385] Beatrix Brice and William Pulteney, *The Immortal Salient* (London: John Murray, 1925).
[386] Beatrix Brice, *Battle Book of Ypres* (London: John Murray, 1927).

Ypres League sponsored signboards.[387] Field Marshal Lord Plumer of Messines, in his foreword to *Ypres – Outpost of the Channel Ports*, summed up what Brice and the Ypres League had achieved with their various publications and projects,

> The whole countryside is greatly changed since the War, and Miss Beatrix Brice by her untiring efforts has been able to reproduce the atmosphere of the War years in a wonderful manner…[388]

This series of publications, in spite of making reference to pilgrims, provided the ex-servicemen with a medium to reconnect with the landscape of their memories and the places of their experiences.

Within the prevailing mood to preserve wartime landmarks we must consider the cemeteries and their designs. This preservation was in part related to the memorialisation of the landscape, but also as places of visitation. The distinct vocabulary related to what Connelly and Goebel have called the micro-geography of the old Western Front, represented a landscape that no longer existed, as well as the experience of being in that landscape.[389] The cemeteries, in this respect, become landmarks for the other landmarks; the naming conventions adopted by the IWGC acting as emboldened words in an otherwise fading lexicon.

## 2.4.2 Plotting the Front Line

In previous chapters we have looked at a number of cemeteries that fit into the category. Indeed, all those that show geometric alignments between the cemetery

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[387] Beatrix Brice, *Ypres: Outpost of the Channel Ports* (London: John Murray, 1929).
[388] Ibid, p. V.
[389] Connelly and Goebel, *Ypres*, p. 90.

architecture and the battlefield also fulfil the function of retaining the front line. The front line in this sense is relative to the positioning of the cemetery and the contemporaneous fighting in the area. The position of the front line cannot be defined by a single line either on a map or in the landscape. It is a nebulous concept that has come to have its own set of indicators. Through the naming conventions of the IWGC, however, the inference of the front line can be maintained by points in the landscape.

The cemeteries that this section will explore will be cemeteries that have battlefield locations within their respective titles, but that do not display the same quantifiable geometric alignment with the battlefield feature of the same name as the previously investigated cemeteries have done.

The first of these cemeteries is located in the old Ypres Salient, near to the village of Boezinghe. According to the CWGC historical files;

> Welsh Cemetery was begun in July 1917, at the spot known then as Caesar's Nose, by the 38th (Welsh) Division, 23 of whose soldiers are buried here. It was used until the following November.[390]

The historic information on the cemetery is scant, indeed, the CWGC cemetery file is equally as unrevealing of the intention or otherwise of a connection between the memorial space and the battlefield place.[391]

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[390] CWGC Historical Information, 'Welsh Cemetery (Caesar's Nose)' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[391] CWGC Add 1/6/9, Hutton, A. J. S., Cemetery Design Approval Documents.

The battlefield position known as Caesar's Nose was a German front line trench that formed part of the defences around the village of Pilckem. Within the same network of trenches could be found Caesar Spur, Caesar Reserve and Caesar Lane. The name of the battlefield site is obvious when seen on the trench maps of late 1916 and early 1917; the section of the front line in question acting as a mini salient and projecting out into an already narrow part of no-man's land.

Chasseaud makes an interesting observation in regards to the use of nasal terminology being used within trench naming conventions;

> The multiplicity of projecting features, or local salient, where the trench lines bulged out round a village, wood, farm or hill feature, gave rise to many noses, nebs, nabs, points, bills, beaks and so on in a nomenclature of protuberance…These were key points for the defence, as machine guns sited in them could enfilade no man's land to either side, but they naturally formed obvious targets for mortar and shell fire.[392]

It is clear from Chasseaud that the use of anatomical features played an important role in the naming of the battlefield space. In the context of Chasseaud's identification of a preponderance of nasal terms to identify the localised salient found along the old Western Front the IWGC decision to both retain this cemetery and incorporate the original battlefield location into the title highlight the importance of place within the decision making process. Piet Chielens, in his chapter on the use of military aerial photography within the museum context, discussed the site of Caesar's Nose.[393] He posited that only through the interpretation and use of aerial

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[392] Chasseaud, *Rats Alley*, p. 133.
[393] Piet Chielens, *The Last Witness: Military Aerial Photography Used in a Modern Museum Context* in *Images of Conflict: Military Aerial Photography and Archaeology*, eds. By J. Bourgeois, N.Saunders, B. Stichelbaut (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), pp. 22-24.

photography could individuals reconnect with the lost landscape, spaces and places of the old Western Front. This view, whilst is true in the abilities of the aerial photography to offer a way in which we can interpret the lost landscape and spatial relationships of the war time landscape, does not take in to account the function of the tangible memorial sites of the CWGC.

There are a number of examples of cemeteries that retain the nomenclature and approximate location of the old front line, without having the overt geometric alignment that we have discussed previously. Indeed, some of these sites suggest a geometric alignment that cannot be adequately proven. One such site is that of Cuckoo Passage near to Arras. The CWGC Historical Files have scant information on the site, stating;

> Cuckoo Passage Cemetery (named from a trench which ran from north-east to south-west beside the site of the cemetery) was begun by a divisional burial officer in April 1917 and closed in May.[394]

The trench maps do not corroborate this exact name, only other routes with Cuckoo included in the title. Chasseaud also does not have a Cuckoo Passage listed within his comprehensive index of trench names. However, it is interesting that within the CGWC notes, which are usually scant on landscape information, there is a direct reference to the trench.

In regard to understanding both the lost landscape and the memoryscape, the cemetery becomes a key nodal point for unlocking both. In fact, the small grouping

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[394] CWGC Historical Information, 'Cuckoo Passage Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

of Cuckoo Passage, Rookery – which we will look at in due course – and another cemetery that we explored in an earlier chapter, Bootham, form a memorial to the landscape in the landscape that would not exist without the IWGC intervention. Cuckoo Passage Cemetery not only captures a history of the landscape that is lost in the physical landscape, but one that is lost in the remaining archival sources. It is highly likely that the asymmetric curve made up by the headstones is the original route of the Cuckoo Passage trench referenced in the CWGC historical notes. It would seem unlikely that the DBO would dig another trench, let alone one with such an unusual geometry. Cuckoo Passage Cemetery, in this respect, reflects not only an aspect of lost nomenclature, but also of lost geometry. Without the IWGC policy to retain cemeteries with specific historic significance there would be no record of this landscape feature in any of the remaining landscape resources. Even contemporary and modern archaeological aerial photography, whilst potentially being able to identify the remnants of a trench line, would be unable to establish the name.

Only a few hundred yards away from Cuckoo Passage Cemetery is the even smaller site of Rookery Cemetery. The cemetery itself has no geometric alignment with the trench map.[395] A trench passes nearby and catches the edge of the cemetery precinct, but there is certainly no intended connection between the two forms. However, the name Rookery is featured on the trench map as a way marker in the landscape, the former copse being denoted on the map with the symbol for woodland. It is unlikely that any woodland existed during the time of the fighting given its proximity to the front line. However, the design layout of the architecturally treated cemetery has the two trees within the small plot placed precisely where the

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[395] HMSO, Trench Map, Vis-en-Artois,10-51BSW2-8A, 25 April 1918.

cartographic symbols are on the trench map. This playful connection between the abstract landscape interpretation of the trench map and the tangible memorial to the landscape that the cemetery creates serves to highlight a point that is valid for each chapter in this thesis; that the trench maps remained the principal maps used by the IWGC architects as they surveyed and designed the cemeteries. Despite the dearth of design notes that remain, it is clear in quirky examples such as Rookery Cemetery that the Junior Architects were both aware and making reference to the trench map geometries within their designs.

In the context of initiatives such as the Ypres League project to add marker posts at key locations in the Salient the IWGC approach is in keeping with the zeitgeist of retaining the vernacular of the battlefield. There is an interesting aspect to the type of language retained by both these projects, and also those battlefield sites used within battlefield guidebooks, one that Julie Coleman identifies in a broader sense in her study of the emergence of slang. Coleman notes that slang in British society emerges from the working class, in the British Army of the First World War this was reflected in the emergence of Infantry slang.[396] In her study of slang and place names within the Australian, Amanda Laugesen identified a number of naming cultures and an associated shift in language to deal with these.[397] Laugesen defines the three groupings of place naming as follows;

> Firstly, some place names were given to a place on or near a battlefield where there was no other way of identifying it, except by a military marker of map co-ordinates. Names such as SUICIDE CORNER or SHRAPNELL GULLY are examples of this…Secondly, some place names were corruptions or Anglicisations of French,

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[396] Julie Coleman, *The Life of Slang* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[397] Laugesen, *Furphies and Whizz*-bangs, pp. 155-168.

Belgian, or other names for existing places…examples of this include MOO-COW FARM (for Mouquet Farm) and PLUGSTREET (for Ploegsteert(sic)). Finally, soldiers give names to particular locations within towns or existing foreign locations, often giving them entirely different names form their existing ones.[398]

Laugesen also went onto note how troops often gave nicknames to individual trenches, indeed the trenches made reference to are those in around Ploegsteert Wood that we will look at a in a later section.

Of the three groups that Laugesen identified as the framework for naming cultures, it is only the first point, identification of locations, that readily fits with the nomenclature of the IWGC cemeteries. However, it is not only in the cemetery places names that this primacy is identifiable. In two of the most prominent trench journals published during the Great War, The Wipers Times and The Fifth Glo'ster Gazette, place names, with the obvious exception of Wipers, are written as they would appear on an official map. There is, of course, a great deal of slang used throughout both runs of journals, but this rarely translated into to place names. On the few occasions slang terminology is used it is in those previously stated, such as Plugstreet for Ploegsteert on the Franco-Belgian border. Further to the trench journals, it is also noticeable in the guide books of the interbellum that the nomenclature is that of official terminology.

