

Types of war memorials



War Memorials Trust

On this sheet you will learn:

- The names of different types of war memorial.
- How to recognise different types of war memorial.

More information about different types of memorials, and pictures of other examples, can be found in our **Gallery** at www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/youth-groups/gallery.

Church fittings

Church fittings are items that you would find inside a church like **bells**, **screens**, **seating** or an **organ**. Sometimes these have been put there as a war memorial. They will often have either an **inscription** on them, or a plaque fixed to them or nearby to show that it is a war memorial. Church fittings might not be what you would usually think of when you imagine a war memorial. Why do you think something in a church was considered a good choice for remembering a war?



Little Bollington war memorial church organ, Cheshire © Holy Trinity Parish Church Council, 2012.

Crosses

Crosses are a design that many people associate with war memorials – why do you think this is? There are many different **types of cross** design, which you can see in our Gallery. Some are fairly **simple** while others are more elaborate and **decorative**, often with carvings on the

cross. A cross might form the whole memorial or it might be a smaller part of a larger monument or sculpture.

Landscape features

Landscape features means **outdoor spaces** that have been dedicated as war memorials, such as a **garden**, a playing **field** or another memorial that has been designed using outdoor space or the **natural** environment. Often open spaces like these will have something like a **plaque** on gates or nearby that tell people that the space itself is a memorial to people involved in the war.

Lychgates

A lychgate is a gate with a roof covering it, which stands at the **entrance** to a **church**. Lychgates that are war memorials will often have the **names** of those commemorated carved into the wooden **frame** or **roof**, or be on plaques fixed to the gate. Not all lychgates are war memorials but they were a popular choice after the First World War.



Newton Regis memorial lychgate, Warwickshire © War Memorials

Monuments

Monuments are things like **pillars**, **cenotaphs** and **obelisks**. They are usually tall structures placed **outside** and often in a place where lots of people can see them, like a town square. Many have inscriptions on them, either carved onto it or on a plaque fixed to it. Many of these

inscriptions list the **names** of the people remembered on the memorial.

Plaques



Wetton war memorial plaque, Staffordshire © Paul Sephton, 2012.

War memorial plaques might be quite **large** and form the **whole** of the memorial, or can be part of a **larger** memorial such as a cross or a monument. In these cases it is often the plaque that bears the memorial's **inscription** and list of names. If a plaque is the only part of the memorial then it might also include another feature such as a **carving** or **painting** of an **image** or **symbol**. Plaques can be made of different **materials** and be placed inside or outside a building.

Sculptures

Some war memorial sculptures are of men or women in the **Armed Forces** shown either ready to fight or after a battle so that the **effect of war** can be seen. Many are shown with '**arms reversed,**' meaning that their weapon is turned inwards and the person is resting their hands on it. This is a traditional sign of **remembrance** and **mourning**. Other sculptures show figures that mean **victory** or **peace**. Others show a combination of these.

Structures and buildings

Buildings, like church fittings, might not be an immediately obvious war memorial – you might have to look carefully to find something that tells you it is. In the UK there are examples of war memorial

hospitals, schools, village halls, chapels, even bus shelters. Why do you think some communities chose to remember their war dead with one of these buildings rather than something more 'traditional' like a monument?



Crediton war memorial shelter, Devon © War Memorials Trust, 2006.

Windows

Stained glass and other types of windows in public buildings or churches are sometimes used as war memorials and might feature **symbols** or **pictures** associated with the people being remembered.

Others

There are lots of war memorials that do not fit into any of these groups. Examples can be seen in our Gallery on www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/youth-groups/gallery and include **Books of Remembrance**, where the names of those remembered are written and displayed in a book, **pictures** such as **photographs** of the people commemorated or a **painting**, or a **shrine**.