

Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society

Founded in 1842, the Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society exists to promote the study of the historic heritage of the City of York as well as the County of Yorkshire. It seeks to stimulate interest by arranging lectures and excursions and by issuing publications. It owns the Evelyn collection of historic lantern slides and negatives of York and has been instrumental in preserving many of the City's unique features.

This volume of *York Historian* is the twelfth in a resumed series of journals published by the Society whose contents include articles, notes and records relevant to the history, architecture and archaeology of York and its district. A valuable source of articles are the prize winning entries for the Sheldon Memorial Trust Essay prize, offered annually for the best unpublished essay on history, literature or the arts connected with the City of York and based on original research. Details of the dates of submission for future prizes may be obtained from the Secretary of the Trust, The University of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD, who should be notified in advance of proposed topics. The Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society is grateful to the Sheldon Memorial Trust for its generous financial assistance in the publication of *York Historian*.

Continued publication of this journal depends on securing adequate sales of existing issues and readers are urged to place continuation orders for future issues with the Secretary at the address given below. Contributions to the journal from both members and others are welcomed and should be sent to the Editors, and enquiries concerning membership, purchase of *York Historian* and other publications should be made to the Secretary, Y.A.Y.A.S., c/o York Archaeological Trust, Piccadilly House, 55 Piccadilly, York YO1 1PL.

The other publications available are R. M. Butler, *The Bars & Walls of York* and *Medieval York*; Hugh Murray, *Heraldry and the Buildings of York*, *Photographs and Photographers of York, the early years, 1844-79* and *The Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society 1842-1992: A Sesquicentenary Retrospect*, and Eileen White, *The York Mystery Play* and *Elizabethan York*.

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Cover: Lendal and the Old Post Office, c.1840 (Evelyn Collection).

York Historian Volume 12 1995

Christopher Daniell	Family, Land and Politics: Ralph Nuvel's family and ancestors in York (c.1120-c.1240)	2
D. M. Palliser	The York Freeman's Register 1273-1540: Amendments and additions	21
A. E. Daly	An Introduction to the Archive of Architectural Drawings of York Minster in the Minster Library	28
W. B. Taylor	A History of the Tadcaster-York Turnpike	40
Meurig G. M. Jones	The Yorkshire County Memorial: A history of the Yorkshire County Memorial York, for the Second Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902	62
Hugh Murray	A York Bibliography	82

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The Yorkshire County Memorial: A history of the Yorkshire County Memorial, York, for the Second Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902¹

Meurig G. M. Jones

Summary The Yorkshire County Memorial is one of many memorials erected to those who served and those who died in the Anglo-Boer War. Originally planned as early as July 1900, it was unveiled by Field Marshal Roberts in August 1905 but was not actually finished until the following year. It is now almost hidden by trees but remains a treasure of the city of York. Awarded a prize in the 1995 Sheldon Memorial Trust Essay Competition.

On 1 May 1961 a small group gathered around the war memorial on the green in Duncombe Place. They were there to mark the handing over of the memorial into the care of the city of York. In his address, Canon Noel F. Porter described the memorial as one of the most beautiful...of its kind...When we have such a lovely memorial bequeathed, as it were, by the county to the city and when those people immediately concerned have passed on and there is little further interest, it is only right and proper that the continuing bond of the city — the city authorities — should take over and preserve such a very precious treasure.²

Canon Porter was describing the memorial erected to the men and women of the county of Yorkshire who died during the Second Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902. His remarks about the lack of interest in this memorial were quite correct, the subsequent World Wars overshadowing all previous wars. But, of the many ways in which the Second Anglo-Boer War is significant to Britain's history, its most visible legacy is the thousands of memorials erected to those who served and those who died. Many have fallen into disrepair, some have been badly vandalised and others have been destroyed. Meanwhile, they have been largely ignored and their place in the history of Britain's cities and towns has gone unrecorded. This paper redresses this neglect in relation to York's 'very precious treasure'.

Introduction

The County Memorial is one of 16 Anglo-Boer War memorials erected in York (see Appendix). It is the biggest in York with a height of 57ft 6in and the most impressive. This is the only Anglo-Boer War memorial in York erected through the efforts of private citizens unaided or not sponsored by city, county authorities or regiments, and on private land (excluding the Minster as 'private' land). Nationally there is only one taller memorial, in Newcastle; few name more than hundreds, let alone the nearly 1,500 named on the County Memorial.

Plans for the memorial were first laid in July 1900, hardly a year after the war had begun in October 1899 and two years before it finally ended in May 1902. It was not unveiled until August 1905. With the benefit of hindsight, it may seem somewhat curious that a committee was formed and solicited subscriptions for a memorial to

commemorate the dead in a war that was not yet over. But the men of the 'Yorkshire War Memorial Committee', like thousands of Britons, believed the war to be as good as finished in June 1900.

On 5 June 1900, British Imperial forces led by Field Marshal Lord Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief, occupied Pretoria, the capital of the South African Republic. This was the final prize; the three besieged towns of Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley had all been relieved months earlier and Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, had been captured in March. The occupation of Pretoria also indicated to many the supremacy of the British and Imperial forces over the Boers. Respect was restored following the debacles early in the war when the Boers scored a number of remarkable victories. The British war effort was reduced in the belief that the Boers would capitulate as their capitals had fallen and their armies scattered. In these circumstances the Yorkshire War Memorial Committee was formed and began its work.

Best laid plans

The first meeting to discuss the erection of a memorial was held in London on 14 July. The meeting resolved to erect

a memorial in memory of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Yorkshire regiments, and of all Yorkshiremen...who have lost their lives during the war in South Africa...all classes be invited to subscribe.³

Those present represented the three Ridings of Yorkshire and many held various colonelcies and county lieutenancies; they were:

- Marquis of Ripon (Sir George Frederick Samuel Robinson, Lord Lieutenant North Riding and Honorary Colonel 1st Volunteer Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment)
- Lord Herries (Marmaduke Francis Constable-Maxwell, Lord Lieutenant East Riding and Honorary Colonel East Riding Imperial Yeomanry)
- Earl of Harewood (Henry Ellick Lascelles, Lord Lieutenant West Riding and Honorary Colonel, late Colonel commanding, Yorkshire Hussars)
- Earl of Carlisle (lived at Castle Howard, M.P. for East Cumberland and Honorary Colonel 1st Volunteer Battalion Border Regiment)
- Earl of Feversham (William Ernest Duncombe, J.P., C.C., Deputy Lord Lieutenant North Riding and Honorary Colonel 2nd Volunteer Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment)
- Lord Wenlock (Sir Beilby Lawley, Lieutenant-Colonel commanding and Honorary Colonel East Riding Imperial Yeomanry and Honorary Colonel 2nd East Riding Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers)
- Viscount Halifax (Sir Charles Lindley Wood, lived at Hickleton near Doncaster, Ecclesiastical Commissioner for England and President of the English Church Union)
- Marquis of Zetland (Lawrence Dundas, P.C., K.T., D.L., J.P., M.P. for Richmond 1872-3, Mayor of Richmond 1895-96, Provincial Grand Master Freemasons North and East Ridings from 1874 and Honorary Colonel 1st Western Division Royal Garrison Artillery from 1894)

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Viscount Falkland (Byron Plantagenet Cary, Lord Cary, served 35th and 43rd Regiments, commanded 4th Battalion Yorkshire Regiment, lived in London)

Major-General Sir R.T. Thynne (Commander North East District).⁴

The Yorkshire War Memorial Committee was formally convened with the Earl of Carlisle as chairman. The Marquis of Zetland and Viscount Falkland dropped out, as did Thynne when he was replaced by Lieutenant-General Sir H.M. Leslie Rundle. In addition, the following were invited to join the Committee; Dean Purey-Cust of York, the Lord Mayors of York, Sheffield and Leeds, the Mayor of Bradford, W.F.H. Thomson (treasurer) and Frank Green (secretary).⁵ Although Green was nominally secretary, much of the actual correspondence was conducted by his own secretary, H. Kenyon, who worked in Green's ironworks in Wakefield.