Considered in the context of Coleman's assertion that slang comes from the working class and the IWGC policies, guidebooks and even trench journals were the product of predominantly the officer and certainly the university educated class, this would provide a potential reason for the lack of slang and infantry vernacular in the

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[398] Ibid, pp.156-157.

names of cemeteries. However, within the three groupings the first also contains an element not apparent in the remaining two. The place names given to aid navigation and understand one's place in the landscape also carry something of the experience of war. It is not the case that Moo-Cow Farm contains anything other than word play, whereas Shrapnel Corner, or in the case of the IWGC cemeteries, No Man's Cot Cemetery or Crucifix Corner Cemetery. In the toponymy of the old Western Front, however, these places are few and far between. The group that Laugesen limits to a side note, the trench naming, is perhaps where there is most evidence of place naming on the Front Line.

It is in the combination of locating a position in the landscape that is otherwise unidentifiable and those experiential names that contain the history of the war in the landscape. It is then, perhaps, not to be unexpected that there are a number of IWGC cemeteries that are named after trenches. Spread across the length of the British sector of the Western Front there are thirty cemeteries that take their names from a trench that either forms part of the cemetery, or one that ran nearby. The military landscape of the front line was not, of course, only made up of trench names. There were a plethora of other locaters within the landscape that came to define the experience of moving through and living within the landscape of the Western Front. The IWGC project sought to retain a range of these features in the naming of their memorial spaces. Of interest in terms of Blomfield's memo on the historical significance of each site, is the range of landscape features that the IWGC project retained. In addition, that this retention also reflected not just the locations of battles, but the ways in which the fighting changed over the course of the war. By

necessity the cemetery locations reflect the location of fighting, so the earlier 1914 cemeteries tend to reflect the nature of fighting.

For example, the early battles around Mons and Le Cateau, and various other skirmish actions that took place on the retreat back to the Marne, are memorialised by cemeteries that often refer only to the location of the fighting. One such cemetery that reflects this is Néry Communal Cemetery. Néry, a small village in the Oise region and approximately 40 miles from Paris, was the site of an action on 1 September 1914 in which the Queens Bays and a battery of the Royal Horse Artillery were engaged in a small but important defensive action. In the context of the early fighting and the mythology that emerged around the professional army engaged in the first battles, Néry stands as one of the most notable actions in this period, to such an extent that even the CWGC historical notes contain an account of what became known as the Affair at Néry. Indeed, despite this being the official historical notes on the formation of the cemetery this brief excerpt shows the *Boy's Own* nature of the account:

> A heavy mist hung in the valley and visibility was poor as the sun rose on 1 September. The Brigade had awoken at 4.30 but a decision was made to delay departure for an hour and a half until the weather cleared. As they waited, officers and men busied themselves watering the horses and preparing breakfast. At approximately 5.30 a.m. a unit of the 11th Hussars which had been patrolling the woods outside Néry dashed into the village and reported that they had sighted a large enemy force. Just minutes after the patrol arrived on the scene, the Brigade came under heavy shell, machine-gun and rifle fire from the heights overlooking the village to the east.[399]

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[399] CWGC Historical Information, 'Néry Communal Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

The memorialisation of the engagement has a number of layers, but two specific elements show the importance of the place in the history of the memory of the war, through the material culture of battle and the establishing of the policy of repatriation and treatment of the dead. The field gun involved in the action, which was the site of three Victoria Cross awards, was donated to the fledgling Imperial War Museum and became a key feature in the narrative and memory of the early years of the war in the first interpretations. Indeed, such an important symbol of the war did the Néry Gun become that in 1924 it was one of three exhibits of 'outstanding importance' used as wreath laying posts within the Armistice Day service. In his chapter on the objects of the Imperial War Museum, Paul Cornish also notes the importance of the Néry Gun:

> There could scarcely be a more striking example of the museum's role as what Saunders callas 'a national focus for the commemorative materiality of war-related objects.
>
> The iconic nature of the "L" Battery gun was reinforced by its appearance at the unveiling of the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner in October 1925.[400]

The role of the action at Néry in the public awareness of how the war was memorialised is evident in its function as a device for remembrance at the Imperial War Museum, but the results of the action also led to the shaping of official policy on what was to be done with the war dead.

During the action a Lieutenant of the Queens Bays, Claude Norman Champion de Crespigny, was killed. Unlike the bodies of the other men killed in the fighting,

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[400] Paul Cornish, 'Sacred Relics': objects in the Imperial War Museum 1917-39 in *Matters of Conflict: Material Culture, memory and the First World War,* ed. Nicholas J. Saunders (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 35-50.

Lieutenant Champion de Crespigny's body was removed from the cemetery, returned to England and interred at the family mausoleum.[401] It was this repatriation along with a few others that led Fabian Ware to push for the banning of all repatriations. Longworth succinctly covers the mood and actions of Ware in these times:

> To take one example, in spite of Marshall Joffre's order of March 1915 banning exhumations during the period of war, the body of a British officer, a Lord Lieutenant and grandson of W.E. Gladstone, had recently been disinterred under fire at Poperinghe and sent home 'in obedience to pressure from a very high quarter'. Ware was disturbed about this. Such cases would increase the demand at home for repatriation. Furthermore he knew that officers themselves 'in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred will tell you that if they are killed [they] would wish to be among their men'. Determined to put a stop to such exhumations, in April 1915 he obtained an order from the Adjutant-General forbidding them not only on grounds of hygiene 'but also on account of the difficulties of treating impartially the claims advanced by persons of different social standing.[402]

It is clear from this excerpt and through the early repatriations that Ware had already formed in his mind the basis of the key tenet of the IWGC, that of equality in commemoration.

Given the significance of the action at Néry in the shaping of the way the war was remembered and commemorated the IWGC cemetery for the action retains aspects of these various layers. The CWGC files, aside from the account of the action, contain the following information about the site;

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[401] L. A. Clutterbuck, W. T. Doner, and C. A. Denison (eds.), *The Bond Of Sacrifice - A Biographical Record Of All British Officers Who Fell In The Great War. Volume 1 Aug-Dec., 1914.* (London: Anglo African, 1916).

[402] Longworth, *Unending Vigil*, p. 14.

> There are now nearly thirty Commonwealth casualties of the First World War commemorated at Néry Communal Cemetery. A vault stands on the west side of the cemetery, in which are buried three officers who fell during the action at Néry on the morning of 1 September 1914 and a fourth (brother of one of the three) who was killed in 1918. A Special Memorial in the North-west quarter, records the names of 12 men of "L" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, who were killed or fatally wounded during the same engagement.[403]

There are three things of particular note in the extant cemetery that appertain to the history of the action, the war at that time and the history of the site. In an earlier chapter we discussed the emergence of private memorials, erected before the IWGC were able to take full control of sites. At Néry it is the very presence of such a memorial that retains the history of the site and a narrative of the war at that time. The IWGC decision to allow those memorials already erected to remain has a greater impact on the retention of historical impact that any other intervention. The second aspect is the special memorial to the men of L Battery, the men who were firing the Néry Gun. As we have discussed in previous chapters, one of the functions of these memorial stones is to lift the case from within the cemetery precinct to the landscape beyond the perimeter walls. This again connects the memorial space with the broader memory landscape. Finally the retention of the name Néry, rather than adopting a regimental title links it directly with the action. In this case, the name reflects the type of warfare, open, mobile and where standard map referencing was applicable. There was no '*tommified*' landscape to speak of in this early part of the war, and so the place names took on a particular significance. In the public consciousness of the war and the memory of the war the name Néry held far more significance than the regimental affiliations.

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[403] CWGC Historical Information, 'Néry Communal Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].

It is a common feature of the 1914 cemeteries that their titles reflect either the location of the action, or on the rare occasion the name of the unit involved in the fighting, such as Guards Grave at Villers Cotterets. Shortly after these original cemeteries were established the fighting became entrenched and the tangle of trenches and cemeteries named after them followed soon after. This thesis has already explored a number of variations of cemetery design based on geometric and spatial retention of trench lines. As such, there is little need to go over the same ground again, instead it is noted that the use of trench names as part of the memorial vernacular is as pertinent to their function as memorial spaces as the geometric and spatial alignments are. Perhaps even more so, owing to the immediacy of the connection to memory created by the visibility of the title. However, an exploration of how trenches were retained is not required to make that point. Of greater interest is the approach taken by the IWGC to ensure a more nuanced version of the landscape was retained alongside the trench names.

### 2.4.3 Beyond the Front Line

The importance of place and place naming was pivotal to the experience of war and the way in which the IWGC chose to commemorate the fallen, the war experience and the landscape. The front line, of course, was not entirely made up of trenches and, as such, neither was the experience of being near the front line. The IWGC portfolio of cemeteries has many and various examples of trench name retention within the titles. In some cases the architectural treatment has retained other geometric and spatial alignments from the original battlefield landscape. In spite of this, the naming remains the most tangible link to the history and circumstance of

the deaths of those buried inside and of the experience of those who fought in the landscape.

The front line, in the broader sense, meaning the tangle of trenches that at some point represented the vanguard of earthworks before no-man's land, is also just a part of the landscape experience that the IWGC interventions retained. Routes to and from the front line also provided the units moving in the landscape with folds and hillocks in and behind which to establish cemeteries. In a number of cases these sites were retained, along with the name of the route to the front line that they were created alongside.

