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Manipulating the Metonymic The politics of civic identity and the Bristol Cenotaph, 1919 - 1932

Abstract

The city of Bristol was one of the last major cities in Great Britain to unveil a civic memorial to commemorate the Great War 1914 – 1918. After Leicester (1925), Coventry (1927) and Liverpool (1930) Bristol's Cenotaph was unveiled in 1932, fourteen years after the Armistice. During that lapse, its location, source of funding, and commemorative function were the focus of widespread disagreement and division in the city. This paper examines the nature of these disputes. The authors suggest that the tensions in locating a war memorial may have their origins in historic enmities between political and religious factions in the city. By examining in detail the source and manifestations of these disputes the authors offer a detailed exemplar of how memory is shaped and controlled in British urban spaces

Keywords

Bristol

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Contested spaces

Introduction

The Cenotaph as a form is, as Sergiusz Michalski observes, metonymic. Whereas nineteenth century monuments had tended towards the allegorical or metaphoric (1) or had stood as portraits of the good and the great, the twentieth century *Cenotaph*, along with the equally novel *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*, stood as a singular abstraction of mass death. Both these memorial forms may be seen as anti-individualistic, or as Michalski further posits, 'democratic.' (2) These monuments do not celebrate individual heroicism or leadership, rather, they mourn the common man, for in this project the foot soldier is equal to the field marshal.

Carter, Donald and Squires in their introduction to *Space and Place*, argued that this process, in which the remit of memorialisation was widened, resulted in the exclusion of 'difference' from the public sphere, where ultimately (and they would claim falsely) 'the norms and procedures of the public realm are claimed to be neutral and accessible to all' (3). However, in the context of the early twentieth century, this new kind of monument was a genuine move towards inclusivity. The Cenotaph, although clearly gendered, is classless, rank-less and inclusive; emphasising the nation as a whole rather than the estates within it.

These memorials, following hard on the heels of nineteenth century valourisation of the abstract of 'nation', de-emphasised the 'local' and the politics of civic identity in favour of the ideal of the unified nation, so cutting across the Victorian propensity to use public spaces and memorials to underpin and emphasise local, municipal power structures. The historian Jose Harris has alerted us to the fact that, during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, whilst the processes of high politics were attempting to transform Britain into a more homogeneous, national society, much of the cultural and intellectual life of the country was generated provincially, and local government was seen as the proper guardian of the 'public good'. Alongside the growth of an inclusive, national culture, there existed (even as late as the end of the Great War) a culture of fierce provincial loyalties and power relations. (4) The national ideal of democratic, inclusive commemoration, once exported from the Metropolis to Britain's

provincial towns, had to find its place in an already heavily contested memorial landscape.

The late nineteenth century European urban landscape found ‘a thickening forest of monuments [that] almost threaten[ed] to choke the city and picturesque sites’ (5). Lefebvre has posited that such sites, such ‘monumental space’, can provide individuals with an image of belonging, or social membership, in which a kind of consensus is rendered ‘practical and concrete’. (6) He goes on to say that:

The element of repression in it and the element of exaltation [can] hardly be disentangled: or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the repressive element was metamorphosed into exaltation. (7)

That which is designed to provide a locus of ‘inclusion’, then, also equally proclaims exclusion. Hence statuary, inscriptions, street signs, commemorative plaques and memorials are rarely located without some negotiation, even dispute. As the work of Matsuda has shown, rivalries for the mnemonic spaces of cities were sometimes fierce and dramatic. A major act of the Paris Communards in 1871 was to destroy a Napoleonic monument as part of the ‘polemics of commemoration and anti-commemoration’ (8). If, as Matsuda suggests, commemoration is an act of evaluation, judgement, and of ‘speaking’ which ‘lends dignity to the identity of a group’ (9), then it is easy to see, as Lefebvre certainly did, how the commemorative process arouses issues over territorial domination. The territory of a city is also the territory of ideals, polemic and power relations. Its public spaces are manifestations of social hierarchy like ‘the model of a military camp, where the military hierarchy is to be read in the ground itself, by the places occupied by the tents and the buildings reserved for each rank.’ (10) However, a city, unlike a military camp, is not fixed. Territories and boundaries are contested and invaded and changes of dominance are made visible, like the running up of a victor’s banner on a captured flagpole. The siting of monuments and memorials, then, cannot be seen as incidental. As one of the present authors has shown in earlier writings, the space that they occupy in a city either confirms or challenges local power structures. (11) This makes the project of local commemoration of national events a complex undertaking, one

where issues of local ownership and power are at odds with the abstract and impersonal 'meta-narrative' of Nation.