Thomson and Green were the only 'non-establishment' figures on the Committee, but their connections would prove useful to its work. Wilfrid Thomson, the son of Archbishop Dr William Thomson, was a partner in Beckett's Bank and a member of the West Riding Territorial Force Association. Beckett's Bank was used by the Committee for collecting subscriptions, which began immediately after the inaugural meeting.

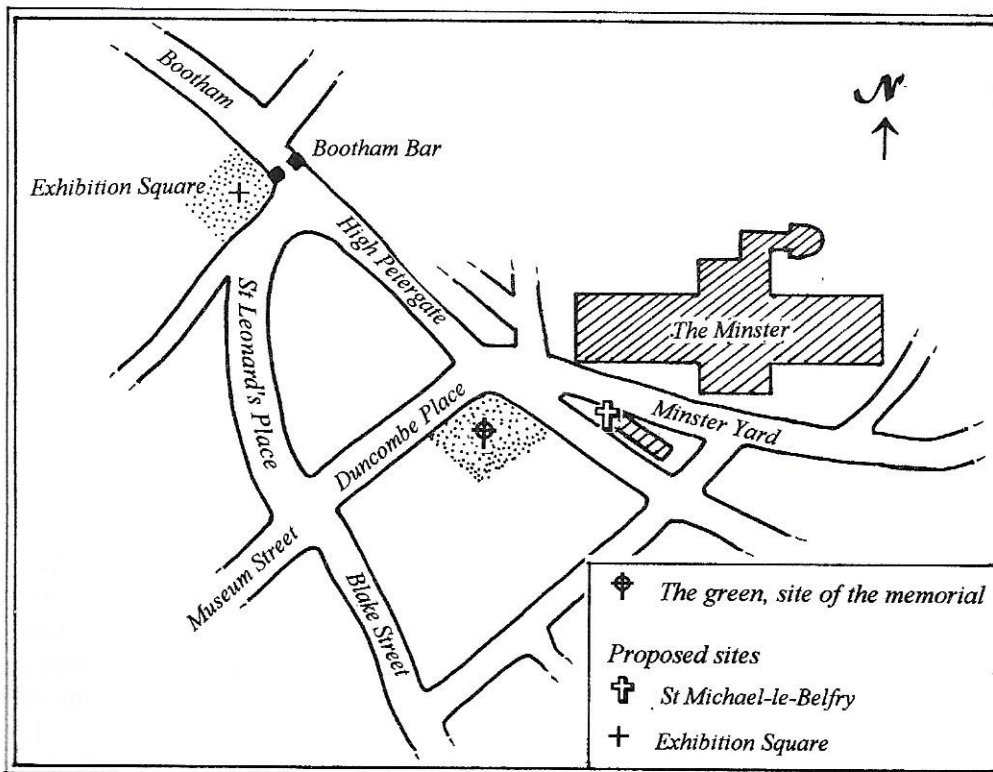


Figure 1.

Map showing proposed sites for the Yorkshire County Memorial.

Frank Green was 'new money', heir to his grandfather's fortune amassed through the success of a fuel saving device known as Green's Economiser. Green bought Treasurer's House, in the centre of York next to the Minster, and restored it. He became one of the gentry who hunted and served in the yeomanry. He was an officer in the Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons and during the Anglo-Boer War was responsible for sending remounts to South Africa for the Dragoons serving in the Imperial Yeomanry. However, he was not too keen to go himself. On the verge of being sent to the war he confided to his diary that he was 'much relieved to get the message that Lord Roberts required no more Yeomanry'. Green retired from the Yeomanry in 1906 as Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel.⁶ In June 1900 he opened Treasurer's House to raise funds for the wounded and also for St Maurice's parish church.⁷

At a second meeting held on 30 October 1900, the principal question discussed was the site of the memorial (see Figure 1). For a county memorial, York appears to have been the automatic choice. The location of the memorial within York had to be somewhere 'frequented by visitors from all three Ridings'. The route from the railway station to the Minster was most 'suitable', nearer the Minster than the station, but not in front of the Minster's west door as it would interfere with that aspect. The meeting broke up resolving to wait for more money before deciding upon a definite scheme.⁸

In the following week, the first of a number of letters on this memorial appeared in the York papers. A correspondent identified only as 'Experto Crede' stated that the site in front of the Minster west door had been abandoned; a site in the centre of the green at Duncombe Place, surrounded by a fence and flower beds, would be the best. If people thought this position still too close to the Minster, then 'Experto Crede' reminded them of the Crimean War memorial outside Westminster Abbey in London.⁹ Duncombe Place runs south-west from the Minster's west door. The green is on the south side of Duncombe Place at the corner with High Petergate adjacent to the west door. Two weeks later 'Experto Crede' had another letter published advocating Duncombe Place as the best site. However, the memorial would have to be of a suitable design, presumably sympathetic to the Minster.¹⁰

The Committee proceeded to sound out the possibility of using the Duncombe Place site. Duncombe Place took its name from Augustus Duncombe, one time Dean of York and uncle to the Earl of Feversham. Then it was owned by the Little Blake Street Improvement Committee (L.B.S.I.C.) whose secretary was the York solicitor, Cecil H. Cobb. He was the sole partner in the solicitors W.H. Cobb & Son whose office was at 19 Blake Street. Cobb's father was the first clerk to the L.B.S.I.C. in 1860 and Dean Purey-Cust was its chairman. In a letter dated 14 January 1901, Thynne wrote to Cobb asking if the L.B.S.I.C. had decided on a request from the Yorkshire War Memorial Committee to erect a memorial 'on the Green in Duncombe Place.'¹¹

The response from Cobb was positive. In reply, Thynne wrote on 8 February giving details of the proposed memorial which Cobb had requested:

[it is to be a] Queen Eleanor cross — somewhat spiral & of beautiful design... [it] would in no way obscure, clash with or interfere with the aspect of the Minster, and should be a real adornment to the site.

