

WAR GRAVES

HOW THE CEMETERIES ABROAD WILL BE DESIGNED

Report to the Imperial War Graves Commission
by Lieut.-Colonel Sir FREDERIC KENYON,
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This Report was submitted in pursuance of instructions from the Imperial War Graves Commission, which, at a meeting held on the 20th November, 1917, resolved to appoint Lieut.-Colonel Sir Frederic Kenyon, Director of the British Museum, as Adviser to the Commission.

The Commission recognised that there would inevitably be considerable difference of opinion on the question how the Cemeteries abroad should be laid out, and what form of permanent memorial should be erected in them. They felt, moreover, that it was undesirable that a matter of this kind should become the subject of controversy, if it could be avoided. The appointment of Sir Frederic Kenyon, therefore, was made with a view to focussing, and, if possible, reconciling the various opinions on this subject that had found expression among the Armies at the front and the general public at home, and particularly in artistic circles. His terms of reference were as follows :

"Sir Frederic Kenyon's duties will be to decide between the various proposals submitted to him as to the architectural treatment and laying out of cemeteries, and to report his recommendations to the Commission at the earliest possible date -

1. He will consult the representatives of the various churches and religious bodies on any religious questions involved.

2. He will report as to the desirability of forming an advisory Committee from among those who have been consulted, for the purpose of carrying out the proposals agreed upon.

The Commissioners are of opinion that no distinction should be made between officers and men lying in the same cemeteries in the form or nature of the memorials."

The recommendations contained in the Report were generally adopted by the Commission, and the work of construction has been put in hand in three Cemeteries in France, for each of which one of the Principal Architects is responsible.

FABIAN WARE, Major-General,
Vice-Chairman, Imperial War Graves Commission.
Winchester House,
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22nd November, 1918.

REPORT

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour to lay before you the following report on the subject referred to me by the resolution of your Commission on 20th November, 1917.

In accordance with the instructions contained in that resolution, and in order to carry out the task entrusted to me, I visited France on two occasions. I was able to see a considerable number of cemeteries of various types; large base cemeteries, such as those of Boulogne, Wimereux, Etaples and Abbeville; large independent cemeteries, either adjoining towns, as at Armentieres, or in open country, as at Lijssenthoek (south-west of Ypres); cemeteries which form adjuncts to French communal cemeteries, such as Merville, Bailleul, Abbeville and Boulogne; cemeteries adjoining or amalgamated with French military cemeteries, as at Villers-au-Bois, near Vimy, in the neighbourhood of Arras, and on the outskirts of Arras itself; small isolated cemeteries, either in flat, featureless country, as at Mendinghem (near Provcn) and Brandhoek, or in pretty rural scenery, as at Warloy-Baillon; small groups of graves in the squalid surroundings of the mud of Ploegsteert; and finally, an immense number of single burials, as over the whole area of the battles of the Somme, on either side of the road from Albert to Bapaume., I was able to visit cemeteries along all parts of the front, in the areas of Ypres, of Festubert, of Arras, and of the Somme, and also those which fringe the coast, in the neighbourhood of the great base camps and hospitals, and thereby was able to form an idea of the variety of problems arising in connection with their arrangement, decoration and upkeep.*

* The only important category of cemeteries which I have not yet had an opportunity of visiting comprises those of the days of the Marne and Aisne in 1914, which now lie within the French zone. These are cared for by our Allies, with occasional visits from the staff of the Directorate.

I have also had opportunities, both abroad and at home, of consulting representatives of the principal interests involved - the Army, the relatives of the fallen, the religious denominations, and the artists and others whose judgment may be of value in a work demanding imagination and taste and good feeling. There are very many whom, if space permitted, I should wish to thank for the time which they have spared for the discussion of this subject, for the courtesy and attention which they have paid to me, and for the good advice which they have given. Among others, I have made a point of obtaining opinions from those who are qualified to speak for India and for the Dominions which have sent so many of their sons to lie in the graves which for generations to come will mark the line of our front in France and Flanders. My endeavour has been to arrive at a result which will, so far as may be, satisfy the feelings of relatives and comrades of those who lie in these cemeteries; which will represent the soldierly spirit and discipline in which they fought and fell; which will typify the Army to which they belonged; which will give expression to those deeper emotions, of regimental comradeship, of service to their Army, their King, their Country and their God, which underlay (perhaps often unconsciously) their sacrifice of themselves for the cause in which they fought, and which in ages to come will be a dignified memorial, worthy of the nation and of the men who gave their lives for it, in the lands of the Allies with whom and for whom they fought.

The question of the arrangement of the cemeteries and the nature of the monuments to be placed in them did not come to me wholly untouched. The Commission are aware that in the course of the summer of 1917 three gentlemen of the highest artistic qualifications Mr. (now Sir) Edwin Lutyens, A.R.A., Mr. Herbert Baker, F.R. I.B.A., and Mr. Charles Aitken, Director of the National Gallery of British Art, were invited to visit France, and to give the benefit of their opinions to the Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries. Much thought has also been given to the various problems, and much work actually done, by the staff of the Directorate in France, of which more will have to be said in a later part of this report. My task has therefore been rather to compare and co-ordinate ideas than to suggest them. The artistic ideas come from others, my function is rather to consider how they would affect, and how they would be received by, the mass of average opinion, for whom the artists, in their higher language, speak.