Mourning and commemoration – national and local

Erected in London in 1920, the Whitehall Cenotaph, was initially conceived of as a temporary monument. However, as Winter has noted, not only did popular demand render it permanent, it came to be seen as 'the permanent British war memorial.' (12) Sitting, as it does, at the heart of the memorial landscape of the British capital, centre of both Nation and Empire, and surrounded by the offices of State, it was perfectly placed to express national solidarity and mourning. Hobsbawm believed that 'if there was a moment when the nineteenth-century principle of nationality triumphed, it was at the end of the First World War' (13) Indeed, the idea of the Nation developed through the nineteenth century, was (as many commentators, including Hobsawm and Gillis have observed) essentially democratic and inclusive. (14) In the project of nationhood all were equally British, all were equally 'citizens', who had a 'stake in the country.' (15)

At the end of the Great War the price paid by these stake-holders had been great, and the need to grieve, and to commemorate all who had died in the conflict, rather than just generals and politicians, was an unprecedented groundswell of feeling. As Mosse and Winter relate, the acts of commemoration were many and various, ranging from the temporal – the Two Minutes Silence – to the permanent and immutable, invariably in the form of statues, tombs and buildings. (16) It is interesting to note however that, given the great national urge towards the memorialisation of the fallen, some commemorative acts were achieved with more ease than others. The Whitehall Cenotaph, in using the symbolism of the empty grave, allowed a democratic remembrance of every one by commemorating no-one. (17) However, the relative ease in establishing a war memorial in historic London contrasts starkly with the difficulty that arose elsewhere, particularly in the city of Bristol.

These difficulties may be seen as the manifestation of a conflict between the inclusive idea of the Nation, and the divisive reality of petty territoriality. Once the cenotaph left the national space of London's government district, it began to engage with

the particularities of the 'local'. This meant that this monumental-form, which was very much 'in step' with national sentiments, was now out of step with the local politics of sectional commemoration. As Winter points out : 'However sacred the task of commemoration, it still touched all the chords of local loyalties.' (18)

Whilst a national monument is often the focus for 'self-aggrandising national memory' (19) civic commemoration allows the privilege of self-aggrandisement to particular sections of society within a contestable landscape. As Raphael Samuel has observed this means that what civic memory contrives to forget is as important as what it remembers (20) and these acts of forgetting, become, in effect, acts of exclusion. Once a town, or city, embarks on the project of remembering its dead, then it engages in the particular rather than the general. In a town or small city there are no unknown soldiers. The dead come from suburbs, neighbourhoods, chapels and churches, families and schools. They are not British: they are Mancunian; Bristolian; Brummies. More than that, they are Accrington Pals, Bedminster Boys, Ladywood Chums. They are identified by local boundaries and affiliations. They are 'our' dead in a localised and exclusive sense. They are known, they are particular, and, even when dead, they are part of networks of power and identity. As inferred above, some dead will 'belong' and some will be 'excluded'.