A path would be laid to it and railings erected round it. Marble slabs set into the memorial would list all Yorkshiremen who died in the war. At Thynne's request, Cobb sent the L.B.S.I.C.'s decision to Green, Committee secretary, at Treasurer's House,

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giving permission for the site to be used. Green replied on 18 February thanking him for the L.B.S.I.C.'s permission to use the Duncombe Place site.¹²

Frank Green's letter was the last activity of the Committee for two years. Following the great change in Britain's military fortunes initiated by Lord Roberts, or 'Bobs' as he was popularly known, many people, the Committee included, had begun planning in earnest to celebrate the apparent victory. Some towns issued peace medals. Many more British towns and cities planned to honour Bobs with gifts and to grant him their Freedom, which York City Council's Finance Committee agreed to do in January 1901. At that time a Freeman was given a casket, usually in silver, to record the honour. Most caskets for this purpose, including York's, were made by Messrs Kleiser of London. However, when it became evident that the Boers were not going to give in and the war would continue, all such plans were postponed indefinitely. In January 1901 Lord Roberts had accepted the Freedom of the City of Bath, but later turned it down. He then turned down similar honours from London¹³ and Portsmouth. In September the *Yorkshire Gazette* reported Kleiser's safe to be full of silver caskets for Lord Roberts, and a gold one from the City of London.¹⁴

In the case of Portsmouth, the *Yorkshire Herald* printed part of Lord Roberts's letter to that city:

It is most distasteful to me to be honoured, feted and called upon to rejoice, while so many people are in bitter grief, and before we can properly return thanks for the cloud being rolled away.¹⁵

Lord Roberts knew too well 'bitter grief'. His son, Lieutenant F.H.S. Roberts, had been killed in October 1899 at the battle of Colenso. For the actions that led to his death he was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross (V.C.). His father had won the V.C. nearly 50 years earlier during the Indian Mutiny.

Perhaps these reports of Lord Roberts's attitude influenced the Yorkshire War Memorial Committee. Rather than rush ahead the Committee no doubt felt it prudent to wait until a peace was signed, when they could be sure of recording all Yorkshiremen who would, unfortunately, die.

The war dragged on for nearly another year, British and colonial troops chasing the Boers literally all over southern Africa in a vain attempt to capture them. In frustration, Lord Kitchener, the new commander, instituted a 'scorched earth' policy; Boer farms were destroyed and all women, children and livestock were rounded up. It was this apparent destruction of the Boer nation that forced the fighters to the negotiating table. Peace was finally signed on 31 May 1902.

Work starts again

In February 1903 the Committee wrote to the *Yorkshire Gazette* to appeal for more money. To erect an Eleanor cross 'near the Minster' a further £2,000 was required to reach the target of £3,500. The previous £10 maximum limit on subscriptions was lifted and subscriptions would be taken until 31 May. They warned, 'The number of names to be recorded [on the memorial] is unfortunately very considerable'.¹⁶ A noted architect of the period who was also architect to the Minster, G.F. Bodley R.A., had been engaged to design the memorial. He designed two other Anglo-Boer War memorials in York, for the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, both in the Minster, and at least six others around the country.

The earliest known drawing of the memorial is that published by the *Yorkshire Weekly Herald* in March 1904. On the 5th the paper presented the Committee's plans to the public with a special edition: 'York & Yorkshire Rolls of Honour'. Not only was there a drawing, but also a list of 1,369 names to be inscribed. The 'York Roll of Honour' refers to a memorial later erected in the Guildhall by the City Council commemorating York men who served in the war (Figure 2).

From the drawing in the *Yorkshire Herald* and accompanying description, the type of cross to be used had changed from a Queen Eleanor to an Edwardian cross. Certainly it differs from Thynne's description in 1901. When this change occurred and why is not clear. It may well have to do with the engagement of Bodley or, perhaps, it was felt an Edwardian cross more appropriate in the reign of Edward VII. The ornate and complex design of the finished memorial could indicate Bodley's influence. Bodley's proposed design called for a tall Edwardian cross in perpendicular Gothic style with an

octagonal base on four tiers of steps, with boldly moulded overhanging treads. At each of the four main angles of the base will be a massive projection built in stone, resting on the second flight of steps and forming a cruciform arrangement...The lower half of the shaft is in the form of trefoiled panels, to

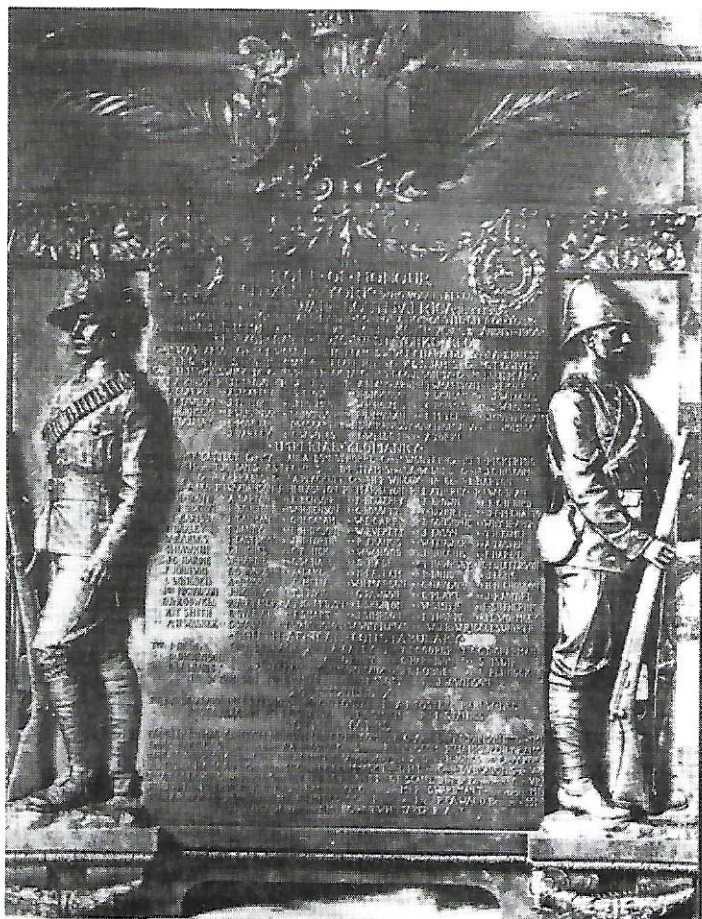


Figure 2.
The memorial to the citizens of York who volunteered for service in the war in South Africa. It appears to have been destroyed in the bombing on 29 April 1942 when the medieval Guildhall was severely damaged. Postcard by Debenham, York.

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which...tablets of marble or granite shall be affixed, bearing the names of the men commemorated. The upper portion of the shaft is divided into eight niches, to be occupied by statues of Yorkshire warrior saints. The shaft is surmounted by a lantern top, with flying buttresses and supporting a cross, which bears a small shield. The angles of the shaft and lantern terminate in carved gargoyles, and the lantern is also decorated with pinnacles.¹⁷

This was not, however, the final design; on a drawing from Bodley's London office, dated 11 July 1904, is noted 'Tracery to be omitted in panels. Also the shields.'¹⁸ Another change, this unrecorded, was the replacement of the 'warrior saints' with figures of contemporary service personnel. The cost of these figures was born by individual donations; sailor (G.D. Faber, M.P.),¹⁹ cavalry (Earl of Carlisle and Frank Green), Imperial Yeomanry (Viscount Mountgarret), militiaman (Earl Fitzwilliam) and the volunteer (Marquis of Ripon).²⁰ There were to be three other figures; nurse, infantryman and artilleryman. The provision for these would not be settled until much later.