Strand Cemetery, near to Ploegsteert Wood, is named after a corduroy path that led from the relative safety of Le Bizet, up through Plugstreet Wood and out to the frontline facing Messines.[404] The architectural treatment of the Strand Cemetery ensures that the nomenclature and spatial memorial work in harmony. The left gateway to the cemetery is directly aligned with the entrance to the communication route of the same name. Prior to the road widening of the late 1980s, Strand Cemetery included a walkway that crossed an irrigation ditch that enhanced the feeling of crossing-over into another space – now, the entrance leads directly onto the hard standing. However, the concept and principle are the same – the visitor to the cemetery must pass through the same space that every soldier going up to the line also moved through. The gateway of the architecture acts not only as a physical entrance to the cemetery, but a temporal threshold to the spaces of the battlefield.

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[404] Tony Spagnoly and Ted Smith, *A Walk Round Plugstreet* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 1997), p. 17.

The retention of the title serves to enhance the crossover of memorial and battlefield landscapes. (Fig. 21)

Robert Macfarlane, in his exploration of the ancient ways of England, notes that paths have an ability to transcend time-based boundaries and retain memory, saying of paths that it is,

> 'as if time had somehow pleated back on itself, bringing continuous moments into contact, and creating historical correspondences…'[405]

The architecture and nomenclature of Stand Cemetery work together to demand that the visitor pass through the same space both interacting and becoming part of the story and memory of the landscape in doing so. This is retention was a deliberate
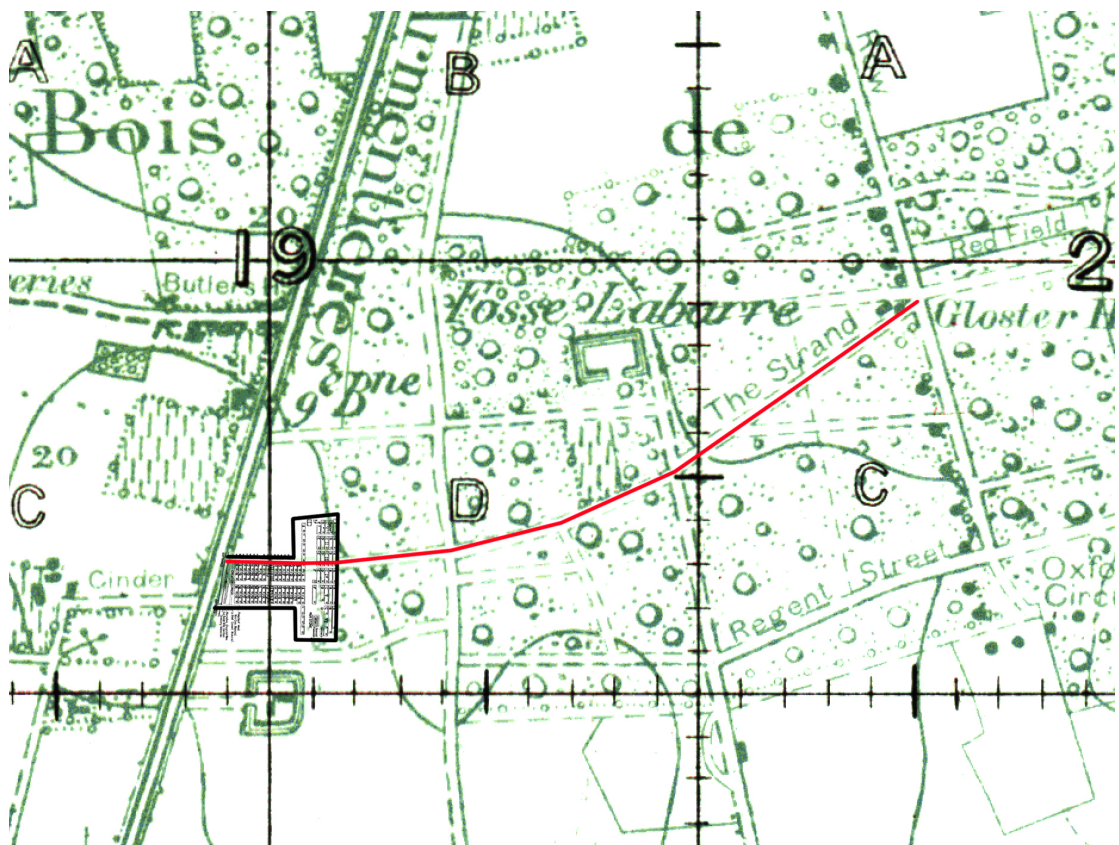


*Fig. 21 – Strand Military Cemetery Plan + Trench Map*

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[405] Robert Macfarlane, *The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot* (London: Penguin, 2012), p. 22.

act by the IWGC to ensure the connection with the former battlefield space, formerly known as The Australian Cemetery, it was given the title Strand Military Cemetery after the concentration of graves scattered along the edges of the path and wood.[406]

Macfarlane's exploration of paths and memory is equally pertinent to a study of the spaces in between the cemeteries of Ploegsteert Wood. The lattice work of paths and trenches, constructed and named by the London Rifle Brigade in the late months of 1914, are mostly lost – however, a handful survive. Those that remain act as access to the cemeteries – seen from above the battlescape of the Great War is identifiable by both cemeteries and the paths that cut through the woodland and surrounding countryside. Routes such as Mud Lane and Bunhill Row still lead the visitor to the same places they did in 1914. Whilst the paths do not fall under the jurisdiction of the CWGC, part of the land acquisition process was to ensure access in perpetuity. By retaining the cemeteries within the wood, rather than consolidating them into a more easily accessible cemetery elsewhere, the wartime landscape and inferred nomenclature has been retained and reinforced.

Other such examples of the route to the front line being retained can be found at Track X near to St Jan and Waggon Road, near Beaumont Hamel on the Somme. In the case of Track X the same reflection of the battlefield geometry as seen at Strand Cemetery is also twinned with the nomenclature to create another physical and memorial cross over in the landscape.

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[406] Spagnoly and Smith, *Plugstreet*, p. 73.

**2.4.4 The Military Landscape, Names and Transposed Toponymy**

Beyond the trenches and communication routes that the '*Tommies*' used to pass through the landscape, a descriptive language was placed onto the points that enabled an element of orientation on an often desolate horizon. These points often serve a dual role in regard to the historical narrative that Blomfield sought each site to preserve.

Unlike the cemeteries that retain a trench line or communication route, the cemeteries that retain elements of the battlefield toponymy are unable to retain the geometry owing to the scale of the landscape compared to the architectural intervention. That is not to say that they do not retain a spatial and geometric relation to elements of the battlefield landscape.

At Gordon Dump Cemetery near La Boisselle on the Somme, for example, the now rear perimeter wall and one of the adjacent perimeter walls directly mimic the original paths of the trenches that cut through the landscape during the summer of 1916. Neither of these battlefield features, however, were known as Gordon Dump, this title refers to the store that was nearby. The retention of the battlefield location in the cemetery title preserves the purpose of the location, whilst the built architecture retains the geometry of the wartime landscape. The two work in harmony to retain differing but equally important layers of memory within the landscape.

Elsewhere on the Somme, near to Longueval, can be found Caterpillar Valley Cemetery. As the CWGC historical file notes "Caterpillar Valley was the name given

by the army to the long valley which rises eastwards, past "Caterpillar Wood", to the high ground at Guillemont".[407] The siting of the cemetery is at a high point between the area known as Caterpillar Valley and another valley that sweeps from Bazentin, past High Wood and across to the edge of Longueval. It could easily be mistaken for Caterpillar Valley, given that the cemetery is located adjacent to both. However, the architectural intervention gives a remarkable clue as to which of the two valleys the cemetery is named after.

The cemetery is entered from the High Wood side, the wrong valley, the main axis leading up to a raised platform. This axis functions at right angles to the memorial axis, which includes the Cross of Sacrifice, War Stone and one of the New Zealand Memorials to the Missing. The raised platform that creates the axis with the entrance is an architectural intervention with one purpose, to be able to view the length of the valley after which the cemetery is named.

The two axes, laid out as they are, reflect a clear dual purpose within the design process, one of memorial space within the confines of the cemetery precinct and one of the memorial in the landscape.

Another example of IWGC naming policy retaining an essential part of the narrative of the war in the landscape can be found further to the north of the Somme battlefields, near to the village of Serre. On the trench maps of July 1916, the area before Serre was defined by four copses named after the apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These four copses came to demarcate the landscape of the attacks of

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[407] CWGC Historical Information, 'Caterpillar Valley Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1June 2019].

the first day of July 1916 by many of the northern pals battalions. Whilst the city of Sheffield purchased the copse as a landscape memorial, the name was changed to Sheffield Memorial Park.[408] The only marker in the landscape that retains the original nomenclature of the battlefield that July morning is the IWGC cemetery.

The examples of Gordon Dump, Caterpillar Valley and Luke Copse are sites that relate to the navigation in the landscape, be that in the experience of fighting the war or that of visiting the memorial landscape of the battlefields. This, of course, is a reflection of the narrative of human experience in the landscape during the war. There are an interesting series of cemeteries that also reflect the changing nature of the fighting. Indeed it is possible to track the type of warfare the British Army were engaged in by the type of cemetery, and in certain instances it is reflected in the title.

For example, prior to the entrenching of the armies, the warfare was mobile, the '*Tommification*' of the landscape, a term coined by Ross Wilson in his study of the transposition of language on to the Western Front landscape, had yet to begin.[409] As such the cemeteries related to actions are named after the action as decreed by the Battle Nomenclature Committee or after units involved, for example Néry Cemetery, named after the defensive action by Queens Bays and L Battery RHA, or Guards Grave at Villers Cotterets.

Once the entrenching began so too did the naming of cemeteries named after trenches, which we have previously looked at. However, the fighting on the Western Front did not remain in trenches in the typical form in which they are presented.