A Bristol context

In Bristol the mnemonic landscape is heavily contested. (21) As Morgan and Dresser have identified, the rivalries between power factions run deep and are characterised through politics, religion and geography. (22) The old City of Bristol, based on the North of the River Avon, and traditionally part of the County of Gloucestershire, has been the power base of a High Anglican, High Tory, merchant class, typically represented by the Society of the Merchant Venturers of Bristol. (23) Existing since the sixteenth century, the Society of Merchants Venturers grew to become the most powerful mercantile cartel in Bristol and the region; their wealth and status partly founded on the trade in slaves. (25) Evidence of their power in the controlling oligarchy was expressed in buildings, social networks, endowments and statuary. The figure of Edward Colston was especially valued and, as one of the cities' favoured sons, his name was lent to streets, concert halls,

stained glass windows, a statue located at the heart of the city as well as almshouses and schools which he established in the late seventeenth century. (25) In lionising Colston, the Tory and Anglican merchant class were memorialising themselves and their own values, their favourite son was being re-presented as an embodiment of benign paternalism and his reputation rendered immutable in stone, glass and bronze. (26)

The ascendancy of this grouping was later challenged by the Non-conformist, Whig/Liberal industrialists of Bedminster, the separate town that eventually became South Bristol. Based on the South bank of the Avon in the County of Somerset, much of the area in question did not become part of Greater Bristol until the beginning of the twentieth-century. As such it had developed its own identity and power structures based, from the seventeenth-century onward, on its strong association with Dissent and on its development of the tobacco, sugar and chocolate manufacturing industries owned by nonconformist families such as the Frys and Wills.

The merging of the 'Hundred of Bedminster' with the City of Bristol in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries brought the two ruling elites into direct competition for control of the central commemorative landscape of this new Bristol. What ensued was often, literally, a battle for the higher ground as evidenced, for example, in the close proximity of Cabot's Tower [associated with the Merchant Venturers] of 1887, and the 1925 Wills Memorial Building of Bristol University [both University and tower were substantially funded by the eponymous South Bristolian Wills family, they were further aided in this project by the Frys]. These two tall buildings dominate the area around Park Street, which had always been identified strongly as the territory of the Merchant Venturers. It is not irrelevant that the later building, that of the challengers, as it were, is bigger, heavier and more immediately 'present'. It is as though Park Street, a very steep hill decked with Georgian and early Victorian buildings, is the flagpole and the Wills Memorial Building is the victor's pennant. (27) There were earlier provocative acts instigated by the emerging Liberal, Nonconformist industrialists of South Bristol. In 1894, the year that W.H.Wills was returned to Parliament as MP for East Bristol, he marked the occasion by commissioning a statue to the mid-eighteenth century radical Whig MP for Bristol Edmund Burke. (28) One year later, John Cassidy's

statue of Edward Colston, paragon of the city's mercantile and Anglican values, was erected in the centre. Today, the two statues stand one hundred metres apart, continuation of a parallel monologue in the recitation of Bristol's past.

It is not difficult to see, then, how the mnemonic landscape of Bristol might be a particularly difficult setting for a monument designed to unite disparate factions in one inclusive act of mourning. In the post-Great War period traditional rivalries were especially intense due to the very recent incorporation of the industrial southern territory into the city. As subsequent events were to prove it was almost impossible to conceive of a memorial that might incorporate both factions. Still harder was it to agree a site that would be both territorially neutral and appropriately solemn. It is perhaps telling that the Bristol Cenotaph now stands on a traffic island on reclaimed land over the River Frome: a tomb to no one on no one's land.

Contested memory – the control of martial commemoration in British cities

Contemporary accounts of the post-war commemorative process in Great Britain reveal a complex matrix of disputes and differences that surrounded the commissioning, selection and siting of public war memorials. The dead, as Heffernan,, points out were not allowed 'to pass unnoticed back into the private world of their families'. They were 'official property' to be accorded appropriate civic commemoration in 'solemn monuments of official remembrance'. (29)

As we have noted above, the marking of the urban landscape with effigies, monuments and inscriptions is, argues Samuel (30) a crucial form of public history whereby identity is agreed or perhaps asserted by those economically and politically able to gain jurisdiction. Many groups and constituencies fought for that jurisdiction, for what Winter identifies as the primary sites of memory and mourning. (31)