Although permission to use Duncombe Place still stood, the question of the site had been re-opened. In February 1904 Green wrote to the City Council's Streets and Buildings Committee asking permission for Bodley's design to be erected in the triangular space at the west end of St Michael-le-Belfry church. To do so the Council required the permission of the Dean and Chapter of the Minster and the City Engineer was asked to report on the site.²¹

Quite erroneously, and perhaps acting on the information of an over-confident Committee member, the *Yorkshire Herald* stated that the memorial would be erected on the St Michael-le-Belfry site, but the City Council had yet to make a decision. This provoked a strongly worded anonymous letter from a 'Loyal Citizen' who wrote that the St Michael-le-Belfry site was highly unsuitable and

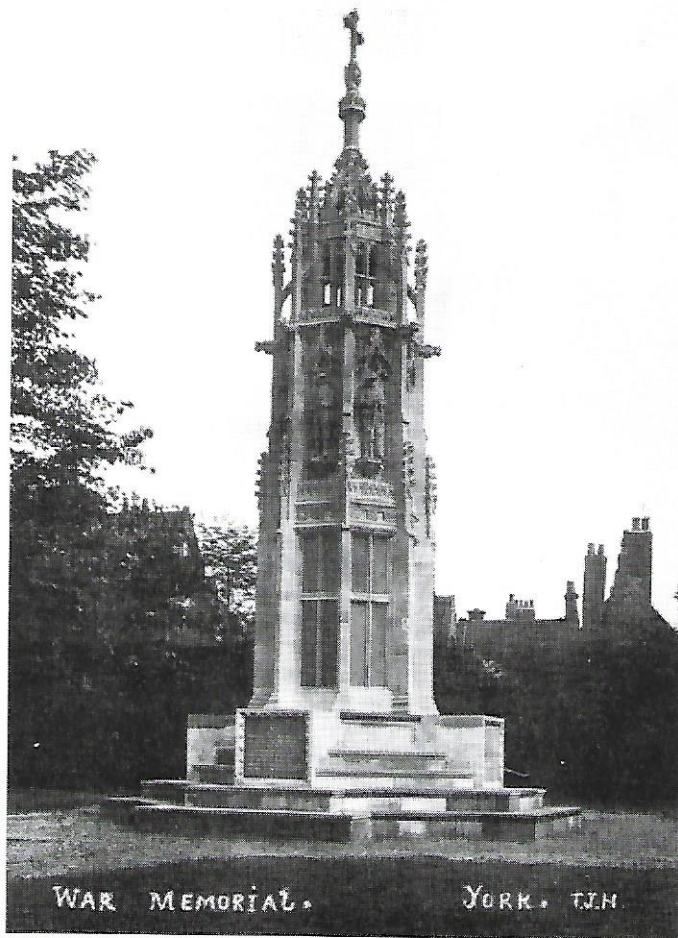


Figure 3.
The memorial on a postcard of 1905.

appalled many other York citizens.²² Possibly influenced by this, the Streets and Buildings Committee voted on 15 March to recommend that the Council reject the St Michael-le-Belfry site, which it did at the next Council meeting.²³ But this did not stop the debate.

Despite the City Council's rejection, the St Michael-le-Belfry site was still under consideration, fuelled by rumour that Bodley favoured this site. On 25 May the Yorkshire Herald published another anonymous letter opposing the St Michael-le-Belfry site:

[the memorial] would be overshadowed by the Minster, and dwarfed by its proximity to that enormous building... [the plot was] too small to afford sufficient space for a satisfactory inspection of the memorial [and] would be seriously injured by the vibration, occasioned by constant vehicular traffic over the two roads which run on either side, which would almost touch the monument.

The letter listed three other sites: Exhibition Square (where the statue of William Etty R.A. now stands), an 'open space at the junction of St Leonard's, Blake Street, Duncombe Place, and Museum Street' and the green at Duncombe Place. The correspondent concluded that the green was the best site. The same day the Herald reported that 'the Corporation of York...has unanimously decided against the selection of' the St Michael-le-Belfry site.²⁴

Not all the correspondence printed was favourable to the erection of a memorial. In another letter, the wife of a Yeomanry volunteer who returned from the war questioned the value of erecting war memorials when the veterans were in such desperate straits:

there would have been much more honour in getting the men back the work they had lost through volunteering for South Africa than writing their names up in the drill hall...we are having to go through the mill. But what can one do? We are obliged to be content with a little sooner than been [sic] out of work altogether.

Her husband, she wrote, could not get his job back on his return and with a wife and children to support he had had to take the first job offered, at a low wage.²⁵

Unemployment was a problem for returning volunteers as there does not appear to have been any general notion of holding jobs open. Many had to sell furniture and even wedding rings to buy food. The men were at the mercy of their employers. As far back as June 1901 the Deputy Adjutant General of the Imperial Yeomanry, Colonel Lucas, wrote an open letter to employers urging them to take their former employees back.²⁶ To help former yeomen, the Imperial Yeomanry Self-Help Employment Association was set up to distribute money, groceries and clothes.²⁷ The *Yorkshire Gazette* reported that the bureaucracy involved in claiming back pay for deceased soldiers made the situation worse for widows and families.²⁸

Albert Linney of Bootham School, reading the long list of names, was prompted to ask

what has been gained by the sacrifice of their lives and those of the others. What more bitter than the reply that comes to us from the land where our Yorkshire dead rest — reply, to the financiers of the Rand it has given Chinese labour!²⁹

After the war, Britain's priority was to recoup the millions of pounds spent on the war and many more millions were required for the reconstruction of those Boer farms that had been deliberately destroyed. The money was available in the enormous gold reserves on the Rand which Britain now controlled. The key to the profitable operation of the mines was very cheap labour. White labour was too expensive, black labour less

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expensive but problematical. A solution was the importation of thousands of Chinese who could be paid a pittance without fear of revolt which the Africans could threaten. The 'Chinese labour question' was hotly debated in Parliament and around the country. In York, a meeting was held in the Co-Op Halls in March 1904 to oppose the importation of Chinese labour; a scheme that insulted the Chinese, was not befitting Britain as a 'Christian nation' and only benefitted the mine owners.³⁰

Apart from these two protest letters, there appears to have been no organised opposition to the memorial. In June the Committee finally decided to take up the L.B.S.I.C.'s offer after all. Green wrote to Cobb on the 24th; referring to Cobb's letter of 16 February 1901, the Committee

unanimously...accept the kind offer...to allow the memorial to be placed on the Grass Plot near the Wills Court.