It is necessary in the first place to emphasise the great variety in the circumstances of the cemeteries, and consequently in the problems connected with their disposition and decoration. Many of them have been formed in connection with hospitals and casualty clearing stations, in which the burials can usually be made with some forethought and deliberation. These may be of very various sizes, according to the length of time that the hospital or station has remained on that spot. Some of them are in towns or villages, and often adjoin the communal cemeteries, so that the monuments, of our dead will be seen in close proximity to those which characterize civilian burials in France and Belgium. Others are in open country which may present all kinds of natural features, sometimes flat, sometimes muddy and sodden, sometimes undulating, sometimes surrounded by trees, sometimes with little or no background, sometimes near roads and sometimes far away. Some are in woods, some in orchards, some in open fields, some along the edges of roads. Some are still in use, and consequently are being progressively enlarged; others are enclosed, the land acquired, and have no further possibility of alteration of boundaries.

Other cemeteries, again, have been formed during the progress of fighting, when opportunity has occurred (as it often did not occur) of collecting and burying the dead on the field of battle. For these there was little choice of site, and they may be found anywhere in the areas where the armies have fought; and in some cases it may be necessary to move them in order to preserve them at all. And besides these there are the thousands of isolated burials - men buried hastily where they fell, men buried by the shell or mine explosion which killed them, men whose bodies could not be reached at the time for burial, and who have been subsequently sought out and buried by the devoted labour of the officers and men of the Directorate. These single burials, now marked by their wooden crosses up and down the battlefields, present a special problem which will be considered later.

And while dealing with this part of the subject, it may be as well to remind some who may read this report that of many who have fallen in this war there can be no identified grave. Many bodies are found but cannot be identified; many are never found at all; many are buried in graves which have subsequently been destroyed in the course of fighting. This is especially the case in areas such as that of Ypres, where the same ground has been contested for three consecutive years, and the whole countryside has been blasted and torn with shell fire. Therefore, whatever may be done in the way of placing individual monuments over the dead, in very many cases no such monument is possible. Yet these must not be neglected, and some memorial there must be to the lost, the unknown, but not forgotten dead.

EQUALITY OF TREATMENT.

The Commission has already laid down one principle, which goes far towards determining the disposition of the cemeteries; the principle, namely, of equality of treatment; but since this report may be read by some who are not acquainted with the reasons which led the Commissioners to this conclusion, it may be as well to say a few words about it. As soon as the question was faced, it was felt that the provision of monuments could not be left to individual initiative. In a few cases, where money and good taste were not wanting, a satisfactory result would be obtained, in the sense that a fine individual monument would be erected. In the large majority of cases either no monument would be erected, or it would be poor in quality; and the total result would be one of inequality, haphazard and disorder. The cemetery would become a collection of individual memorials, a few good, but many bad, and with a total want of congruity and uniformity. The monuments of the more well-to-do would overshadow those of their poorer comrades; the whole sense of comradeship and of common service would be lost. The Commission, on the other hand, felt that where the sacrifice had been common, the memorial should be common also; and they desired that the cemeteries should be the symbol of a great Army and an united Empire.

It was therefore ordained that what was done for one should be done for all, and that all, whatever their military rank or position in civil life, should have equal treatment in their graves.

It is necessary to face the fact that this decision has given pain in some quarters, and pain which the Commissioners would have been glad to avoid. Not a few relatives have been looking forward to placing a memorial of their own choosing over the graves which mean so much to them; some have devoted much time and thought to making such a memorial beautiful and significant. Yet it is hoped that even these will realize that they are asked to join in an action of even higher significance. The sacrifice of the individual is a great idea and worthy of commemoration; but the community of sacrifice, the service of a common cause, the comradeship of arms which has brought together men of all ranks and grades - these are greater ideas, which should be commemorated in those cemeteries where they lie together, the representatives of their country in the lands in which they served. The place for the individual memorial is at home, where it will be constantly before the eyes of relatives and descendants, and will serve as an example and encouragement for the generations to come. A monument in France and still more if further afield) can be seen but seldom; a monument in the parish church or churchyard is seen day by day and week by week, from generation to generation.

If any further argument is needed, I would say that the contrast now presented between the military and communal cemeteries, where they adjoin one another, provides it. The communal cemeteries are a jumbled mass of individual monuments of all sorts and sizes and of all variety of quality, packed much more closely than the monuments in an English churchyard, and the result is neither dignified nor inspiring. Side by side with these, the military cemeteries, whether French or English, with their orderly rows of crosses (the French ones bearing, in addition, a tricolour *cocarde*), have both dignity and inspiration. It is this impression which it is sought to perpetuate in the treatment now proposed for permanent adoption.

HEADSTONES.

The principle of equality and uniformity of treatment having been adopted, there are two main alternative methods by which it may be carried out:

(1) either the individual graves will be undistinguished (except perhaps by an inconspicuous number), and the names of the dead will be commemorated on a single inscription, placed in some convenient position in the cemetery; or

(2) each grave will have its own headstone, of uniform dimensions, on which the name of the dead will be carved, with his rank, regiment, and date of death.

In the first alternative, the cemetery would have the appearance of a small park or garden, composed of turf or flower beds divided by paths, planted with shrubs or trees, and in no way recognizable as a cemetery, except by the presence of some central monument or monuments (of which more will be said later).

In the second alternative, the cemetery (besides such central monument or monuments) will be marked by rows of headstones of uniform height and width, though perhaps with some variety of pattern, as indicated below. The graves themselves might, in principle, be either separate mounds or a continuous flat surface. In practice I strongly recommend the latter, as being both easier to maintain and (especially where graves are so crowded as they necessarily are in these cemeteries) more satisfactory in effect, and also better adapted for decoration by flowers.