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[408] CWGC, WG 1879 Pt.1, Sheffield Park Memorial, Serre Road 1927-1934.
[409] Ross Wilson, *Landscapes of the Western Front* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 101.

Instead a form of defence in depth that saw a network of strong points evolve became the front line from late 1917 onwards. The cemeteries of this period also begin to reflect this change in tactic and places such as Berles Position Cemetery emerge. In addition to the narrative of tactical development that can be found in the cemetery titles, there are a range of other elements of the military infrastructure that are retained.

Principal among the other aspects of the back areas that are retained in the cemetery titles is the hierarchy of medical bases that casualties passed through. This is only to be expected, given the necessary proximity between medical facilities and cemeteries. At places such as St Mary's Advanced Dressing Station, Le Trou Aid Post and St Julien Dressing Station the explicit connection between the two is retained. In addition the title recreates an element of experience and also of the role of that point in the landscape during the war.

Other elements of the military infrastructure that stretched back to the channel ports and beyond can be found contained in the IWGC cemetery titles. If medical services were an obvious aspect of 'behind the lines' to retain then it seems equally reasonable that the other great piece of the infrastructure would be represented; that of accommodating the millions of men passing to and from the front line. As with the medical related titles, the range of forms of accommodation are represented from just behind the front line, back virtually to base camp at Etaples. There is, of course, a large cemetery at Etaples that is a result of the combination of the hospital and the camp, but it is named after the town rather than a specific site. It is interesting to note in this respect that whilst the IWGC sought to retain the

landscape nomenclature, they did not seek to retain any of the anglicised '*Tommy*' slang. Alas, we miss out on '*Eat Apples Cemetery*' or '*Wipers Reservoir Cemetery*'.

Those cemeteries that do retain a direct association with the infrastructure of accommodation can be found sites such as Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, The Huts Cemetery and Dragoon Camp Cemetery, all reflections of various levels of accommodation depending on the distance to the front line.

As well retaining the larger infrastructural elements of the military machine, the IWGC project retained a number of more obscure reference points. Perhaps the most interesting is to be found a short distance from Ploegsteert Wood. As we have seen earlier, there are a number of cemeteries in the area that create a network of memory paths and ensure that the whole landscape acts as a memorial to the experience of fighting the war in that particular sector. As the war progressed '*Plugstreet*' became known as a cushy sector, a quiet part of the line to offer rest to battle weary troops or as a relatively light introduction to trench warfare for newly arriving units.[410] As such it also became the most extreme of trench experiences, far more realistic than the model trenches on view to the public at Blackpool or Hyde Park, for politicians who wanted to learn about the trials and demands of trench warfare.

Despite its perceived 'cushy' status, '*Plugstreet*' was still an active theatre of war, and there were particular requirements for moving about the in the front line, namely that it all had to be undertaken on foot. The point in the landscape where this

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[410] Spagnoly and Smith, *Plugstreet*, p. 113.

transition from passenger to pedestrian occurred was marked on trench maps of the period, but now is only retained by an IWGC cemetery named Motor Car Corner. It is both the only reference in the landscape, and virtually in the historiography of the war, that such visits took place.

Of the last remaining group, that of the transposed toponymy, there is little that can be expanded on other than to note that for the soldiers entrenched in the landscape the naming of spaces after places from home lessened the sense of alienation. It was an important part of humanising the landscape in which they found themselves. As such, cemeteries such as Norfolk, Dartmoor and Hyde Park Corner all serve as reminders of Brooke's corner of a foreign field.

There is one final cemetery on our journey through the landscape memorial created by the IWGC naming conventions that is almost certainly unique; Dud Corner Cemetery near to Loos. Whereas all the cemeteries we have looked at so far in this chapter reflect the wartime landscape and the experience of the war in that landscape, Dud Corner is a direct reflection of the post-war battlefield clearance. It is the first link between the wartime landscape and the memorial landscape, and it is the only memorial to the inevitable continuation of '*Tommification*' that continued beyond the armistice.

Amongst many other aspects of the design process that shows the IWGC project to have been a much more greatly nuanced approach to memorialisation and the treatment of memory, this chapter has shown how the naming policy of the IWGC has served to create a monument to the landscape and the experience of the

landscape during the First World War. The taxonomy clearly identified, shows how the naming conventions of the IWGC retained a range of experiences of the First World War on the Western Front. It has shown that the names of the cemeteries were often considered as part of the overall design process, such as at Strand Military Cemetery, making them defining points in the treatment of a cemetery. These policies were intended to preserve the history and stories attached to the specific sites and, by extension, the landscape around. Ploegsteert Wood provides an example of how the retention of the physical space of the cemetery and the making permanent of the otherwise ephemeral language of the old Western Front create a tangible memorial across the landscape. Indeed, the next chapter will expand further on this theme.

## 2.5 The IWGC Design Project and an Inferred Landscape Memorial

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the consideration of place defines the architectural intervention of the IWGC. Up to this point, this thesis has explored elements of place attached to individual locations, be that the alignment of cemetery walls with the wartime landscape or with the use of nomenclature to evoke place. This chapter will look at the relationship between the IWGC architectural intervention and the landscape within which it is placed. It will show how the process of site selection and the consideration of the audiences of each cemetery enabled the Commission to create a vast landscape memorial that stretches along the old Western Front, crucially, without enclosing it.

Much of what has been looked at until this point has been able to be viewed, if not in isolation, certainly with primacy placed on the architecture of the IWGC. In this chapter we will place the work of the IWGC in the context of other landscape memorials that were created in response to the First World War.

The chapter will firstly expand on the previous chapter in considering varying contemporary approaches to preserving the landscape of the former battlefields. It is important to understand the context in which the IWGC was creating its memorial to the landscape, and thus part of the experience of fighting the war, predominantly to show how forward-thinking the Commission's approach was. Secondly, it will consider the few national memorial parks that were established on pieces of former battlefield. Finally, this chapter will show how IWGC design policy enabled a different form of landscape memorial to be created.

## 2.5.1 Preserving the Old Western Front

As previous chapters have shown, the IWGC was keen to retain both a direct connection and, in some case, physical aspect of the battlefields within their architectural treatment of the cemeteries. The decision to retain aspects of the battlefields was one in keeping with the prevailing mood of the years immediately following the war. The Ypres League, a prominent remembrance group, as a key tenet of their existence, sought to retain the ruins of the town square in Ypres. In addition, they were also heavily involved in projects to preserve other important sites within the Ypres Salient. As early as June 1921 the league were offered custodianship of Hill 60, a spot which had remained as one of the few predominantly untouched pieces of battlefield along the old Western Front.[411] Indeed, the enclosing and retaining of a section of the original battlefield was the predominant approach to preservation.

The sentiment of retaining the battlefields and markers that helped to codify the battlefield experience can also be seen in such organisations as the Talbot House movement. Talbot House had been a meeting place and point of relaxation set up in Poperinghe during the war, as an important transfer point for soldiers passing to and from the Salient it became synonymous with the experience of the Ypres Salient. After the war the building that had housed the club, much to the chagrin of the owner, was inundated with visitors. Upon returning to the old Western Front these ex-servicemen, along with their families, wanted to reacquaint themselves with the landscape of their memory. Talbot House provided just such a physical point from which to access the micro-geography of their memory. Toc H as it became known,

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[411] Anon. 'Hill 60 as a Gift', *The Ypres Times*, Vol 1, No.1 (October 1921), p. 20.

its name echoing the British Army phonetic alphabet used throughout the war, was in many ways an ideological precursor to the ethos of universal commemoration proposed and carried out by the IWGC. During the war years Toc H acted as an everyman's club where all ranks were welcome and all ranks were equal, typified in their motto 'abandon rank all ye who enter here'. Neville Talbot, one of the key figures in the establishment of the club, expressed the desire to retain aspects of the war years in his preamble to the popular *Tales of Talbot House*, stating that he hoped the "spirit of Talbot House and the things for which it stood may find expression in Blighty".[412] What is evident in the retaining of the Toc H club in Poperinghe is the desire to retain, as well as the experience and memories of the war years, a distinct place related to them.

Whilst the Toc H movement initially focussed on a nodal point in their own narrative of the landscape, the Ypres League began to focus on the general experience of the old Salient. Whilst being involved with the literal preservation of the former battlefield at Hill 60 and in the campaign for the ruins of Ypres, the League also produced one of the early tourist maps to the Salient. This map marked a significant change in the interpretation of the former battlefield landscape. For the first time, the geography and spaces of the battlefield were aligned with the civilian geography and infrastructure. This was ostensibly to allow for battlefield tourists to find the battlefield locations on their motor tours; what it served to do was to codify the micro-geography of memory that remained in place even once the rate of reconstruction increased. Much as the IWGC naming protocols explored in the

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[412] Clayton, *Tales of Talbot House*, p. viii.

previous chapter, it ensured that the landmarks remained marked in both memory and in tangible form.