In pencil scribbled on the bottom of the letter, presumably by Cobb, was the note that the L.B.S.I.C. would need precise plans and details of the memorial before sanctioning its erection. From subsequent correspondence, it appears that the Committee was not able to supply the L.B.S.I.C. with the plans and details it required for at least six months.³¹

Finally, on 20 January 1905, Frank Green's secretary Kenyon wrote to Cobb saying that in the absence of any plans a builder, Mr Rawling, would call to discuss the erection of the memorial. In February, the L.B.S.I.C. and Green visited the green at Duncombe Place to fix the exact position for the memorial, scaffolding having been erected on the proposed spot. Satisfied that the view of the Minster's west aspect would not be obscured, final assent was given.³² By mid March the Yorkshire Weekly Herald reported that hoardings had been erected and site preparation begun. The construction of the cross and its erection was carried out by the stonemason Robert Bridgman & Sons of Lichfield. A pit 3ft 6in deep was dug into which two feet of concrete was poured. The path around the memorial was dug out to a depth of 2ft 6in into which 18in of concrete was set.³³ The cross was constructed of Ketton stone with slabs of slate for the steps and inscription tablets.

Construction continued to the day of the unveiling. Only a few days before, the masons were still awaiting the arrival of the slates onto which all the names would be carved. The slates were mined in Cumbria and had to be dragged 10 miles from the mine to the nearest railway. The carving was a laborious task not helped by the slates' toughness, though today some are beginning to exfoliate in small areas.³⁴

Who is a Yorkshireman?

The 'Roll of Honour', published on 5 March 1904, listed 1,369 names to be inscribed on the memorial. The paper noted later that the total might rise to 1,800, 'equivalent to over two full battalions of the line'.³⁵ The *Yorkshire Evening Press* commented 'it is inexpressibly sad to note the large proportion who died of disease'.³⁶

The compilation of the names was co-ordinated by Kenyon. Information was collected from the War Office and from the Dominions for colonial units. The Committee's original intention was to include men from those regiments with connections with the county, such as The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and The Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment) and all Yorkshiremen. From cross-referencing the names of the County Memorial for the Yorkshire regiments with those

regiments' own memorials it appears the first part of the intention was largely fulfilled. But, with regard to the second part, recording all Yorkshireman, this was more problematical.

The criteria used to identify 'Yorkshiremen' are not known. Green wrote that he was 'guided solely by the attestation papers', but whether he was referring to the stated place of birth or residence is not clear.³⁷ Following the publication of the list the *Yorkshire Herald* received considerable correspondence from friends and relatives pointing out omissions and corrections. From the published correspondence and the final list of names inscribed, it is clear that birth place was not the sole criterion. In general, it would be invidious to apply rigid criteria, but also difficult to apply a liberal selection policy.

To illustrate the dilemma the following men were not on the 1904 'Roll of Honour', but are named on the memorial. A friend or relative of each man made a representation to the Committee through the *Yorkshire Herald*. A correspondent from Todmorden highlighted one difficulty: Todmorden was divided between the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire, but was in the West Riding of Yorkshire for administrative purposes. Four men from Todmorden died in the war but only three were on the 1904 'Roll of Honour'. The fourth, Private Harry Escritt, 2nd Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers, was not. Of the four, only he had not been born in Todmorden. Escritt was born in Norfolk and came to live in Todmorden at the age of six; he lived there for nearly 20 years.³⁸ Like Escritt, Private George Power, a reservist in the South Wales Borderers, had not been born in Yorkshire. He lived in York, as did his parents; his father worked in the post office. Perhaps the clinching fact was that Power worked for the *Yorkshire Herald*.³⁹ Power is listed on the Welsh national memorial in Cardiff suggesting he had been born in Wales. Then there is the case of Sergeant C. King, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers. The details submitted for him proved to be incorrect: he was said to be a native of Yorkshire with the rank of Colour-Sergeant and holding the Distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.). Checks with the War Office showed that he was never a Colour-Sergeant, had never been awarded the D.C.M., and had been born in Ireland not Yorkshire. The *Yorkshire Evening Press* suggested he was ineligible because he had been born in Ireland. Further correspondence was invited.⁴⁰ If anyone did write supporting King's case it was not published, but King was included as a sergeant without the D.C.M.

There is no doubt that many relatives and friends supplying the names of deceased felt their own Yorkshire connections sufficient. After all they wanted that person to be recorded and would probably have been unaware of any efforts to raise a memorial in the deceased's place of birth. In Islington, north London, there is a memorial to 'Islingtonians'. From the list of names and diverse regiments the qualification as an 'Islingtonian' would not appear to be solely birth. Three Yorkshiremen are also Islingtonians. Men on the County Memorial appear on county memorials in at least eleven other counties from Devon, Glamorgan and Norfolk to Northumberland.

There are 1,490 names inscribed on the memorial, representing 105 units of the regular army and navy. Yorkshiremen were found in most regiments and corps of the British Army. There are colonial units from Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. There is one winner of the Victoria Cross named on the memorial. Sergeant A. Atkinson, 1st Battalion Yorkshire Regiment, was awarded a posthumous V.C. for attending to wounded soldiers under fire during the battle of Paardeberg, 18 February 1900. During the battle he was severely wounded and died nine days later. Of particular

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note are the names of Misses Caldcleugh and West who served as nurses in South Africa. Women played a significant part in the war, on both sides and in assisting the war effort and also in opposing it. The recognition of women's role in war by placing them on war memorials first occurred on a wide scale following the Anglo-Boer War. The turn of the century was a period 'when nurses and other women were beginning to draw appropriate conclusions as to women's claims to equality of citizenship and franchise'.⁴¹ The Yorkshire Memorial Committee played their part in this by not excluding West and Caldcleugh from the memorial or separating them in any way from the main body. However, they were not included on the 1904 'Roll of Honour'. It is not known if their names were put forward by official or private sources. Two York women involved in work for forces charities were Major-General Thynne's wife and Lady Emma Purey-Cust. Both were involved with the York branch of the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association, of which Mrs Thynne was president.⁴²

Of the 1,490 names the cause of death (see Table 1) of all but 165 has been identified; 59% died of disease (typhoid and enteric) and 36% died in battle or from wounds received in action. A tragic feature of the casualty figures for the whole war is the fact that three times more men and women died of disease than were killed by the Boers. The ratio on this memorial is nearer 2:1. One major contributory factor to the number who died of disease was the epidemic centred on Bloemfontein during March, April

Table 1. Breakdown of Casualties by Cause of Death and Rank

Cause of death	Officers	Other ranks	Nurses	TOTAL
Accident		23		23
Disease ¹	11	751	2	764
Drowned	2	16		18
Dysentery		1		1
Enteric	6	10		16
Killed in action	31	323		354
Lightning	1	1		2
Other ²	2	8		10
Pneumonia	1	2		3
Railway		7		7
Suicide		1		1
Wounds (in action)	10	116		126
Not known ³	4	161		165
TOTAL	68	1,420	2	1,490

Notes to table

1. Usually typhoid or enteric.
2. 'Abscess & syncope' (1), Bright's disease (1), diarrhoea (2), fractured skull (2), liver disease (2), murder (1), phthisis (1).
3. Many men were invalided home suffering from the effects of disease and wounds. Deaths in the UK, of which many of these probably are, are not recorded in the official casualty rolls.

and June 1900. The soldiers nicknamed it 'Blooming-typhoid-town'. More Yorkshiremen died of disease in Bloemfontein than any other place and most deaths occurred during the period March to June at the rate of almost one a day. Both typhoid and enteric fevers are water-borne diseases contracted by drinking polluted water. They can usually be avoided by boiling water before drinking it. However, the pressures of campaigning and the general neglect paid to medical services meant that troops often had no option but to drink from fetid pools, rivers and streams polluted with dead animals and men. The notion of 'clean' water was then unknown to the British army.