Of these two alternatives, my recommendation is definitely in favour of the second, for the following reasons:

(a) The headstones clearly indicate the nature of the enclosure, that it is a cemetery and not a garden. Although it is not desired that our war cemeteries should be gloomy places, it is right that the fact that they are cemeteries, containing the bodies of hundreds of thousands of men who have given their lives for their country, should be evident at first sight, and should be constantly present to the minds of those who pass by or who visit them.

(b) The rows of headstones in their ordered ranks carry on the military idea, giving the appearance as of a battalion on parade, and suggesting the spirit of discipline and order which is the soul of an army. They will perpetuate the effect, which all who have seen them feel to be impressive, of the present rows of wooden crosses.

(c) The existence of individual headstones will go far to meet the wishes of relatives, who above all things are interested in the single grave. Many of them, as indicated above, will be disappointed that they are not allowed to erect their own monument over their own dead; but they will be much more disappointed if no monument except a mere indication number marks that grave at all. The individual headstone, marking the individual grave, will serve as centre and focus of the emotions of the relatives who visit it.

(d) Although opinion is not unanimous, it is my impression from all the interviews and conversations which I have had on the subject, that a large majority of those whose opinions are most entitled to consideration (including soldiers, relatives and artists) would be in favour of the use of headstones.

I recommend that the headstones should normally be 2 ft. 6 in. in height and 1 ft. 3 in. in width; not so large as to be cumbrous and oppressive, but large enough to convey the effect desired. Subject to this latter consideration, the smaller the dimensions the smaller will be the expense, and the less will be the difficulty of accommodation in the more crowded cemeteries. The stones would be let into concrete bases, so as to lessen the danger of their losing their perpendicular position.

In a few cemeteries, where the burials are very crowded (the bodies being buried three or four deep) it will be impracticable to have individual headstones. In such cases it may be necessary to have a single monument for each plot of ground, or headstones containing several names. I am inclined to think that the former method would be the less distressing to the feelings of relatives. These, however, are quite exceptional cases. The normal practice is that of single burials, which admits of individual headstones.

REGIMENTAL PATTERNS OF HEADSTONES.

In order to secure a certain amount of variety in uniformity and at the same time to gratify the regimental feeling which is so strong a characteristic of the British Army, it is proposed that each regiment, or other convenient unit, should have its own pattern of headstone, incorporating the regimental badge, which will be erected over the grave of every man of that regiment, wherever he may be buried. It is desirable that regimental feeling should be consulted as to the design of these headstones, and consequently (the approval of the Commission having been given to the principle) a circular has, I understand, been issued to units inviting suggestions or designs from men of artistic knowledge and experience. In the case of British regiments, the circular is being issued through the Colonels of regiments in the case of other units, through such channels as are most in accordance with military practice. The designs, when received, will be submitted to a committee representing artistic taste and experience, and one will be selected to serve as the regimental pattern for each unit. Simplicity of design and avoidance of elaborate detail, which would be costly to execute and unlikely to endure, are enjoined on the designers; and special attention will be paid to good lettering.

It has been suggested that, in addition to the regimental badge, some form of national device should appear on each headstone. This suggestion commends itself differently to different people, according to the way in which it is regarded. To some it emphasises the fact that the great Army which has fought in France was gathered from all quarters of the earth, and included representatives of every part of the British Empire. To others it appears to obscure the unity of that Army and of that effort, by striking the note of separatism. My own belief is that the British Army would be content with the name and badge of the regiment, and would not require a national emblem in addition but if the Dominion Forces desire anything more, I think it would be right to defer to their wishes. *Ceteris paribus*, it is to be remembered that all additional carving will add to the cost, which is in any case bound to be heavy.

INSCRIPTIONS ON HEADSTONES.

The inscription carved on each headstone will give the rank, name, regiment and date of death of the man buried beneath it. There is some difference of opinion as to whether leave should be given to relatives to add anything further. It is clearly undesirable to allow free scope for the effusions of the mortuary mason, the sentimental versifier, or the crank; nor can space be given for a lengthy epitaph. On the other hand it would give satisfaction in many individual instances to be allowed to add an appropriate text or prayer or words of dedication; and notably it is certain that in the case of members of the Roman Catholic communion there would be a strong desire to place a customary formula beneath the name. I am inclined, therefore, to recommend that leave should be given for a short inscription of not more than three lines, to be added on the application of the next-of-kin, or other person or organisation (such as a regiment or a religious community) whose claim is approved by the Commission, and at the cost of the applicant; but that the inscription must be of the nature of a text or prayer, and that the Commission shall have absolute power of rejection or acceptance.

CENTRAL MONUMENTS.

The question of the central monument (I mean by this central in interest, not necessarily in position) in each cemetery, which will strike the note, not only of the cemetery itself, but of the whole of this commemoration of the fallen, is one of great importance, and also of some difficulty. It is essential that it should be simple, durable, dignified and expressive of the higher feelings with which we regard our dead. In order to do this, it must have, or be capable of, religious associations, and while it must satisfy the religious emotions of as many as possible, it must give no reasonable ground of offence to any. The central sentiment of our commemoration of the dead is, I think, a grateful and undying remembrance of their sacrifice, and it is this sentiment which most persons will wish to see symbolised in the central monument.