The observation that future visitors to the battlefield would require way markers to navigate the former battlefield was one identified as early as 1917 in John Masefield's exploration of the old front line of the opening months of the 1916 Battle of the Somme:

> When the trenches are filled in, and the plough has gone over them, the ground will not long keep the look of war. One summer, with its flowers will cover most of the ruin that man can make, and then these places, from which the driving back of the enemy began, will be hard indeed to race, even with maps…In a few years' time, when this war is a romance in memory, the soldier looking for his battlefield will find his marks gone. Centre Way, Peel Trench, Munster Alley, and these other paths to glory will be deep under the corn, and gleaners will sing at Dead Mule Corner.[413]

An important tool in the post-war battle to preserve sites of memory was the emotive, pseudo-religious language that came with the proclaiming of sanctified ground. Indeed, the Ypres League, in their opening editorial declared that "the bond of union that was cemented in blood at Ypres should be one that no human power can ever dissolve".[414] The idea of Ypres as Holy Ground was one put forward by the Ypres League, in particular one of the founder members Lieutenant Colonel Henry Beckles Willson. After the war, Beckles Willson had installed himself in bungalow near to the site of the Menin Gate with the sole purpose of guarding the remains of

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[413] John Masefield, *Old Front Line* (London: William Heinemann, 1917), p. 75.
[414] Anon., 'Editorial', *Ypres Times,* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1920), p. 2.

the Ypres town square.[415]  His publication of *Ypres: The Holy Ground of British Arms* in 1920 served as a vehicle to disseminate this vision and Beckles Willson's position on the future of Ypres:

> The spirit of the place infects me, and I find it the most interesting spot on earth. During the day my heart has been sick at the scenes of desecration, but when the evening comes, Ypres seems suffused with peace and sanctity. No – I then say to myself – no, a thousand times, this Ypres as I see it now must not be blotted out. The blood of a quarter of a million dead has consecrated these ruins. It is a holy place.[416]

Typically used to underline the sanctity of the Salient were statements to do with the cost of the land, "Do you remember that warden ship (of the Salient) cost two hundred and fifty thousand lifes?" stated the *Ypres Times*.[417] This was a feeling that is emphasised in a number of contemporary publications.[418] Indeed, through such organisations as the Ypres League and the many and various guidebooks to the Salient that they published, the notion of 'Holy Ground' became a common held belief in the ex-service community.

A large part of the aura that created Ypres and the idea of sacredness was the constancy of the experience. After the initial forays of the late summer 1914 and the ensuing entrenchment the British Army found themselves in a salient jutting into the German lines, that surrounded the city of Ypres. Throughout the remaining years of the war no German boot set foot in the city. It was heavily shelled, the multitude of images related to the ruined Cloth Hall, Cathedral and medieval market square

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[415] Ian F. W. Beckett, *Ypres 1914* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 234.
[416] Beckles Willson, *Ypres, The Holy Ground*, p. 107.
[417] Anon., 'Editorial', *Ypres Times,* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1920), p. 2.
[418] See Beckles-Willson and Oxenham for examples of sanctified language used in book titles and content.

confirm this, but the site remained a permanent point of reference for soldiers of the British Army.

A short way from the Cloth Hall and town square, the Menin Gate, now adorned with Blomfield's vast memorial to the men who perished in and around Ypres prior to 14th August 1917, was an access point to the front line and the familiar geography of the Salient. The siting of the Menin Gate Memorial was partially practical, owing to complications with other potential sites and the uncertainty about reconstruction of parts of the Market Place. However, as Dendooven remarks on the final decision to construct the memorial at the Menin Gate, "…the site was also heavily laden with symbolic significance: it was through this gate that hundreds of thousands of British soldiers had set off for the front, many never to return".[419]

The location of the Menin Gate is not only symbolic due its link with the fallen soldiers of the Salient, but also with its explicit links to that very distinctive nomenclature that help the soldier move through the battlescape. The Menin Gate leads on to the Menin Road, a topic of songs and of Paul Nash's landscape painting. The Menin Road, in turn, leads out to Hell Fire Corner and on to Clapham Junction, before arriving at Hooge. Just as at Toc H in Poperinghe, the nomenclature of the site, in combination with its physical position, provides access to the geography by locating the visitor within the specific micro-geography of the war experience.

The combination of the presence of Talbot House in Poperinghe and the Menin Gate meant that pilgrims followed the route to the front line that the soldiers also took.

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[419] Dendooven, *Menin Gate*, p. 41.

Indeed, the discovery earlier this century of an old painted sign on the side of a house along the road between Poperinghe and Ypres advertising the British Legion, Haig House Tearooms on the Grand Place, is evidence of the popularity of this route. The importance of interconnectivity of spaces to the pilgrimage experience is one that Lloyd's chapter on pilgrimages deals with and in which he draws attention to anecdotes of bereaved family members wishing to trace in the footsteps of their fallen relatives.[420] It is within this context that the desire to maintain tracts of the former battlefields emerged. Indeed, the establishment of a narrative of sacred ground ensured that it was often seen as the only way of truly preserving such hallowed landscape.

## 2.5.2 Lost Landscapes, Enclosures and National Memorial Parklands

During a number of visits to the former Western Front throughout the 1920s, Captain H. A. Taylor catalogued the changing nature of the landscape and the loss of the distinctive features that had made up his experience of the battlefields, lamenting that "…one finds no trace of that tangle of trenches, named after London streets".[421] Ralph Hale Mottram, in his collection of essays and short stories, published a decade after the end of hostilities, has the main protagonists of his best-selling *The Spanish Farm Trilogy* – Geoffrey Skene and Stephen Dormer – return to the place of their respective woundings in 1918, only to become lost in what was once a familiar landscape.[422] Indeed, the idea of a lost landscape is a consistent theme within the writings of those soldiers who returned to the former battlefields.

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[420] Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism*, p. 135.
[421] Taylor, *Good-bye to the Battlefields*, p. 33
[422] Ralph Hale Mottram, *Ten Years Ago* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1928), p. 35.

The experience of the Great War for the front line soldier was epitomised by the relationship between architectural and geographical spaces; Guy Chapman, an officer in the 13th Royal Fusiliers, described it as an experience made up of 'architectural memories'.[423] The idiosyncratic naming of these spaces also served as a narrative framework for personal experience. The distinctive nomenclature of trenches and battlefield landscape features, influenced by thoughts of home or tongue-in-cheek '*Tommy*' humour, helped to give a sense of place to the individual's involvement in the war. When, as in the case of Taylor and Mottram, the soldier returned to 'look about for his old home'[424] the geography of his memory and experience had often seemingly disappeared without trace.

This phenomenon of a disappeared landscape is not limited to the returning veterans, but, as Jennifer Iles identifies, it is even more pronounced with the present day battlefield tourist:

> In many respects battlefield tourists on the Western Front explore a landscape that today visually reveals relatively little of the bloody carnage that took place during the war. Long empty of its former military occupancy, its geography requires significant decoding to understand its hidden narratives.[425]

As a result of this disconnect between the visitor and the landscape of the Great War, preserved sites and landscapes adopt much greater significance for the visitor. Jon Price also not only identifies the formal act or retaining a battlefield landscape, such as at Delville Wood, Newfoundland Park and Vimy Ridge, but in the persistence

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[423] Chapman, *A Passionate Prodigality*, p. 41.
[424] Taylor, *Good-bye to the Battlefields*, p. 30.
[425] Jennifer Iles, 'Exploring Landscapes after Battle: Tourists at Home on the Old Front Lines' in *Writing the Dark Side of Travel* ed. by J. Skinner (Oxford: Berghahn, 2012), p. 183.

of informal associations with the landscape, such as at the Sunken Lane near to Beaumont Hamel on the Somme – a place captured in Geoffrey Malins' *Battle of the Somme* film and the location from which a battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers entered the maelstrom of the battle.[426]

Price also draws on the desire to 'validate the sanctity of particular locations', such as at Mansell Wood where the Devonshire Regiment memorial to men who also fell on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme.[427] For both Iles and Price the cemetery and battlefield have been intertwined to the extent that one represents the other, but this is only in as far that the cemeteries can be considered as tangible points of pilgrimage in an otherwise lost landscape.

Within this, the notion of sacredness is again brought to the fore. Indeed, the idea of preserving the battlefield in a state of destruction was considered an apt memorial by many in the years immediately after the war. Not least of which in holding to this idea was the campaign to keep the town square of Ypres in rubble as a permanent memorial to the men who fell protecting it. These campaigns had strong support from all levels of the social strata, the campaign for Ypres being strongly supported by Winston Churchill and promoted by the ex-serviceman's group the Ypres League.[428] It is interesting to note, then, that the only pockets of battlefield that were

[426] Jon Price, *Cultural Landscape of Sacrifice, the problem of the sacred ground of the Great War 1914-1918*, presented at Forum UNESCO Univesity and Heritage 10th International Seminar (April 2005), p. 4.
[427] Ibid.
[428] TNA, CAB 24/106/45, Preservation of the Cloth Hall and Cathedral at Ypres.

preserved relate specifically to Imperial forces, where the ground had as greater significance to questions of nationhood than of war memorial.[429]

When, in 1921, the negotiations and purchasing of the 40 acre site that came to be known as Newfoundland Park were completed it marked a significant change in the ways in which the memorialisation of the Great War differed from previous conflicts.[430] Whilst retaining important battlefields was not uncommon, both the sites of Gettysburg and Waterloo were maintained even prior to the Great War, they related to discreet battles. These pieces of land were fought over once and their respective narrative and memoryscapes were linear. The decision to create a parkland memorial to the Great War, however, was confronted with the requirement of capturing a range of experiences and events in one area. This can clearly be seen within the space occupied by Newfoundland Park, where the 51st (Highland) Division placed their primary memorial on the Western Front within the grounds of what is intended as memorial to the men of the Newfoundland Regiment. In addition, the casualties who were killed in the opening minutes of the battle of the Somme on 1st July 1916 and buried in the cemeteries within the park, and close proximity to the park, display a mixture of units and nations that betray the complexity of the memory landscape occupied. Even the remainder of the division that the Newfoundland Regiment was part of was made up of English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish and Guernsey units. Within this was another level of complexity, in that the division was a mixture of Regular, Territorial Force and New Army soldiers. The respective experience, both in battle and life, would have been vastly different across

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[429] Hanna Smyth, 'The Material Culture of Remembrance and Identity: South Africa, India, Canada and Australia's Imperial War Graves Commission Sites on the First World War's Western Front', (Unpublished DPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 2019).
[430] Paul Gough, 'Contested memories: contested site: Newfoundland and its unique heritage on the Western Front.' *The Round Table* 96, no. 393 (2007), pp. 693-705.

the units on the day this park commemorates. Thus the narrative of memory even for the one day on which the memorial focuses is considerably more complex than the interpretation of the site allows.