The unveiling

There is no record of discussion amongst the Committee as to who should be invited to unveil the memorial. Circumstance, however, made the decision automatic and presented the ideal choice, Lord Roberts. In 1901, York had resolved to award Lord Roberts the Freedom of the City, but as he had declined to accept this and similar honours until the war had ended, an invitation was not issued to him until March 1905. The Council waited until their own memorial to York's volunteers, to be erected in the Guildhall, was ready before inviting Lord Roberts. The first dates suggested were 29 April or 1 May as this coincided with a Military Sunday on 30 April. However Lord Roberts's busy schedule precluded him from coming until sometime in August.⁴³ The Lord Mayor, V. Wragge, fretted all the while Roberts did not confirm a date. Wragge, conscious that 'August is a holiday month' was keen for a firm date so that councillors could make their holiday plans around Roberts's visit.⁴⁴ In June, Wragge was able to announce that Lord Roberts would visit the city on 3 August. He hoped the Yorkshire Memorial Committee would take advantage of this and invite him to unveil the County Memorial.⁴⁵ This was confirmed in July, despite the fact that the memorial was not yet finished. In fact the memorial was not even completed by the day of unveiling. At least three figures, an infantryman, an artilleryman and a nurse, were not in place and the flagstones were not laid and possibly some of the inscription panels were not ready.

Charles Heriot of 15 St Ann's Street wrote to the *Yorkshire Evening Press* urging people to attend and forget 'personal political antipathies [to remember] well loved comrades who died that their (spasmodically grateful) country might live.' He appealed for all veterans to gather before the ceremony in Exhibition Square in order to march to Duncombe Place and also to wear their medals. He noted that many veterans had sold their medals and decorations to 'Uncle Cohen' (i.e. the pawnbroker); for those that had not he urged them to wear their medals on their coats and not on the waistcoat, 'the semi-surreptitious manner...at present in vogue'.⁴⁶ Some seats at the unveiling were available to the general public. Tickets for these could be purchased from Mr Arthur Anderson of Coney Street.⁴⁷

For Lord Roberts Thursday 3 August was to be a busy day — two unveilings, acceptance of the Freedom of York and a luncheon with the Lord Mayor. He travelled up with his daughter, Lady Aileen, and they stayed with Lord and Lady Wenlock at Escrick Hall near York where a 'distinguished house party' was assembled in his honour. The weather at the time was bad, a long drought having been broken by almost continual rain. On the appointed day Lord Roberts, accompanied by Lord Wenlock, travelled to York in an open carriage despite the rain; the 'downpour was pitiless'. He had a Field Marshal's escort of a sergeant and twelve men provided by the East Riding Imperial

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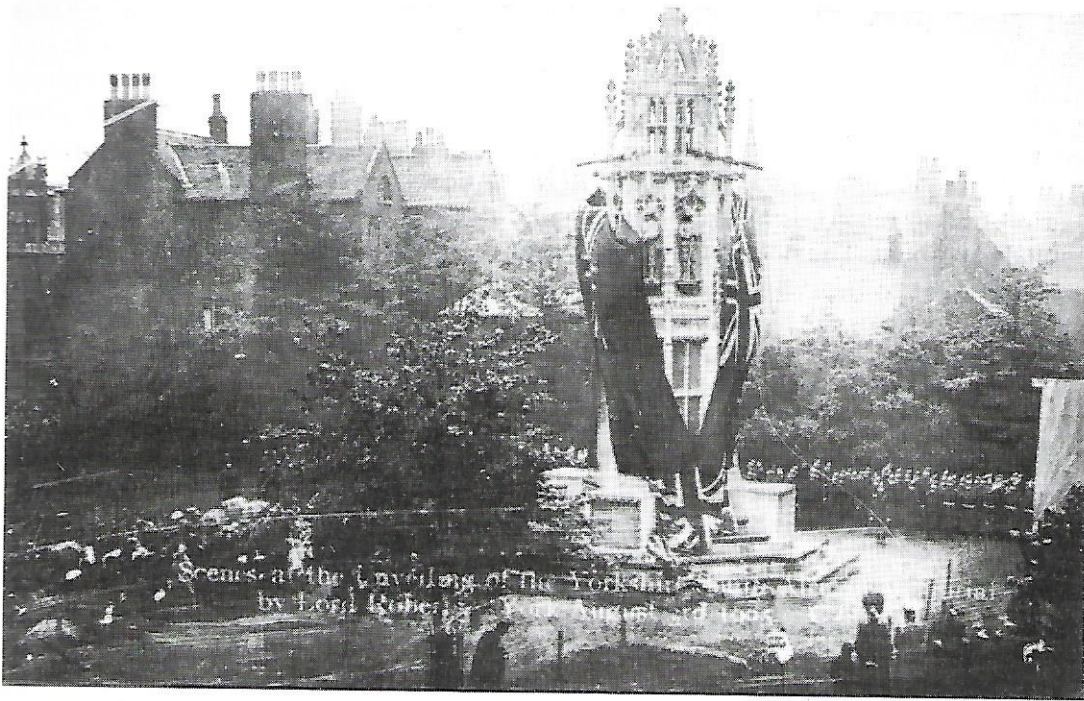
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Figures 4 and 5.

Scenes at the unveiling of the Yorkshire South African Memorial at York, by Lord Roberts, 3 August 1905. Postcards by Chadwick and Allen, Hull.

Yeomanry. Lord Wenlock, as colonel of the East Riding Imperial Yeomanry, wore their uniform. Because of the rain very few people turned out to cheer and 'even in the city, there was along the route no great concourse of people'.

The procession went past the barracks where the soldiers turned out to cheer a very popular soldier. It stopped in front of Northern Command headquarters, 'ordinarily known as the war office', for Roberts to inspect a guard of honour provided by the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment. The regimental colour paraded included the newly won battle honours for their part in the war. The West Riding Regiment had served in Roberts's army that was so successful and Roberts took time to enquire after their latest battle honours. The procession moved on to the Mansion House joined by Lieutenant-General Sir H.M. Leslie-Rundle and his staff. At the Mansion House, the escort was replaced by a guard of honour of 50 Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers commanded by Captain A.W. Metcalfe.⁴⁸

From the Mansion House the procession continued to its destination, the Guildhall. The route was lined with more volunteers, this time the 1st Volunteer Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, commanded by Captain W. A. Pearson and Lieutenant A. P. Dale. Pearson had served in South Africa and was a city councillor. Earlier they had assembled at the Drill Hall in Colliergate and marched to their positions via Coney Street led by the band under the direction of Bandmaster T. Finnigan. As the West Yorkshire volunteers marched to their positions, the invited guests began assembling at the Guildhall at 12 p.m.