One suggestion was made at an early stage (by Sir E. Lutyens) which has been received with a considerable amount of approval. This was to the effect that the main memorial in every British cemetery should be "one great fair stone of fine proportions, 12 ft. in length, lying raised upon three steps, of which the first and third shall be twice the width of the second; and that each stone shall bear, in indelible lettering, some fine thought or words of sacred dedication." This stone would be, wherever circumstances permit, on the eastern side of each cemetery, and the graves will lie before it, facing east, as the Army faces now. It would have the character of permanence, as much as any work of man can hope for it. It would meet many forms of religious feeling. To some it would merely be a memorial stone, such as those of which we read in the Old Testament. To others it would be an altar, one of the most ancient and general of religious symbols, and would serve as the centre of religious services. As an altar, it would represent one side of the idea of sacrifice, the sacrifice which the Empire has made of its youth, in the great cause for which it sent them forth. And wherever this stone was found, it would be the mark, for all ages, of a British cemetery of the Great War.

The idea and symbolism of this great memorial altar stone go far to meet our requirements, but they do not go all the way. It lacks what many (probably a large majority) would desire, the

definitely Christian character; and it does not represent the idea of self-sacrifice. For this the one essential symbol is the Cross; and I have no doubt that great distress would be felt if our cemeteries lacked this recognition of the fact that we are a Christian Empire, and this symbol of the self-sacrifice made by those who lie in them. The Jews are necessarily intermixed with their Christian comrades; but it is believed that their feelings will be satisfied by the inclusion of their religious symbol (the double triangle, or "Star of David") in the design of their headstones, and that they would not be offended by the presence of the Cross in the cemetery. For the great majority the Cross is the symbol of their faith, which they would wish to see in the cemeteries where their comrades or their kinsmen lie. One large and important class must be dealt with separately. It will be understood that where our Mohammedan, Hindu, and other non-Christian fellow subjects lie (and care has always been taken to bury them apart) their graves will be treated in accordance with their own religious beliefs and practices, and their own religious symbol will be placed over them. On this point it is essential that the Commission should be guided by the advice of those who are most conversant with our Indian and African Empires.

The religious requirements of the different castes and creeds must be scrupulously respected, and the designs of mosques or temples erected in Moslem and Hindu cemeteries should be in conformity with the religious customs and aspirations of the particular creed concerned. The Commission will no doubt desire that no less honour should be paid to the last resting places of Indian and other non-Christian members of the Empire than to those of our British soldiers.

My recommendation, therefore, after much consideration and consultation with representatives of many points of view, definitely is that these two forms of monument should be combined; that in every cemetery there should be, on the east side, unless local conditions render it impracticable, a memorial stone as recommended by Sir E. Lutyens, and elsewhere in the cemetery a cross. The cross should not be of the bare pattern, which would provoke comparison with the crucifixes habitually found in French cemeteries, but rather of the nature of the crosses found in many English country churchyards, or the Celtic crosses characteristic of northern Britain. The size, pattern, and position would be left to the artist who designs each cemetery. The cross and stone combined would be the universal mark of the British war cemetery.

With regard to the inscription on the stone, I do not venture to make a recommendation. It must be left to the inspiration of one of our masters of literature. I would only suggest that it must be short, and that its effectiveness must not depend upon literary associations, which do not exist for the majority of those who will read it. A phrase from the Bible, or some words which will of themselves strike the right note in the hearts of those who read them, is what is required. One member of the Commission might be appointed as a committee of one to supply this need.

OTHER BUILDINGS.

Besides the cross and stone, some form of building will, for practical reasons, be required in all except the smallest cemeteries. In every cemetery a register of graves will have to be kept; in most some form of tool-house will be required. But beyond these needs, it will be convenient to have some shelter for visitors from the weather, some place where simple religious services may be held. My own feeling is that in most cases, and especially in the smaller cemeteries, these purposes will best be fulfilled by letting the building cover the stone, in the form of a small colonnade or cloister, open (with pillars) towards the graves, but protecting both the stone and

those who may worship round it from full exposure to the weather. In some cases, however, a better effect may be obtained by allowing the stone to stand out in the open, flanked by suitable shrubs or trees, while the building or buildings would be provided elsewhere in the cemetery. In fine weather, this would give an impressive effect; but it is to be remembered that many days are not fine, and that a dripping stone, covered with fallen leaves or bird-droppings, has a forlorn and dreary aspect. With this in mind, I think there is much to be said in favour of normally placing the stone under cover, though without prescribing it as a rule. In some cases, local conditions may make it convenient to give the building the form of a lychgate; but a lychgate in itself (as a place where the coffin rests temporarily on its way to the grave) is meaningless in cemeteries such as these, where there will be no more burials in the future. In general it may be worth while to emphasise the fact that the buildings, like the other features of the cemetery, should be as durable as possible, and should involve as little cost in upkeep as possible. Permanence should be the note of our cemeteries, but we desire both the lessons of the war and the expressions of our gratitude to those who gave their lives in it to be permanent,

HORTICULTURAL DESIGN.

The remaining features of the cemeteries will be horticultural. This part of the work is in the hands of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, and much has already been accomplished under the general supervision of the Director of the Gardens, who is represented on the staff of the Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries by the Assistant Director and by two permanently resident assistants in France. Much of the general effect of the cemeteries will depend on the planting, and it is essential that the architectural designers of the cemeteries should work in the closest cooperation with the horticultural experts. The former will be responsible for the effect to be produced, but the latter alone can advise what trees or shrubs or flowers are suitable to the soil and will produce the required results. Fortunately this harmonious cooperation has already been established, and there is no reason why it should not continue.