Gough's paper on the contested memories of Newfoundland Park amply captures the pitfalls with attempting to retain a site with an imposed, single narrative when it contains a complex tapestry of experience and memory. It also serves to highlight the need that was felt in the years immediately after the war to preserve aspects of the battlefield landscape. As Bull and Panton note, both Newfoundland Park and Vimy Ridge are evidence of a "decision to retain the physical evidence of the battle as part of the memorial design suggested the inability of traditional war memorials to convey the horror of the Great War".[431]

The decision to retain and promote a single narrative within a space is also evident at the South African memorial at Delville Wood on the Somme. Here the IWGC principal architect, Herbert Baker, already connected with the South African nation as the designer of a number of Anglo-Boer war memorials, created a memorial park to reflect the actions of the South African Brigade in August 1916.

The Delville Wood Memorial was laid out as a counter-balance to the cemetery, which sits on the opposite side of the Longueval-Ginchy road. Both use the same axis as a way of bringing the two sites together. This was particularly evident in the early years of the memorial as the surrounding parkland had not become so

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[431] N. Bull and D. Panton, 'Conservation of historic battlefield terrain: drafting the Vimy Charter', in *Fields of Conflict: Progress and Prospect in Battlefield Archaeology*, ed. by P.W.M. Freeman and A. Pollard (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports International Series 958, 2001), p. 271.

established. Baker's architectural intervention maintained a direct link with the battlefield, its plan being sited on the former ground inhabited by Buchanan Street, the first trench line of the South African Brigade.[432] Nasson's political deconstruction of the process argues that there are many other meanings within the context of South African history contained within Baker's Delville Wood Memorial.

In the context of a national memorial a single narrative placed over the landscape, an instamatic memorial to a fleeting few moments of a long war, is an acceptable and wholly intended outcome of the intervention. However, it could be argued that the preservation is limited to those few moments, too. The physical landscape of the battlefield, as at Newfoundland Park, has been gradually reabsorbed by nature, even though the re-absorption is managed. At Delville Wood nature has been adopted to retain the geometries of the battlefield at the loss of the original physical features.

The enclosure of these sites was intended to preserve a piece of the battlefield for future generations, for the IWGC it was never a consideration to enclose large tracts of land, but instead to create the sense of connection to individual sites.

### 2.5.3 The IWGC and Inferred Space

In his exploration of the Western Front as a unique landscape, Paul Shepheard's observations regarding the former battlefields as seen today are principally focused on death and the dead:

> Along the twenty-mile British front of the Somme offensive, from Gommecourt to Montauban, these cemeteries are so frequent that

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[432] Bill Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 119, No. 480 (Feb., 2004), p. 72.

the next two are usually visible from the one you're in, like the villages. They lie along the old German trench line at six-hundred yard intervals, perhaps two hundred graves in each one, and each one is given the soldier's name for where they are. Serre Road 3, Railway Hollow, and Luke Copse are in the ridge above Serre village…[433]

Not only does Shepheard retain death as the focus, his perception is that the British cemeteries of the Great War are liberally sprinkled up and down the old front line, haphazardly laid-out wherever the men fell. Even if not explicitly said, this quality is inferred by most writings on the subject. The apparent arbitrary locating of cemeteries aligns smoothly with the perception of arbitrary death attached to those housed within them.

In this brief excerpt and throughout the chapter devoted to the former Western Front, Shepheard infers an overwhelming sense of chance to the siting of the cemeteries. This serves to enhance the pathos of the experience of visiting the cemeteries for Shepheard, further emphasised by his interpretation of the landscape. This romantic idea that the men are buried where they fell and in places they named is not entirely inaccurate, but Shepheard's utilisation of selected cemeteries to create a false understanding of the landscape overlooks a number of other factors. Shepheard's chapter succinctly captures many of the pre-conceived ideas around the IWGC cemeteries along the old Western Front. Namely, that there is no order beyond the immaculate rows of white headstones, the siting is informed only by where the men fell and that the men who lay in them gave the cemeteries their titles.

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[433] Paul Shepheard, *The Cultivated Wilderness: or what is landscape?* (London: MIT Press, 1997), p. 215.

In previous chapters we have looked at elements of relationship between aspects of the built architecture within the cemetery precinct. This showed the intent of the Junior Architects in retaining certain battlefield geometries and spatial relationships in the design and layout of each of the cemeteries. This section will expand the idea of the spatial memorial beyond the walls of the cemetery, to show how the IWGC considered an approach to the memorialisation and commemoration of the dead that also served to create a memorial to the landscape and stories contained within it.

To do this I will draw on some of the cemeteries we have already looked at in other chapters to show how the spatial memorial works in conjunction with other aspects of retained memory within the architecture. Firstly, we will consider general architectural devices that have been used to lift the gaze beyond the walls of the cemetery; secondly, we will look at specific cemeteries to show how these devices work and how they enable the visitor to the cemetery to rebuild the lost landscape of the Great War. Finally, we will look at two case studies of cemetery clusters that show a clear decision making process to ensure a landscape memorial is retained using the memory hotspots created by the cemeteries.

Throughout this thesis we have looked at the way in which the extant architecture contains elements of the wartime landscape, be that in the geometric alignments with shapes, forms and features of the battlefield, framing a spatial or physical remnant of the battlefield or in the retention of a motif of the battlefield. In all cases, this has considered the wall as an object of containment; this final section considers the

perimeter wall in different terms, as one of access to the landscape and not as a barrier.

During the discussions regarding the success or otherwise of the prototype cemeteries two of the designs, if not rejected, were certainly considered inappropriate as a base template from which the remainder of the portfolio would be developed. At both Le Treport and Louvencourt criticism was aimed at the design of the walls, though for differing reasons. Longworth outlines the objections to both in the official history;

> In the first place, they thought there was too much architectural decoration. Sir George Perley of Canada thought the walls of Le Treport were 'altogether too high' and those at Louvencourt 'decidedly too heavy and expensive'. This feeling was general. Kenyon agreed that walls should not exceed three feet in height, though he insisted that the treatment must depend on the site.[434]

In a literal sense the objections to the walls at Louvencourt and Le Treport, respectively, are in regards to their function in the aesthetic and a deciding factor in the eventual costing of each cemetery. However, these objections also ensure that future cemeteries will have low walls that allow for a view to the landscape beyond, and the narrowing of these walls will ensure that a connection between the precinct and landscape will be retained. Rather than becoming an element that cuts off the design from the surrounds, they act in different ways according to the position of the visitor. Seen from an external position the cemeteries act as a retaining element in the landscape of the wartime space. Seen from within, the landscape around the cemetery is re-imagined as one with direct connection to the cemetery space. The

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[434] Longworth, *Unending Vigil*, p. 68.

walls, in both instances, due to their low height and the thin veil that they create between the memorial and wartime landscapes, are an essential part in ensuring this relationship between the two spaces.

The architects of the IWGC also ensured that the architectural treatment of the sites encouraged the visual connection between the cemetery space and the landscape beyond. At both Hooge Crater and Caterpillar Valley cemeteries the architects created an element of the cemetery precinct designed for the purpose of viewing the landscape beyond. As we saw in the previous section, the design of Caterpillar Valley Cemetery enables the visitor to understand the landscape from which the cemetery takes its name. At Hooge Crater, the viewing platform provides the visitor with a view over the landscape in which the fiercest fighting took place. In both instances the viewing platform directly ensures that the circumstance and narrative of the place is retained within the broader space of the surrounding landscape.

This principle of the outward facing memorial, an architectural memorial that encourages the visitor to interact with and connect with the spaces beyond the walls is particularly evident at two of the memorials to the missing that are incorporated at cemeteries. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, the Tyne Cot Cross of Sacrifice was designed to function on a number of levels within the design, one of those being as a viewing position from which the visitor could see Ypres and the landscape between. The same form of explicit viewing tower was included at Dud Corner Cemetery as part of the Loos Memorial to the Missing.

In all these examples, the perimeter wall acts as an interpretive frame for the landscape beyond. It does not act simply as a boundary between spaces, it enables the direct connection between the cemetery space and the lost landscape of the war experience.

The interconnectivity of the cemetery spaces is an important element of the spatial memorial that was created by the IWGC intervention in the landscape. In his study of the poetry of Wilfred Own, Dominic Hibberd unintentionally provides an example of how the IWGC siting decisions allow the spatial relationship of the battlefield to be reconstructed. Writing about Owen's poem 'Exposure', he sought to recreate the landscape within which Owen found himself when he wrote the first draft;

> A Company was on the eastern spur of Redan Ridge, straddling the former German line, their position running west from Waggon Road for about 600 yards just above the 140-metre contour, halfway between Beaumont Hamel and Serre. Below them to their left, partly out of site, the British Line turned its right angle round the Quadrilateral and joined the trenches they had just occupied. To their right it swung back through anther right angle along the newly captured Munich Trench, facing enemy-held trenches in the valley below. The company was thus open to shelling from east as well as north. Directly ahead to the north, only a few metres higher than their own ridge, was Serre, seemingly a short walk away over level ground, but between them and the village, Waggon Road dropped down into a shallow, hidden valley, the dip concealing a formidable barrier, a double trench know as Ten Tree Alley and at least two machine gun posts.[435]

The points in the landscape identified by Hibberd as he turns the single dimensions of the trench map into a literary space within which to tell the story of Owen's poem also serve to highlight the way in which the IWGC policy of pockets of cemeteries creates a spatial memorial to the landscape and experience. Each of the

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[435] Dominic Hibberd, *Wilfred Owen* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2002), p. 273.

trench map references made by Hibberd can still be found in the modern landscape owing to the IWGC intervention and decision to retain the nomenclature.