Lord Roberts arrived at the Guildhall soon after 1 p.m. First, he was sworn in as a Freeman and presented with the silver casket. Then he unveiled the memorial plaque to York's volunteers. To help illuminate the memorial on what was a dull grey day an electric light had been set up. At the conclusion of these events, Roberts and the Lord Mayor's party retired to the State Room for luncheon.

After lunch, the final event began at 3.30 p.m., again in a 'heavy downpour of rain'. Despite this, 'hundreds of people' gathered to get a glimpse of Lord Roberts and, if fortunate, witness the unveiling of the County Memorial to which many may have subscribed or even had a personal connection. Photographs (Figures 4 and 5) taken on the day show the area around the memorial fenced off keeping the public at some distance. Detachments from many regiments with affiliations to the county paraded behind the memorial inside the fence. Music was provided by the band of the West Riding Regiment. To one side a dais covered with a tarpaulin had been constructed for the dignitaries. The west face of the Minster was clad in scaffolding from which many people had a grandstand view, including a photographer. The memorial itself was draped in large banners hung vertically. Each banner was dark blue with the Union flag at the top. The memorial's inscription reads

REMEMBER THOSE LOYAL AND
GALLANT SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
OF THIS COUNTY OF YORK WHO
FELL FIGHTING FOR THEIR COUNTRY'S
HONOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA 1899 TO
1902 AND WHOSE NAMES ARE
INSCRIBED ON THIS CROSS ERECTED
BY THEIR FELLOW YORKSHIREMEN
A.D. 1905

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The whole ceremony lasted just half an hour,⁴⁹ the inclement weather hastening matters no doubt, and Lord Roberts returned to Escrick. The *Yorkshire Evening Press*, reporting on what was a momentous and important day for York, noted with pride that the Chief Constable, Mr J. Burrow, and the city police had successfully managed the traffic and crowds without the aid of the military or other police forces.⁵⁰

The *Yorkshire Herald* published a full report on the unveiling and Lord Roberts's visit to York. Along with the text and black and white drawings, a colour 'fine art' supplement of the memorial was published. Extra copies could be purchased for 2d (unfolded) or 1d (folded), or by post for 3d. A week later it reported a large demand, with many requests coming in from around Britain.⁵¹ On the 4th, Lord Roberts left York for Darlington where he was to receive the Freedom and unveil the town's memorial on the next day.

Completing the memorial

After the unveiling, the memorial still had to be finished. In September, the *Yorkshire Evening Press* reported that the 'remainder of the panels' would be delivered from the Cumbrian quarry in two to three weeks. The issue of fencing still had to be resolved. On 16 August, nearly two weeks after the unveiling, Kenyon wrote to Cobb on the question of railings around the memorial. At the time of the unveiling a waist-high fence of rather ugly 'chicken wire' surrounded the green. The Committee and the L.B.S.I.C. had agreed to place a similar fence around the memorial. However, Bodley with his more finely tuned aesthetic eye objected on the grounds that it would look ugly. His advice was noted and Kenyon wrote to Cobb that the Committee would prefer to put a 'low iron fence about one foot in height' around the grass 'similar to what is used for the purpose in Hyde Park.' The L.B.S.I.C. agreed providing a gate was included and signs requesting people (and dogs) to 'refrain from injuring the grass plot'. However if these signs were ignored then it would fence off the whole plot.⁵² Today there is no fencing at all. Benches have been placed near the memorial positively encouraging use of this small green space in York's otherwise paved city centre with resultant 'injury' to the turf.

Following the unveiling, York's newspapers moved onto other news, such as the general election, the Russo-Turkish War and a shooting incident involving men of the West Yorkshire Regiment in a Dublin barracks. One soldier was killed and another seriously wounded by a third, who had apparently become deranged after 20 years service and more recently by his experiences in the Anglo-Boer War. As to the memorial, however, they noted that the Earls Feversham and Harewood were providing for the figure of an infantryman, leaving two niches unfilled for which 'it is hoped that donors...will offer themselves'.⁵³ By May 1906 Kenyon could report to Cobb and the L.B.S.I.C. that all figures had been fitted and that Green was 'arranging for a gate to be fixed...and the edges of the lawn [to be] trimmed without delay'.⁵⁴

Some time after the unveiling, the statue of the sailor was replaced with another. The first was returned to the stonemasons Bridgman's, who gave it to Lichfield city. The reason for its rejection is not documented, but the anecdotal evidence is that the figure was too warlike. The figure in Lichfield, still mounted incongruously on the wall of the Carnegie Library, is of a Petty Officer from H.M.S. Powerful holding a rifle (Figure 6).



Figure 6.

The rejected figure of the sailor, now in Lichfield. The barrel of his rifle has been broken off.
Photo: the author.



Figure 7.

Detail from the memorial, the replacement figure of the sailor.
Photo: H. Murray.



Figure 8.

Detail from the memorial, the figure of the nurse.
Photo: the author.

The replacement figure on the County Memorial holds a length of chain or large gauge rope (Figure 7).⁵⁵ All the other figures hold the 'tools of their trade'; the nurse holds a bandage (Figure 8), the artilleryman an anachronistic ramrod, the cavalryman a sword and the others rifles, as does the original sailor. Since the figures were provided individually, presumably the donor of the sailor, G.D. Faber, had the right to specify its appearance. In Treasurer's House there is a wooden model of the memorial showing the original sailor (Figure 9). This statue can also be seen on picture postcards of the memorial.

The memorial since 1905

One issue that seldom seems to be resolved when a memorial is erected is provision for its subsequent maintenance. Perhaps this is not surprising considering all the time and effort required to get it erected in the first place. A memorial, constructed from hard wearing stone and not a victim to acts of vandalism and accidental damage, will wear well for many years as the County Memorial has done. It was not for nearly 50 years that any cleaning and restoration was necessary.

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In 1957 responsibility for raising money to have the memorial cleaned fell to the York and District Council of Service Associations, prompted by the York branch of the South African War Veterans Association (S.A.W.V.A.). An appeal for £500 was launched, but the response was very poor; only £104 was raised,⁵⁶ demonstrating the 'little further interest' Canon Porter spoke about four years later. In spite of the general lack of interest, the appeal remained open. In 1960 the City Council agreed to take over responsibility 'when the memorial is renovated'. With the York Festival due to open later that year it was decided to start the work and then collect the remaining money from festival visitors.⁵⁷ Fortunately the strategy worked and in May 1961 the memorial was handed over to the City in the ceremony conducted by Canon Porter. The Lord Mayor and Sheriff attended, accompanied by veterans associations, including six of the seven surviving members of the York S.A.W.V.A., the seventh being in hospital. The choir of St Helen's sang the hymns.

