



Remembrance Day 2020 fell on Sunday 8th November when once again we found ourselves in a month of lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Throughout the country there were no parades, no marches, no festivals. We were asked to mark Remembrance from our own doorsteps. How different from 1920. This year we would have commemorated the burial of the Unknown Warrior and the centenary of the Cenotaph and our many War Memorials.

Remembrance Sunday is about our honouring of the 40million lives lost in World War One and the more than 80 million lives lost during the Second World War. During the Great War of 1914-1918 and the Second World War of 1939-1945, brave soldiers faced untold horrors. Many were tragically lost and those who survived often suffered life-changing injuries. They returned home to face a new life, in a society ill-equipped to offer the full support they needed. We also take time to remember the lives lost in the Korean War, the Falklands War, the Gulf War, and the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and the many lives lost in acts of terrorism. And today there are still servicemen and women who, every day, are seriously affected by their time in military service, so as we gathered on Remembrance Sunday we shared in this profound reminder of the importance of peace and unity.

In St. Tudy, our Remembrance Sunday was carefully planned, having consulted with Cornwall Council, Public Health and Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, in order to ensure we adhered to the lockdown regulations and we observed the 'Rule of Six' and asked those not directly involved with the service and the laying of wreaths to remain at distance from the War Memorial and to observe social distancing. Gathering for a short service to lay the wreaths of remembrance, prior to the two-minute silence that we observed at 11am with the Nation as we remembered those who had fallen and those who still have their battle to fight. The names of the Fallen of St. Tudy, whose names appear on the War Memorial, was read by Cdr Ian Whitehouse and Colonel Rupert Nicholas said the poem by Rupert Brooke and the two verses of The Exhortation. The Reverend David Seymour conducted the short service. And a video was made by Mike Smith.

COMMEMORATION

By the end of the First World War over 1,100,000 men from Great Britain and the British Empire had died in the conflict – every community and family sharing to some degree in the grief for those lost lives. A decision in the early stage of the war was that the fallen should not be repatriated. With the shocking intensity of the Western Front, almost half of the fallen simply not be found or identified and had to be interred anonymously.

None of the grieving families had graves to visit at home and many thousands of war memorials were built in the post-war years, including private memorials to individuals, memorial crosses in parish churchyards, and municipal monuments in almost every town and city. Individual regiments and other military groups and formations-built monuments to their dead, several of which are in central London.

However, the Cenotaph in Whitehall has always had a pre-eminent place as the nation's main place of commemoration of its war dead.

THE FIRST CENOTAPH

Although the war ended with the Armistice of 11 November 1918, peace was not formally established in Europe until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919. Meanwhile, the British government began to plan a day to celebrate victory and the peace which was due to be signed. The French government was also planning a victory parade through Paris to be held on 14 July, the plans for which included a 'catafalque' as a memorial to the dead, which the passing troops would salute. The then Prime Minister David Lloyd George, impressed with their plans, asked Sir Edwin Lutyens, the most celebrated British architect of the day, to design something similar although it was only envisaged as a temporary structure erected for the occasion.



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Lutyens provided his design very quickly and it was approved on 7 July, leaving only 11 days for it to be built by the Office of Works' contractors. The wood, plaster and canvas memorial was unveiled on 18 July on the present site outside the Foreign Office building in Whitehall.



The Cenotaph made a deep impression on the public and within a couple of days over a million people had visited it, a great many of them laying wreaths there.

Lutyens's subtle design had captured the national sense of grief and loss. It was then commissioned in stone, for unveiling at the 1920.

2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the Cenotaph.

THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

On the 11th November 1920, 100 years ago this year, body of the Unknown Warrior, with soil from France, and covered with a slab of black Belgian marble was interred at the west end of the Nave of Westminster Abbey.

The body was chosen from unknown British servicemen exhumed from four battle areas, the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres.