In the closing pages of his lyrical memoir of a walk along the battlefields of the old Western Front, Geoff Dyer recounts his own visit to the Redan Ridge Number One Cemetery. Amidst the existential considerations, Dyer makes to remarks that beautifully illustrate the spatial relationship,

> It is early evening by the time I make my way to Beaumont-Hamel. I walk along a footpath to a small cemetery on the top of a low hill. From the cemetery gate I can see the crosses of four other small cemeteries.
>
> […] Light, field, the crosses of the other cemeteries. The faint breeze makes the pages stir beneath my fingers. It is the opposite of lonely, this cemetery: friends are buried here together…[436]

For Dyer the Crosses of Sacrifice connect the spaces. They connect the single place, in this case Redan Ridge Number One Cemetery, with the landscape and memorial beyond.

The use of the cross as a locater in the landscape is one of the few elements of the architectural intervention that whilst being eminently visible in the built record is also mentioned in the written archive. Truelove, in his general remarks for Quarry British Cemetery, Vermelles, noting that the cemetery was 'very difficult to find' added, "the cross sited in the position shewn will dominate the cemetery and act as guiding point to anyone visiting the Cemetery".[437]

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[436] Dyer, *Missing of the Somme*, pp. 129-130.
[437] CWGC, Add 1/6/12 Capt. Truelove, Architect – France.

This use of the formal IWGC architectural language, as devised by the three principal architects, fulfilled both the practical role of identification within rolling countryside and served to preserve the spatial relationship between the retained sites. This intervention, then, infers, far from empty space between the sites, a place of memory.

The interconnectivity is the very aspect that Dyer picked up on, "it is the opposite to lonely" he states, whilst referring to the landscape connection created by the visibility of the IWGC architecture in the landscape around him. It is the same visible connection in the landscape that Daniel Alexander and Andrew Haslam identified in their photographic essay on the War Graves Commission. In their collection of images aimed at capturing the essence of the work of the Commission the example used for the old Western Front is the cluster of cemeteries along the Redan Ridge that lead to Serre.[438]

The architect for this cluster of cemeteries was William Cowlishaw. In an earlier chapter we looked at the geometric alignment and retention of battlefield space in Cowlishaw's design for New Munich Trench British Cemetery. The other cemeteries in the cluster are not as obviously geometrically connected with the wartime landscape.

Of the cluster the most intriguing cemetery is the one named after Frankfurt Trench. According to the CWGC Historic Files;

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[438] Daniel Alexander and Andrew Haslam, *When War is Over* (Stockport: Dewi Lewis, 2015), pp. 130-131.

> Frankfurt Trench British Cemetery is named from a German trench about 1.6 kilometres North-East of the village, which remained in enemy hands until the German retreat early in 1917. The cemetery was made by the V Corps after that retreat, when their units cleared the Ancre battlefield, and it was known also as V Corps Cemetery No.11.[439]

However, a survey of the site using the trench maps of the period associated with the fighting in this area from late 1916 onwards highlights that the site of the cemetery is several hundred yards away from the position of the original Frankfurt Trench. The cemetery precinct does have a trench passing through the corner, over which stands the Cross of Sacrifice, but this was known as Pritchard Trench. This is the only case within the IWGC architectural project where a cemetery named after a trench is not either adjacent to or in geometric alignment with the trench of the same name. However, the site survey revealed an element of the cemetery history that is not recorded in the written archive. The actual title of the cemetery is Frankfurt Trench V Corps Cemetery Number Two. There is no mention in early guidebooks to the battlefields of a Frankfurt Trench V Corps Cemetery Number One, and the cemetery file also contains no further information on this.[440] Likewise, there are no references made to special memorials within either this cemetery or others to mark graves lost should a number one cemetery have been lost to shellfire.

Whilst the full title adds the question as to what is the history of wartime burial sites in the area, it does offer an answer to the other, that of why the cemetery is named after the trench and yet located at a significantly different site. The combination of

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[439] CWGC Historical Information, 'Frankfurt Trench British Cemetery' in *Cemeteries and Memorials* <https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials> [Accessed 1 June 2019].
[440] No reference to such a cemetery is found in the previously cited *White Cross Touring Atlas of the Western Battlefields* or *Michelin, Somme vol. 1.*

the historical file and the built record mean that another form of spatial memorial is taking place, the cemetery title in this case records the location of the deaths of the men buried within. The reference to an indirectly associated piece of battlefield landscape again connects the cemetery space with the landscape beyond, whilst retaining the battlefield vernacular.

The other cemeteries in the cluster also have little in the way of geometric alignment with the battlefield nomenclature after which they are named. At Munich Trench Cemetery, for example, there appears to be little correlation between the cemetery and the site of the trench of the same name. However, the access path does follow the route of the trench for a brief period. That there are so many cemeteries arranged in close proximity is likely to be the result of a decision based on two aspects; the size of each individual plot in terms of the number of burials and the interrelationship between the individual sites. The first point allowed for each cemetery to be solely designed by a Junior Architect without any involvement by a Principal. In spite of this, there is still a discrepancy in authorship within the CWGC archive, which lists Frankfurt Trench British Cemetery as the work of Reginald Blomfield. In addition, it is interesting to note additional discrepancies between the figures of burials in the architectural files, which often over estimate the numbers, as opposed to the actual figures contained in the historic files. For examples, Redan Ridge Cemetery Number One contains eighty-one burials, and yet the architecture files have it as containing 154. This is the case in other cemeteries in the grouping.

The second point as to the cause of the decision to retain clusters of cemeteries rather than to concentrate them into a single large cemetery highlights an understanding of the requirement of each point in the landscape to adequately retain

the history and circumstance of each individual cemetery. Taken in the context of Blomfield's memorandum this consideration aligns with the principles he laid out, the parcel of landscape that the group of cemeteries enclose by inference is an inherent part of the narrative of each site.

Standing in Munich Trench Cemetery and looking across to the cluster of cemeteries that retain the spatial memorial the Crosses of Sacrifice lead in an informal visual processional way to the central memorial to the missing on the Somme at Thiepval. In his walk through the Somme landscape Dyer described Thiepval and "its hulking immensity dominating the landscape for miles around".[441]  The memorial at Thiepval was designed by one of the Principal Architects of the Commission, Sir Edwin Lutyens. It was the last of the great memorials to be unveiled, and, as such, the processional way is purely fortuitous, but does highlight the central nature of the monument in the memorial landscape.

The memorial is located on the high ground once occupied by a chateau. Originally intended to be located at St Quentin the location was changed and after a series of site visits Lutyens selected the position upon which the memorial now stands. The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing has been lauded by architectural historian Gavin Stamp as "one of the finest works of British architecture of the twentieth century".[442] The complex massing of interlocking red brick arches, allow for both the wall space to contain the 73,000 names of those lost in the folds of the Somme landscape, and to act as a beacon within that landscape. The consideration in this respect is not dissimilar to a larger variant of the role of the Cross of Sacrifice, a

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[441] Dyer, *Missing of the Somme*, p. 125.
[442] Stamp, *Memorial to the Missing*, p. 13.

point on the horizon from which one can locate an element of the spatial memorial created by the IWGC intervention. However, Stamp also notes another aspect of the nature of Lutyens' design for Thiepval, saying that;

> The visitor stands beneath a high stone vault resting on solid brick walls but is mostly conscious of space and sky as he, or she, looks out through the arches in each direction – north, south, east, west – over the placid, rural landscape…[443]

This recognition by Stamp of the outward facing nature of the memorial, of the design that ensures a framing and constant relationship with the landscape beyond also reflects the principle of the spatial memorial. The men commemorated on the memorial are enclosed in the landscape framed by the archways. In his famous painting of the *Menin Gate at Midnight*, Will Longstaff imagined the fallen rising up and being drawn towards their name on the memorial. With the Thiepval memorial the design ensures that for the visitor the name goes out to find the fallen, it connects memory with the landscape around rather than to purely act as a focus.

The same theme of a memorial intrinsically connected with the landscape beyond was identified by Greenberg in his study of Lutyens' relationship to the modern movement, saying of Thiepval;

> One explanation for this unexpected placement of an urban structure is that perhaps in Lutyens' mind, the memorial stands at the centre of a great conceptual city. Each of the names inscribed on the base suggested an unrealized network of human relationships that have, in turn, spatial connotations of homes, work places, houses of worship, places of leisure, and civic functions. This conceptual City of the Dead

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[443] Ibid, p. 4.

is spread out in an orderly grid around the tetrapylon and takes possession of the landscape.[444]

Another aspect of the design that lends the idea that the memorial was to be considered as a viewing platform from which to engage with the surrounding landscape, further supporting Blomfield's principles of ensuring the site retained the historical narrative, Lutyens included a viewing platform at the pinnacle of the tower of arches.

The site of the memorial was the back drop and scene of bitter fighting from the opening of the Somme offensive on 1 July 1916 until shortly before its close in November of the same year. The grounds in which the memorial stands were themselves heavily fought over until they were captured by units of the 18th (Eastern) Division in October 1916. The map of operations in the Divisional history for the period of fighting around Thiepval and over to the Schwaben Redoubt identify a number of sites related to the series of actions;[445] at each of these sites can now be found an IWGC cemetery. Seen from the viewing platform on the top of Thiepval the cemeteries in the landscape would mark the furthest points of the 18th Division advance.