From the horticultural point of view, perhaps, the first decision to be taken is whether separate mounds should be maintained over each grave, or whether the surfaces should be levelled, leaving the positions of individual burials to be indicated by the headstones. I have already stated my preference for the latter alternative, which I find is confirmed by the Kew Gardens authorities. Whether the surface is covered with grass or flowers, a more satisfactory result can be obtained from the even surface, while the labour of keeping the separate mounds tidy is so great as in itself to be almost prohibitive. Where both methods are at present in existence in the same cemetery (as occasionally happens) there can be little doubt of the more pleasing effect produced by the even surface.

The main architectural features of each cemetery will be given by the trees or shrubs planted in it, with regard to which the designer and the horticultural expert must work hand in hand. Masses of dark evergreen shrubs have a fine effect; and there is much to be said for the occasional introduction of the English yew (where soil permits) from its associations with our own country churchyards, though it is only a distant posterity that will enjoy the full benefit of it. For the rest, grass or flowers would seem to provide the best covering for the actual graves. There is no reason why cemeteries should be places of gloom; but the restfulness of grass and the brightness of flowers in fitting combination would appear to strike the proper note of brightness and life. Care must be taken that the grass is properly mown, and that the flowers do not grow in such

profusion as to overshadow the headstones and disguise the fact that the place is a cemetery; and in general a sheet of grass, with occasional beds of flowers seems to give a better result than continuous flower beds.

In a few places the cemeteries have been situated in orchard and the effect in spring or summer is said to be very pleasing. In such cases there seems to be no reason why the trees should not be allowed to remain; but in general I do not think that the planting of fruit trees in cemeteries is to be recommended.

SUMMARY OF PRECEDING RECOMMENDATIONS.

If the recommendations made in the preceding portion of this Report are carried out, the general appearance of a British cemetery will be that of an enclosure with plots of grass or flowers (or both) separated by paths of varying size, and set with orderly rows of headstones, uniform in height and width, but with slight difference of shape. Shrubs and trees will be arranged in various places, sometimes as clumps at the junctions of ways, sometimes as avenues along the sides of the principal paths, sometimes around the borders of the cemetery. The graves will, wherever possible, face towards the east, and at the eastern end of the cemetery will be a great altar-stone, raised upon broad steps, and bearing some brief and appropriate phrase or text. Either over the stone, or elsewhere in the cemetery, will be a small building, where visitors may gather for shelter or for worship, and where the register of the graves will be kept. And at some prominent spot will rise the Cross, as the symbol of the Christian faith and of the self-sacrifice of the men who now lie beneath its shadow.

The outlines of this scheme have been explained to many who are qualified to speak for the Army (both British and Overseas), to the representatives of the principal religious denominations, to several leading architects and persons of artistic taste, and to the staff concerned in the horticultural side of the work. The result has been uniformly encouraging. Different parts of it appeal differently to different persons, but there appears to be a general consensus of opinion that the scheme, carried out under good artistic guidance, will give a dignified and harmonious result, and that future generations will not be ashamed of what will be regarded as the characteristic British memorial of the Great War. 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, and so typify the common spirit of the nation, the common purpose of the Army, and the common sacrifice of the individual.

Here and there it is inevitable that there should be exception. The graves do not always lie east and west, there will not always be room for separate headstones; it will not always be possible to find space for both cross and stone, nor will it always be easy to place the memorial stone at the east or to find a satisfactory position for the cross. But difficulties are the artist's opportunity, and it will be expected that every effort will be loyally made to carry out the plan adopted by the Commission, and that no departure will be made from it without the Commission's sanction. Machinery for dealing with such difficulties will be proposed later in this report.

BOUNDARIES.

Some points of detail remain to be dealt with; and, first, that of the boundaries enclosing the cemeteries. Here permanence and protection seem to be the guiding requisites. It is desirable that the cemeteries should be fenced in by some boundary which will keep out the farmer's plough and his cattle, which will not easily fall into decay, and which will be likely to endure, even if in time to come the care of these cemeteries should be relaxed. All this points to the desirability of having them, wherever possible, enclosed by a wall; not a high wall, which suggests rather a kitchen-garden than a cemetery, and which conceals the nature of the enclosure from the passer-by, but by a low wall such as is usually found round a country churchyard, which leaves the ground within open to view, but effectually protects it from violation. A hedge cannot be depended on to be durable or impervious for any great length of time, and it has a further disadvantage for the present purpose in the fact that French law does not permit a hedge within a certain prescribed distance from the boundary of any property, and consequently the use of a hedge entails a certain loss of ground which can seldom be spared. If, for artistic reasons, a hedge boundary is desired, it might be planted inside the wall. Special considerations arise with regard to boundaries when, as not infrequently happens, the British cemetery adjoins a French one. In determining what sort of boundary should be used here, we should, I think, ascertain and conform to French feeling on the subject. We do not want to erect a conspicuous wall if it will be regarded as a proof of British exclusiveness and insularity. A light hedge, an open railing, a low wall not more than a foot high, might serve to mark the dividing line between the two cemeteries, without impairing the sense of comradeship and alliance which their contiguity should suggest. Where the French cemetery is a communal one, the very marked difference in type may require a marked boundary; but where (as at Villers-au-Bois) it is a military one, the boundary should be of the lightest, or nonexistent. The decision in such cases cannot be laid down in advance but each case must be dealt with on its merits, under the guiding principle of conformity with French sentiment.

CEMETERY REGISTERS.