There existed at least six key constituencies: ex-service organisations, the bereaved, fund-raisers, private donors, town planners and urban developers. A complex set of inter-relationships existed between these groups. There are, for example, many instances of prolonged disputes where ex-servicemen felt that they were being manipulated by municipal authorities who appeared more intent on promoting a

memorial scheme as part of a comprehensive urban planning development than properly representing the memory of their absent comrades. Moriarty identifies tensions in the aesthetic form that memorials should take (32) and Grieves focuses on memorial schemes in Sussex villages to explore social dissonance between church, village and demobilised soldiers. (33) King, taking a more panoramic view (34) identifies at least four areas of contestation: firstly, tensions between the demands of ex-servicemen's groups and the collective interests of the bereaved. Here, tensions are focused on which of the two constituencies hold the moral and emotional imperative and might, therefore, engineer the debate on the symbolic function of a memorial. Secondly, in Great Britain, there were entrenched rivalries between religious groups, particularly between Anglicans and non-conformists, as to the most suitable location for a memorial, the former invariably demanding a church location, the latter preferring a chapel, or a non-consecrated site. Thirdly, but perhaps less frequently than one might expect, there were disagreements on the aesthetics, symbolism and design of memorial schemes which had been funded by major donors or privileged subscribers who demanded a greater say than those who had contributed by public subscription. Finally, King identifies those disputes concerning the location of memorials. This was especially strong where local groups felt that they were being coerced by municipal authorities or other power groups.

The management (and, we might add, the manipulation) of choice, concludes King, was often complex, convoluted and 'thoroughly ambiguous.' (35) It may seem odd that the siting of a war memorial should arouse such anxieties; perplexing that icons of national reverence and remembrance such as a civic war memorial should have once seemed so complex and elusive. But this is to ignore the debates about the way in which memorials encapsulate and perpetuate memory. As Johnson tells us, such sites of memory are rarely arbitrary assignments: instead they are "consciously situated to connect or compete with existing nodes of collective remembering." (36) Containing and conveying memory, war memorials exist not only as aesthetic devices but as an apparatus of social memory a phenomenon Boyer describes as 'rhetorical topoi':

those civic compositions that teach us about our national heritage and our public responsibilities and assume that the urban landscape itself is the embodiment of power and memory. (37)

Bodnar has argued that the actual focus of commemoration is not the past at all 'but serious matters in the present.' (38) Drawing on his survey of the processes of 'public memory' in the United States Bodnar identifies a 'dichotomy of intentions and interests between the official groups who institute commemorations and the various groups who make up the mass of participants and audience.' (39) Bodnar maintains that the very process of negotiation between the many groups is in itself a unifying act, engendering 'a general framework of understanding' within which the participants locate, and then re-locate, their own particular viewpoints. Indeed, these administrative and political acts become the very medium of commemoration and are encouraged by the homogenising power of an official administration.

Drawing on Freud's work on mourning and melancholia, Rowlands (40) has argued that one of the primary function of the 'monument' is its transition to 'memorial', largely as a result of the successful completion of a mourning process. Cousins further suggests that during the initial mourning period ;

the object must die twice, first at the moment of its own death and secondly through the subject's unhitching from its own identification. It is only then that the object can pass into history and that the stones can be set – for mourning and memorial are a phase apart. (41)

In a further refinement of this model, Winter (42) identifies three distinct periods in the evolution of the public monument: an initial, creative phase – the construction of 'commemorative form' – which is marked by monument building and the creation of ceremony. Secondly, the 'grounding of ritual action in the calendar' through a process of institutionalisation and routinisation. Finally, their transformation or disappearance as 'active sites of memory' during a final phase that is largely contingent on whether a second generation of mourners inherits the earlier meanings attached to the place or event and adds new meanings. Without frequent re-inscription the date and place of

commemoration simply fade away as memory atrophies: the monument loses its potency to re-invigorate memory.