No sooner had the City taken responsibility for the memorial than they were forced to act. Early in the morning of 4 September lightning struck it destroying the cavalryman. The Council voted £500 to make good the damage and fit a lightning conductor, but not to replace the figure. In its place is a small plastic plaque recording the lightning strike.⁵⁸ In 1973 the inscription was re-gilded by the York Civic Trust.⁵⁹ Today the memorial stands almost unnoticed in a darkened grove, once a prominent landmark now hidden by trees that dwarf it. Still it remains a treasure of the City of York.

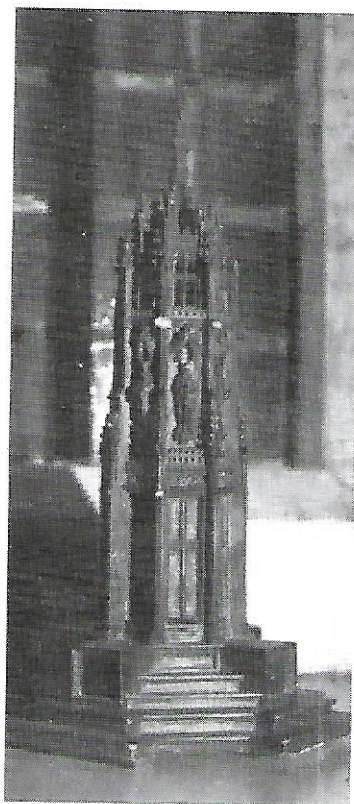


Figure 9.
Wooden model of the memorial
in Treasurer's House.
Photo: H. Murray.

Appendix: Anglo-Boer War Memorials in York

4th/7th Dragoon Guards Museum	Brass plaque: 7th Dragoon Guards
Duncombe Place	Yorkshire County Memorial
Guildhall	Volunteers from York (believed destroyed)
Minster	Tablet: Cpt. W.M. Marter, 1st King's Dragoon Guards
Minster	Tablet: Lts S.F. Wombwell and R.B. Wilson, Imperial Yeomanry
Minster	Memorial: King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
Minster	Plaque: 18th Hussars
Minster	Plaque: Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment)
Minster	Plaque: Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

Minster	Plaque: York and Lancaster Regiment	tral
Minster	Plaque: Lt-Col. J.G. Wilson, York and Lancaster Regiment	ork
St Columba's Free Church	Plaque: Scottish regiments	oe,
St Peter's School	School prize: Lt W.W.D. Whytehead, Imperial Yeomanry	son 25-
Skeldergate Bridge	Obelisk: Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment	er's
York Cemetery	Grave: Pte J.W. Wilson, 18th Hussars	ry's
York Cemetery	Grave: Trpr W. Thompson, South African Constabulary	len, ohn

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the kind hospitality and unfailing assistance of Mr Hugh Murray, FSA, in guiding me through the various libraries and archives of York which revealed much invaluable material.

Sources

Letters and unpublished material

Books not listed in an endnote

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Burke's *Peerage*

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Yorkshire Who's Who (1912)

Who Was Who

NOTES

1. This paper arises from the voluntary work which the author is doing as co-ordinator of the Anglo-Boer War Memorials Project for the Victorian Military Society. The Project catalogues and encourages research into Anglo-Boer War memorials around the world.
2. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 1.5.1961, 1 and 6.
3. *Yorkshire Herald*, 3.8.1905, 9a.
4. Major-General Sir Reginald Thomas Thynne, b. 23.12.1843. Served with the Grenadier Guards in the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War, 1882 Egyptian War and 1885 eastern Sudan campaign.

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Deputy Assistant Adjutant General and then Assistant Adjutant General, South Africa 1881-82. Deputy Adjutant General, Malta 1882-83. Commander 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards 1885-89. Assistant Adjutant General, Home District 1890-93. General Officer commanding the North-East District 1894-1902. Thynne retired in 1904. He was related to the Marquis of Bath through his father, Reverend Lord John Thynne, brother of the 3rd Marquis.

5. *Yorkshire Herald*, 3.8.1905, 9a.
6. *Waste Not, the Story of Green's Economiser* (Harley Publishing Co. Ltd, 1956), 6, 102.
7. *Yorkshire Herald*, 22.6.1900, 3a.
8. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 3.11.1900, 3d.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 17.11.1900, 3c.
11. York City Archives [YCA], Little Blake Street Improvement Committee [L.B.S.I.C.] accession 272.
12. YCA, L.B.S.I.C. accession 272.
13. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 12.1.1901, 3f and 14.1.1901, 3c.
14. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 28.9.1901, 4f.
15. *Yorkshire Herald*, 19.1.1901, 13c.
16. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 28.2.1903, 5a.
17. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 5.3.1904, Special Supplement.
18. York Minster Library, Y/DUN.
19. George Dennison Faber C.B., Conservative M.P. for York 1900-1910. He was also a partner in Beckett and Co. Bank, Leeds.
20. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 3.8.1905, 9a.
21. Council Minutes, 7.3.1904.
22. *Yorkshire Herald*, 7.3.1904, 5.
23. Council Minutes, 11.4.1904.
24. *Yorkshire Herald* 25.5.1904, 3.
25. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 5.3.1904, 5a.
26. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 15.6.1901, 3b.
27. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 21.3.1903, 3d.
28. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 16.2.1901, 3c.
29. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 5.3.1905, 5a.
30. *Ibid.*, 6b.
31. YCA, L.B.S.I.C. accession 272.
32. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 15.2.1905, 2h.
33. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 18.3.1905, 6a.
34. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 31.7.1905, 2e.
35. *Yorkshire Herald*, 7.3.1904, 5.
36. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 22.1.1904, 3f.
37. *Yorkshire Herald*, 7.3.1904, 5.
38. *Yorkshire Herald*, 25.6.1904, 5e.
39. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 5.3.1905, 5a.
40. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 19.4.1905, 2e.
41. A. Summers, 'Images of the Nineteenth Century Nurse', *History Today* (December 1984), 42.
42. *Yorkshire Herald*, 4.10.1900, 2f.
43. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 24.4.1905, 2e.
44. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 2.5.1905, 2q.
45. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 6.6.1905, 3d.

- 46. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 4.7.1905, 3d. ral
 - 47. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 18.7.1905, 2f. ork
 - 48. Metcalfe joined the 1st East Riding of Yorkshire Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers in 1894. Promoted Captain 1898. A keen marksman who, on five occasions, had won the Officer's Cup for shooting. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 22.9.1906, 7g. oe,
 - 49. *Yorkshire Gazette*, 5.8.1905, 8. son
 - 50. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 3.8.1905, 3. 25-
 - 51. *Yorkshire Weekly Herald*, 5.8.1905, 4g and 12.8.1905, 4g.
 - 52. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 1.9.1905, 3d. er's
 - 53. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 11.9.1905, 2f. ry's
 - 54. YCA, L.B.S.I.C. accession 272. en,
 - 55. *Victoria County History of Stafford XIV*, 168. ohn
 - 56. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 26.3.1957, 3 and 2.5.1957, 5.
 - 57. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 26.2.1960, 9; 1.4.1960, 4; 28.10.1960, 6. id-
 - 58. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 4.9.1961, 1 and 6; 27.10.1961, 9. ett,
 - 59. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 14.4.1973, 4. ax,
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