It is essential that each cemetery shall have a record of the burials in it, and that it should be made as easy as possible for visitors to identify particular graves. The alternatives seem to be either to have the names carved on a stone wall or on a tablet affixed to the wall, or to have them printed in a book. A carved record in itself makes a better show, but it would be more expensive in the first instance, and also would need more care in the maintenance. A record in book form has the advantages of being easy to consult and of being secure against destruction, since other copies would be preserved by the Commission, so that lost or damaged volumes could be replaced. It could also be utilized to assist visitors in their search for particular graves, since pages could be framed or mounted separately and attached to each of the plots into which the cemetery is divided. I am inclined, therefore, to recommend the printed record as at once less costly and more useful. Arrangements must be made that the register of the cemetery shall always be accessible to visitors, so that they may not have to go away disappointed in their search.

It has been suggested (and the suggestion will appeal to archaeologists) that a copy of the cemetery registers should be buried in the concrete foundations of the memorial altar stone. This, like the cuneiform cylinders which form the foundation deposits of Assyrian palaces, may serve

as evidence of the purpose of these stones hundreds, or even thousands, of years after other records have disappeared.

ISOLATED BURIALS.

A very important question is that of the single scattered burials. Over all the battlefields bodies have been buried where they fell and have not been moved since. This is particularly noticeable in the Somme area, where thousands of burials have been found and a large proportion identified by the conscientious labour of the Directorate's burial parties. All these, whether identified or not, and of whatever nationality have been made up into mounds and marked with a wooden cross; and wherever the fighting was severe, the crosses cluster thickly, but in no arrangement. At present, removal is impossible for military reasons, but these reasons are purely temporary. Exhumation is in any case only possible with French assent; but the time will come when this area will be given back to cultivation, and then every argument will be in favour of the removal of the bodies. The land is now a wilderness of shell holes, overgrown with rank vegetation, cumbered with barbed wire, with bombs and shells and fragments of shells half buried all over it, and sown thickly with burials. As it is now, the plough cannot touch it, and to plough over these thousands of bodies would be an unspeakably revolting task. But if the clearance of the land be undertaken, the bodies would be removed to selected cemeteries, the shells and the wire would be cleared away, the holes would be partially filled up in the process, and the farmer would have some chance of reclaiming the land for cultivation. This work can only be done during the period of demobilization; then labour will be plentiful and the clearance can be carried through rapidly and effectually. But it is important that the principle should be settled in consultation with the French authorities in advance, so that the sites of the future cemeteries may be chosen and planned beforehand, and that all may be ready for the commencement of the work as soon as the moment arrives.

In some cases, as for example at High Wood or round the Butte de Warlencourt, it may be possible to enclose the whole locality and convert it into what will be at once a cemetery and a monument of the battle; but as a rule it will be necessary to move the bodies to a selected site, clear of the villages which will rise again from their ruins, but readily accessible from roads, and near some place where a caretaker may live.

The same considerations apply to many of the smaller cemeteries. Where these represent special episodes in the fight, there is good reason for leaving them untouched; but as a rule the bodies have already been removed from the places where they fell, and the cemeteries are simply places where 10 or 20 or 30 or 40 bodies have been collected during the stress of the fighting. The upkeep of such small cemeteries will be difficult, since they are far from roads or from human habitation, and they will be relatively more expensive in the first instance than larger cemeteries. I therefore recommend that an effort be made to concentrate these burials in larger sites which can be selected in advance and deliberately planned.

BATTLE MEMORIALS.

At this point it may be worth while to refer briefly to a distinct question with which the Commission will have to deal, though it is perhaps outside my province. It is the question of the provision of what may be called battle memorials. Quite apart from the monuments to our dead,

there will be a demand for monuments of our victories. Some will commemorate the achievements of whole armies, such as the victories of Ypres, of the Somme, of Arras, of Messines; others will be confined to episodes in these great fights and the achievements of smaller units, of corps, divisions, brigades, or even battalions. In particular it is probable that the Overseas Dominions and India will wish to commemorate some of the most notable triumphs of their own contingents. It comes within the functions of the Commission to apply to the French and Belgian Governments for the necessary grants of ground, and it will therefore have a voice in the selection of the sites to be acquired and, consequently, the events to be commemorated. Here it is only necessary to refer to the subject so far as to point out that the procedure will be quite different from that which prevails with regard to the selection and siting of cemeteries. It will be essential to have some form of military tribunal to decide what battles or portions of battles are to be commemorated, and what units are to be allowed to erect monuments in particular places. It is true that there is nothing to prevent any unit, or for that matter any individual, from applying to purchase a site for a memorial; but the Allied Governments may rule that all such applications must come through the Commission, and in that case the Commission will have to protect the Government in question from improper applications. It is impossible to commemorate in brass or stone all the memorable deeds of the war; and those which are erected should be few and fit.

The designs of such memorials do not appear to come within the scope of the Commission. The site once acquired, the treatment of it will be the affair of those who acquire it. Here the sculptors, for whom there is practically no opportunity in cemeteries designed after the fashion recommended in this Report, will have their chance, and it is to be hoped that they will show that the art of this country can hold its own with that of the countries on whose soil the monuments will stand. The sites of these monuments will not usually compete with those required for cemeteries.

Here and there, as in the instances of High Wood and the Butte de Warlencourt* mentioned above, the suitable site for a great cemetery may be itself the scene of the fiercest fighting, and the cemetery will recall the crisis of the battle; but ordinarily the battle memorials will be on high and conspicuous spots, while cemeteries will be in villages and folds of the ground which have the air of shelter and of rest appropriate to a place of burial. It will confuse and obliterate the ground idea which our cemeteries are intended to embody, if it is attempted to make them serve the turn of battle memorials also.

*It is to be hoped that the Butte itself will not be interfered with or obscured. It is itself an ancient monument and should be respected as such, although the burials of our modern fighting may cluster round it.