This complex process is exemplified in the case of monuments to distant wars. Here as Inglis suggests, the terminological difference is significant: 'Where the French speak of *monuments aux morts*, the English say *war memorials*.' *Memorial* leaves open the form of commemoration which may, or may not, be monumental. (43) In largely Protestant, voluntarist countries such as Britain, hospitals, libraries and other utilitarian memorials had long been considered to be structures appropriate for commemoration. As we have seen in the case of Bristol, Victorian and Edwardian Britain is strewn with the evidence of philanthropic and state benefaction. After the Great War, British memorials varied in object from avenues of trees to such utilitarian schemes as community halls, recreation grounds, convalescent homes (44) and, in one case, a waterpipe to a local school (45). However, in 1919 the need to find a tolerable meaning to the Great War more often demanded monumental form. Reverential structures such as cenotaphs had several functions. Initially they acted as a focus for personal, public and civic displays of grief. Their iconic form helped to reassure non-combatants and relatives that the dead died for a greater cause, one that was linked to abstract values of nationhood, camaraderie or Christian citizenship. Through the annual ritual of Armistice services they gradually became the locus of communal and individual remembrance opening up a discourse of healing, regret and reflection. In their monumental form, war memorials Rowlands suggests

should ideally allow the fusion of the living with the dead as an act of remembrance whilst in time providing a way out of melancholia through an act of transcendence (46)

In this way, they function as palliative *topoi* helping to resolve the conditions of 'negativity and impotence' aroused by violent death, particularly of the young.

In our examination of the Bristol Cenotaph it is significant that the principle axis of contestation lay in its location. Issues of design, funding and iconography were a secondary, indeed insignificant, matter compared to the extended and very public arguments over its actual site. As Inglis suggests in his analysis of the war memorial

movement in Cambridge perhaps it is timely to look beyond the material object, the memorial itself, and look to ‘the stories of their making’. (47) In Bristol, this story merits close scrutiny.

The Bristol Cenotaph

James Belsey suggests in his narrative of Bristol and the Great War (48) that the main topic of conversation amongst Bristolians leaving a medal awarding assembly at the Colston Hall on February 15th 1919 was ‘the various plans for a war memorial to honour the dead.’ (49) Various plans there may have been, but little progress was made in the years following the Armistice. A small committee of leading citizens had been set up in 1919 by the then Lord Mayor but achieved little. The tardy response may have been due to divided representation amongst the several ex-servicemen’s groups in the city, and it was not until the newly reconstructed British Legion held a public meeting in 1925 that a fresh working group was established under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor. Characteristically, the group was divided as to the nature of a war memorial – should it be “of a reverential character or a more utilitarian kind, such as would provide for the material needs of ex-Servicemen and women, especially those incapacitated.” (50)

The desire for an ‘utilitarian’ outcome was a common theme in Bristol’s history of memorialisation. Will’s Memorial Tower, erected in 1921 as part of the new University of Bristol, was criticised for its lack of utility; its profligate use of non-functional space. The Merchant Venturer’s association with almshouses and schools named after Edward Colston had, perhaps, emphasised the association of the city’s memorials with ‘largesse’, or patronage of ‘the worthy poor’,

In 1919, it soon became clear, however, that funding would be a constraint on the war memorial scheme and the ambition for a special home, hospital or other social amenity was abandoned. Having opted for a ‘reverential monument’ the group sought a suitable site. Several sites were suggested, and three were given close consideration: the first was College Green, a large lawned space in front of Bristol Cathedral. The second, a prominent corner of Canon’s Road immediately below the church of St Augustine-the-Less known as the Tramways Centre which was a junction for road, tram and water traffic in the centre of the city. It was also close to the site used by ex-Servicemen for the

annual service at Armistice Day. (51) The third proposed site lay at the northern end of Colston Avenue in the city centre. Known also as Magpie Park it was in a rather unkempt state, occupied by an old bandstand and several trees. Other locations in the Horsefair, at Old Market and on the Downs were also suggested but considered inappropriate as either being too crowded with existing structures, too busy, or too remote. After deliberation, the group, with uncharacteristic bravado, recommended that the statue of Queen Victoria positioned on College Green be removed (to a public park on the southern outskirts of the city) and the war memorial erected in its place.