The chosen coffin was placed inside another which had been sent over specially from England made of two-inch thick oak from a tree which had grown in Hampton Court Palace garden, lined with zinc. It was covered with the flag that had been used as an altar cloth during the War (known as the Ypres or Padre's Flag, which now hangs in St George's Chapel). Within the wrought iron bands of this coffin had been placed a 16th century crusader's sword from the Tower of London collection.

The coffin plate bore the inscription:

'A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914-1918 for King and Country'

On the morning of 11th November 1920, the coffin was placed, by the bearer party from the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards, on a gun carriage drawn by six black horses of the Royal Horse Artillery. It then began its journey through the crowd-lined streets, making its first stop in Whitehall where the Cenotaph was unveiled by King George V. The King placed his wreath of red roses and bay leaves on the coffin.

His card read:

"In proud memory of those Warriors who died unknown in the Great War. Unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold they live. George R.I. November 11th 1920".

"For your tomorrow, these gave their today"



WHY POPPIES

Red poppies began being used as a symbol in 1921 to help to remember those who fought in war. The flower was chosen because it grows wild in many fields in northern France and Belgium - where some of the deadliest battles of World War One took place.

Its use was inspired by a poem:

*"In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row.*

*That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

by John McCrae (1872-1918)



The **Royal British Legion**, a charity created by veterans of the Great War sell the red poppy each November. They are adamant that the poppy is not a sign of support for war and death, stressing that it is a symbol of remembrance, of hope and should not be seen as a symbol of religion or politics. Nonetheless, some people feel the red poppy has become political, and that politicians use it to help justify war and more and more people are turning to the white poppy, distributed by the Peace Pledge Union, which is the oldest secular and pacifist group in the UK.

The **white poppy** remembers all who are killed in war - including victims, It says the white poppy remembers "all those killed in war" - while the Royal British Legion says it "advocates a specific type of remembrance connected to the British Armed Forces".



The group began in 1933, many began to wear white poppies to stress the "never again" message, which emerged after World War One, and which pacifists feared was slipping away.

Like the red poppy, the white badge also symbolises remembrance for victims of war.

The Peace Pledge Union says the white poppy also represents a lasting commitment to peace and the belief that war should not be celebrated or glamorised. 2020 saw

a quadrupling of white poppy sales in schools amid claims that the Black Lives Matter movement has led to an interest in ‘the good and bad bits of history’.

The **Purple Poppy**, however, is the lesser known pin to remember animals that lost their lives during war.

This includes animals used in the war, like dogs and pigeons that carries messages, horses pulling carts and ammunition, as well as cats, canaries and mules.

Officially associated with the Animal Aid Charity, the badge has been designated to August 23, but can still be worn on November 11 to show respect. The design was first created in 2006 but hasn’t become as well-known as the traditional red remembrance pins.



The **Purple Poppy** pin comes with the encouragement to members of the public to come together to pay tribute to the many animals lost in Service, and to those who serve us today.

Many horses were killed or injured during World War One. Donations to the Purple Poppy Appeal, which is organised by the War Horse Memorial, will go to charities like World Horse Welfare and the animal charity, Blue Cross.

Black Poppies remember the African, Black, and Caribbean communities who contributed to various war efforts as servicemen and servicewomen, and as civilians.

The **Khadi Poppy** was for Remembrance Day 2018, the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War. This design, which was the same deep red as the original poppy, replaced the current paper style and was instead crafted from khadi, a traditional hand-woven cloth from India which bears similarities to “Gandhi’s iconic clothing”.

The idea behind the khadi poppy was to pay tribute to and raise awareness of the service to the British Empire of people from South Asia during the First World War.

The subcontinent suffered greatly during the conflict. “Muslim, Sikh and Hindu men volunteered in the Indian Expeditionary Force, which was the largest of the British Empire’s Armed Forces besides the British Army itself,

And in the words of the Byzantine emperor Maurice who observed that:

“The nation that forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten”.