METHOD OF EXECUTION OF PROPOSALS.

It remains to consider how the proposals contained in this Report, if they are adopted by the Commission, can best be carried out. The designs of the cemeteries, as here contemplated, have an architectural quality which indicates that it is to architects that their execution should be confided. Their work borders, however, on the sphere of the landscape gardener, and it is evident

that the designers must work hand in hand with the horticultural experts. Further, it is evident that the whole work is too great to be undertaken by one man, or even by two or three men. The cemeteries are already numbered by hundreds, and who is to say how greatly they may be increased before the war is ended? Each cemetery has its own local characteristics, with which the designers must be familiar; indeed, it is difficult to suppose that a design will be satisfactory unless it is made on the spot. Again, the cemeteries differ widely in importance. Some are little groups of not more than 50 graves; others may run to a total of 10,000, and may occupy a wide stretch of land. It is therefore evident that a considerable number of designers will be required, and that their tasks will vary greatly in scale and importance. On the other hand, it is desirable that the artistic merit of the whole should be guaranteed by the names of artists in whom the public have confidence, and who have earned the right to be regarded as representative of British architecture.

These considerations seem to point to a system whereby 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; and that their designs should be produced under the inspiration of a few of our leading architects. I am not in favour of a committee of architects or art critics who will collectively examine and pass each plan. I do not believe that in matters of art the best work is produced by a committee. I would rather go back to the mediaeval tradition of a master architect or painter, surrounded by a school of disciples, who, under his guidance, and with greater or less degrees of subordination, did their work and learnt to be masters in their turn.

I would, therefore, recommend that the cemeteries be divided into a few large groups; that to each group should be assigned one principal architect and a number of younger men, working under his leadership; that the majority of the cemeteries should be designed by the younger men, but that their plans should be submitted to the principal architect and should receive his approval before being sanctioned by the Commission. The principal architect would no doubt reserve a few of the most important sites in his area for treatment by himself, for the others he would stand sponsor in the eyes of the public, but would endeavour to leave the main credit to his younger colleagues, while conferring freely with them and assisting them with his advice. All alike would be bound to conform to the general principles laid down by the Commission; but within those limits they would be free to work in accordance with the dictates of their genius. The details of their collaboration would be laid down in a separate memorandum on the subject, if the principle is approved by the Commission.

The Commission is not as yet committed to any particular architects, and has a perfectly free hand in selecting them. There are, however, two gentlemen who have been consulted who are of the highest standing in their profession, and whose selection would command public confidence, namely, Sir Edwin Lutyens and Mr. Herbert Baker. With these I should join Mr. Reginald Blomfield, R.A., an architect somewhat senior in standing, of unquestioned competence, who has, moreover, made a special study of the designing of gardens, and who has the further qualification of having himself done many years of military service as a volunteer. It is possible that, if the work grows, it may be desirable to add a fourth, or even fifth principal architect, and it would not be difficult to name others who would carry the fullest public confidence. For the present, however, three would perhaps suffice; and I would respectfully recommend to the Commission the three architects named for their acceptance. I have reason to believe that all would loyally accept the general scheme outlined in this report.

For the subordinate staff the nucleus already exists in France in the department now admirably organised under the Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries, by which much work has already been done in laying out the cemeteries - work which, without prejudicing more than is inevitable the final design, prepares the way for it, and meanwhile secures the maintenance of decency and order. Under this organisation all the cemeteries are surveyed and large scale plans are drawn out, and several tentative schemes for their ultimate design and layout have been prepared. I would recommend that a further selection of young architects (perhaps six in all) should be made with the concurrence of the principal architects appointed by the Commission, and that these should prepare designs for the cemeteries under the artistic leadership of the principal architect of their group, and the administrative superintendence of the Inspector of Works at the Headquarters of the department in France.

In the selection of the younger architects, I would recommend that preference should be given to men who have served in the Army. Indeed, I do not think that anyone should be accepted for the work who has not so served, unless he has been absolutely precluded from serving on medical grounds; and even then I consider that preference should be 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.

During the progress of the work, questions will from time to time arise, for the settlement of which artistic taste and judgment will be required. Some of them may be best dealt with by a conference between the principal architects, but others will be better referred to a separate body of advisers. One such question will be the final selection of the regimental headstones. I have been fortunate enough to obtain promises of assistance from Mr. D. S. MacColl, Keeper of the Wallace Collection, and Mr. C. J. Holmes, Director of the National Gallery, whose names will command the confidence of the whole artistic world. With the assistance of these gentlemen, and perhaps of others who might be invited to cooperate, according to the nature of the problems involved, it is reasonable to expect that satisfactory results will be achieved. In particular, since the First Commissioner of Works is a member of the Commission, I should hope that the experience of his department would be available for consultation. Representatives of the Dominions might be asked to take part in the selection of headstones for their respective contingents; and as indicated above, all questions affecting Indian burials will be dealt with in accordance with the advice of those who are qualified to speak for the inhabitants of our Indian Empire. With regard to the lettering of inscriptions (a very important factor in the general effect) no better authority could be desired than Mr. Macdonald Gill who has been good enough to promise his services. I am inclined to think that an informal body of consultants such as this, varying according to the nature of the questions to be decided, is preferable to a formal advisory committee.

FINANCE.