This chapter has shown how the prevailing spirit of the interwar period was to enclose land as a way of preserving the battlefields for future generations. The examples of Newfoundland Park and Delville Wood, where national memorial parks

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[444] Allan Greenberg, *Lutyens and the Modern Movement* (Papadakis Publishing, London: 2007), p. 150.
[445] G. H. F. Nichols, *The 18th Division in the Great War* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1922).

were established to do this, show the difficulties in retaining an authentic battlefield, even in abstract form.

The option to enclose large areas of land to act as a memorial was not an option for the IWGC. The complexities of narrative that would have ensued pale into insignificance when the scale of cost and maintenance are considered. However, the IWGC design policies that assigned such emphasis on place within the project also enabled an inferred memorial to the landscape to be created. By using the same architect who understood the landscape to design clusters, by ensuring that sight lines were created by using devices already within the architectural language, and by the selection of specific sites over others to achieve this, the IWGC enabled the memorial to spread beyond the perimeter walls of each cemetery.

## 3 | Conclusion

The principles upon which the IWGC was founded in 1917 have helped to form both public opinion and the narrative of the organisation within the historiography of memorialisation of the First World War. However, those principles of equality of commemoration that have been used to shape this understanding, whilst being true, have overlooked another central principle of the approach taken to make permanent the British and Commonwealth cemeteries of the old Western Front. Throughout this thesis we have used Bloomfield's memorandum circulated in February 1918 as vital addition to the official Kenyon report to provide an insight into the detail of the implementation of the overarching principles. Kenyon's report made reference to general aspects of the architecture, such as the use of tool sheds, pavilions, the role of the boundary, but the majority of the comment regarding the design was in regards to the headstones and the quality of treatment. In regard to the design of the cemeteries Kenyon's remarks were general, outlining the approach rather than the specifics of the process. That each cemetery should be individual and reflect the response of a Junior Architect to the site was evident in his…

> It leaves ample scope for the display of artistic talent in adapting the scheme to the details of the ground in each particular instance, and the credit for satisfactory results will rest with the designer. All that is desired here is to ensure that all the designers shall work on a common plan. Each cemetery, it is hoped, will be beautiful, or at least satisfying, in itself; but their effect becomes cumulative if all, under whatever circumstances, have the same main features and express the same ideas…[446]

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[446] Kenyon, *Cemeteries in France*, p. 14.

That Kenyon wrote of a 'common plan' and of 'expressing the same ideas' is of itself recognition of a set of design principles with much greater nuance than the overarching tenets laid out in his report. We must, then, consider Blomfield's memorandum as an insight to the detail behind Kenyon's broad principles. Blomfield's assertion that;

> The object being to preserve the memory of the dead. The record of the circumstances of their death and burial should be kept steadily in view. In certain Cemeteries for example, where hasty burials were inevitable after some great action, the rows of graves are not always symmetrical or laid out on the same axis line. I think that as a general rule, and except in extreme cases, this arrangement should as far as possible be preserved even at the cost of the design, because it is part of the history of the cemetery.[447]

This statement by Blomfield, in relationship to the Kenyon report and in the context of the case studies of this thesis make this one of the defining statements on the IWGC architectural design policy. Whilst the architectural features, such as the Cross of Sacrifice, War Stone and universal headstone design form the visible language of the memorial, the underpinning principle of history and circumstance shape each usage of these features. Even the usage was often considered as a way to retain an historic aspect, rather than simply the cumulative aesthetic effect that Kenyon spoke of. Understanding the importance of this statement by Blomfield enables a reading of the architectural intervention, the memorial in and of the landscape that the IWGC curated in the years after the First World War.

That the places of those who fell are marked and commemorated, whilst being a fundamental function of the role of the cemetery, is only one level at which the

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[447] CWGC, Bloomfield Memorandum Feb 1918.

spaces retain the history of the site and landscape. The primacy of this function in our understanding and interpretation of the cemeteries has not enabled the nuance of the design process to receive any recognition in existing studies of the IWGC war memorial. As Blomfield noted, for him the history of the site included the geometries and specific features of the battlefield.

For Blomfield the role of history incorporated the idea of circumstance. His interest in the circumstance of the deaths of those buried within each cemetery was a vital aspect of the history of the site. The two elements being co-dependent in the retention of the history, or in the fuller sense, the story of not only the sacrifice of life but in the action and experience that lead to the loss of life. As we have seen in a range of studies, the story of the war formed an essential part of the memorial. That story, or circumstance, could be found in the physical form of remaining battlefield features, geometries of the battlefield, nomenclature and toponymy, spatial relationships and when not directly possible to tell the story, it could be inferred by the use of motif. These elements of nuance in the design process could only be included by those with an intimate knowledge of both the landscape and the experience of being in that landscape during the period of fighting. It is to this end that the IWGC policy to employ only those who had served can be seen in a new light. This policy, in the context of the emergence of many and various other ex-service charities during the same period, could be, and arguably has been, overlooked as a patriotic gesture in solidarity with the swathes of veterans returning from the front. However, framed by Blomfield's memorandum, this can be regarded as a recognition of the vital role the cadre of Junior Architects would play in the

creation of a memorial that not only commemorated the dead, but that told the story of the experience of all.

The metanarrative of the IWGC project, has, until this point, been accepted as purely a single narrative; the idiosyncrasies and design stories contained within each individual cemetery have been overlooked and ignored. In the process of answering the first of my research questions, I have unpicked the range of narratives that are contained within each of the physical memorial spaces and in the inferred memorial spaces between the sites.

There are two distinct elements to the IWGC project that allow the reading of the layers of memory evident in each of the cemetery sites studied in this thesis. First, the individual memory narrative contained in the architecture that relates directly to the individual war experiences of the Junior Architects involved. In the case studies of Wilfrid Von Berg and John Truelove the correlation between war experience and the design work undertaken with the IWGC is clear. The groups of cemeteries they designed also serve to create a proto-pilgrimage for each architect. In the cases of Von Berg and Truelove both of these pilgrimages by design included the commemoration of friends and comrades and, in the case of Von Berg, his own brother. However, beyond solely that connection, the evidence of this shows that those cemeteries nearest to places of importance in their own respective war experiences were frequently included within their portfolio of design responsibility. There is very little in the written archive regarding the division of design responsibility that gives any insight beyond the generic points raised in Kenyon's report. However, the architectural archive, alongside the biographies of the

individual architects, enables a new level of understanding as to the role of the Junior Architects within the design process. This does not discredit Longworth, nor the widely accepted notion that the Principal Architects were chiefly responsible for the designs, nor the idea that the Junior Architects functioned under the direct and constant guidance and direction of the Principals. However, it does add a great deal more detail to the complexity of that relationship and places the credit of authorship on the Junior Architects.

In turn, this greater understanding of the authorship of the cemeteries and the subsequent layer of personal memory this creates enables the designs to be viewed through the eyes of someone who knew the experience of the wartime landscape and was, in some cases, aware of the exact circumstances of the death of those buried within. It is the emergence and understanding of this gaze that offers an interpretation of the memorials in terms of the wider landscapes; those landscapes of memory and of memorial.

Almost by default, as a consequence of the policy to employ former soldiers as architects and the way in which design responsibilities were divided, the IWGC architectural project created a series of sub-memorials to the service and experience of the Junior Architects. In their work, however, the Junior Architects rendered not only their own experiences, but also they retained in their treatment of each site elements of the broader experience of the First World War.

Each cemetery included within this thesis was designed by a Junior Architect. Each aspect of retention, each element of harmony between cemetery space and the

evaporated landscape of the First World War and each cross viewed in the landscape is as a result of the considerations of the group of architects whose names have largely gone unrecognised in the intervening years.

At the beginning of this thesis I set out to answer the following questions:

1. How did the design process of the IWGC cemeteries reflect aspects of memory and experience of the Great War beyond the commemoration of the dead?

2. How did the architecture of the IWGC shape and facilitate an understanding of the physical and memory landscapes of the Great War?

The evidence laid out in this thesis shows a clear interpretation of the cemeteries and sites of the IWGC intervention in the landscape of the old Western Front that shows a memorial of greater nuance than has previously been considered. The layers of memory contained at each site range from the individual, in the burials themselves and in the experience of the architect in the creation of the space, through to the general experience of the wartime landscape, in the retained geometries, spatial relationships and battlefield features. This layering of memory is not a fortunate but ultimately unconsidered by-product, but a central principle of the design ethos and process. Whilst the *raison d'etre* for the cemeteries is the commemoration of the fallen, the IWGC project, through its employment and design policies ensured a memorial was created that also captured something of the experience of all, the

history of the site and by extension the war and the circumstance of those who fell and those who buried them.

This far seeing decision by the IWGC, undoubtedly inspired in part by the 1918 memorandum by Blomfield, ensured the creation of a memorial that tells the stories of those who fell, those who served, the landscape they served in and the men who designed them. The architectural treatment of the cemeteries by the IWGC can then be considered to provide a direct connection between the memorial space, the physical landscape and the landscape of memory. In his *A Good Parcel of English Soil*, the title itself echoing the words of Rupert Brooke's thoughts on a war cemetery, Richard Mabey opened with the thought that;

> If you're trying to make sense of the landscapes that shaped you as a young person it helps to have a hot spot, some metaphorical junction which connects that old space with the world you inhabit now.[448]

As was exemplified in H.A. Taylor's discovery of the Point 110 cemetery in an earlier chapter, the IWGC architectural intervention in the landscape provided exactly this for those who returned. More than just a metaphorical junction, however, the IWGC created a memorial space in which those who were looking could find where the old Western Front still meets with the physical place.

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[448] Richard Mabey, *A Good Parcel of English Soil* (London: Penguin, 2013), p. 1.

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