I have not considered that the question of finance came within my terms of reference, or that I have any special competence to deal with it; but it is obvious that it has an important bearing on the subject of this report. However carefully the cost of each cemetery is limited, the number of cemeteries is so large that the total expenditure must be very great. On this ground alone, if on no

other, it is essential that the general principles of cemetery design should be determined without delay, in order that the plans of every cemetery may be prepared in advance, so that the work may be carried through during the period of demobilization, when labour and transport will be available to almost any extent at military rates of pay. It is also essential that the architects employed should make their designs as simple and inexpensive as possible, since extravagant cost must inevitably lead to the rejection of the design. The country needs dignity and refined taste, not ostentation, and then it will not grudge the cost. It surely will not refuse the cost of one day of war in order to honour for centuries the memory of those who fell.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding this report, I should wish to be allowed to express my thanks to the staff of the Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries, both at home and abroad, for the welcome and assistance given to me in the execution of the task assigned to me by the Commission. I should like also to bear my testimony to the earnest and serious spirit in which the whole work is being carried out. Both in the upkeep of the cemeteries and in the search for and identification of the many isolated burials, tasks which are often distasteful and sometimes dangerous are done with devotion and a quiet sense of duty.

Those who are interested - and hundreds of thousands must be most deeply and poignantly interested - in the treatment of our dead in France and Belgium, may rest assured that no labour is spared, and nothing that careful thought can provide is wanting to pay the tribute of reverence and honour which is due to those that have fallen for their country.

It is in the hope that the scheme here put forward will secure for all time the permanence of this tribute and its embodiment in a memorial worthy of the Empire and of the sons (and daughters also) who have given their lives for it, that I have the honour to present this report to the Commission.

(Sd.). F. G. KENYON.

24th January, 1918.

Since the foregoing Report was submitted to the Commission in February, 1918, progress has been made on the lines then approved, and it may be convenient to refer to some points in which experience has led to development or modification of some of its recommendations.

(1) The original Report contemplated a certain amount of variety in the shape of headstones, in order to assist in the identification of the graves of different arms of the Service, or of different units. Artistic advice, however, was unanimously in favour of a uniform shape, which it was considered would be more satisfactory from the point of view of architectural design, while it would also facilitate supply and lessen expense. A simple pattern with curved top has accordingly been approved; and these headstones will replace the temporary wooden crosses which at present mark the graves in all cemeteries.

(2) Regimental distinctions are, however, still to be observed in the patterns of the headstones. The suggestions sent in by the various units were carefully considered, and though many of them departed too widely from the general standard of uniformity to be capable of adoption as they stood, it was found that a large number of them could, with slight alteration, be brought into conformity with two or three patterns of designs. Each headstone accordingly will bear, with some varieties of arrangement, the badge of the regiment or other unit, executed either in metal or by a special process of engraving now under trial, a cross, and an inscription giving the name, rank, regiment, and date of death. It is hoped that these headstones will be easy of identification, and that the orderly rows of them, standing among level sheets of grass or beds of flowers, and set between lines or groups of shrubs or trees, will at once perpetuate the impressive effect at present produced by the wooden crosses, and will strike the note of dignity and solemnity suitable to a cemetery, accompanied by the spirit of hopefulness and pride proper to the resting places of those who have died with glory and not in vain.

(3) The recommendation made in the Report with regard to Indian and other non-Christian burials has been carried out by the appointment of a subcommittee, under the chairmanship of Lord Islington, and containing Mohammedan and Hindu representatives. Sir Edwin Lutyens and Mr. Herbert Baker have been asked to prepare designs for Mohammedan and Hindu memorial buildings respectively, and these are being sent out to India in order that native feeling in that country may be consulted with regard to them. The site of these buildings is still under consideration; it is to be hoped that it may be found possible to place them in the area which will be for ever associated with the heroism of the Indian Corps between La Bassee and Armentieres.

(4) The recommendations with regard to the cross and the memorial stone have been carried out much as indicated in the Report. An inscription for the stone has been selected by Mr. Kipling, and I understand that his recommendation will be submitted to the Commission at their next meeting. Mr. Kipling's feeling from the first was that this was not an occasion for the invention of some new form of words but that the idea which the stone is intended to convey could be best expressed by the choice of some familiar phrase from the Bible. The associations of the Bible speak to lettered and unlettered alike, and the incomparable English of the Authorised Version is the best embodiment of the feelings of the English-speaking peoples. The

difficulty lies in the selection of one among the many great phrases suitable to express the spirit of these memorials of our dead.

(5) The final paragraphs of the Report spoke of the arrangements for carrying it out in France and Belgium. Progress has since been made with regard to the other countries included within the scope of the Commission. Sir Robert Lorimer A.R.S.A., has been appointed Principal Architect for Italy, and has visited the cemeteries in that country. The preparation of designs for them is in hand. He is also on the point of proceeding to Egypt, in order to advise the Egyptian Government in accordance with the proposals adopted by the Commission. Within the last few weeks matters have also become ripe for work in Palestine, Macedonia, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia, and arrangements are being made for sending out architects to these theatres of war.

(6) Progress has also been made with the selection of the architectural staff who will work under the supervision of the principal architects in France, Belgium and Italy, and some of these have already been at work for a considerable time, and it is hoped that a corps of architects will soon be formed who will work in loyal cooperation to carry out the scheme approved by the Commission. The work of preparation has been long and has not been free from difficulty. Much delay was caused by the course of military operations in the spring; but now that the flood of victory has finally gone forward in every theatre of war, it may confidently be expected that the decisions of the Commission will bear fruit at an early date, and that the cemeteries of our fallen will before long assume their final form, a form which will be alike honourable to those who lie in them and worthy of the Empire and the cause for which they fought.

(Sd.). F. G. KENYON.

14th November, 1918.