There was an immediate furore. This reached a crescendo in December 1926 when the local press held a postal ballot on the future location of the statue. 4,926 voted against its removal, 4,280 were in favour; a majority of 646 against the removal. With the site lost, the war memorial project again floundered. Under the chairmanship of Colonel G.M. Orr, and his successor, Colonel E.Knox, the British Legion continued to lobby the city council for a suitable site. On 8th January 1929 a member of the council, Mr Adam Cottam Castle, moved a motion expressing the opinion that:

It is desirable that Bristol should have a War Memorial to those who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War and that instruction should be given to an appropriate Committee of the Council to recommend a suitable site for a memorial and to report to the Council at an early date. (52)

However, Counciller Frederick Berriman moved an amendment that any memorial should have a utilitarian purpose and take the form of some provision for dependants. It is worth noting that the amendment was carried with a large majority (49 for, 17 against, 5 abstentions) despite widespread public concern that funding could not be promised to deliver a substantial endowment, school, homes or other such utilitarian scheme. Across the city there was little consensus. In September of that year, for example, the committee received a petition from the Bristol branches of the British Legion and the ex-servicemen and Old Comrades Associations to reconsider their resolution of January and to focus entirely on providing a suitable site for 'a memorial'. (53)

By November of that year the Special Committee of ten councillors (chaired by Mr Berriman) which had been established to realise the project had to concede that there

was little prospect of the public subscribing the necessary money for a utilitarian scheme. (54) Leaks to the local press announced that the ‘committee confesses complete failure’ (55) and three days later, Councillor Robert F. Lyne, moved that desirable as it was to ‘safeguard the interests of those who have survived’, the provision of large sums could not be expected. Council of 26th November 1929 received the Special Committee’s full statement which concluded that under their terms of reference, they could make no recommendation:

If the cost of such a scheme is to be provided by voluntary contributions, the response from the public would be inadequate having regard to the length of time which has elapsed since the termination of the war. (56)

Although the Council-initiated project had stalled, the Bristol branch of the British Legion, in addition to raising small sums of money by public donation, had organised and presented a petition to the Council arguing for a ‘visible memorial of the reverential kind’. The petition was championed by Mr Lyne who moved, in what the *Bristol Times and Mirror* described as a ‘charming speech’ that the committee be instructed to investigate and report on possible sites for a memorial

of the fallen, and not for the glorification of war, and that the money was being subscribed by large numbers of people who had suffered by the war, and who desired such a memorial to inspire better living. (57)

The motion was carried by 39 votes to 33 – a narrow majority that reflected the many divisions in opinion that were engendered by the memorial issue. During this period the local press showed more enthusiasm for the campaign and a timely article by Chas Wells in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* helped to summarise the convoluted tale and lend fresh impetus to the search for a suitable site. Reflecting on the previous days’ Armistice service Wells asked wistfully:

Is it too much to hope that part of the commemoration next November may be the unveiling of a simple, dignified memorial in stone? A sum of £3,000 has been

suggested as the cost of such a memorial and that is being raised by voluntary contributions. (58)

Under the stewardship of Lyne progress was made: by early summer 1930 a carefully considered report was presented to Council. It laid out the arguments for each of the three sites suggested in 1926, concluding that only one site met the necessary conditions of proximity to the city centre, ready access, and sufficient space to hold the annual service of remembrance. Least favoured was the Tramways site which was considered cramped and vulnerable to 'the constant flow of traffic', noise and future planning schemes. The report also rejected the College Green proposal. Having explored the possibility with the Dean and Chapter and with the Watch Committee (which had responsibility for all aspects of city and borough policing) the site was considered already crowded with statuary and unsuited to large gatherings. (59) Lyne's report concluded with the recommendation that a site at the northern end of Colston Avenue be 'allocated for the purpose'. Recognising that at present the surroundings were not perhaps completely 'worthy' he suggested that the new war memorial would help accelerate the transformation of the site.

The site is very close to the centre of the city; it is quiet, and the erection of a war memorial will in no way hinder traffic. The demolition of a few trees of no particular size will be involved but this will not be a detriment. (60)

Lyne's report was approved, with an additional paragraph in which the Corporation agreed to bear the costs of clearing and preparing the recommended site. A sum of 790 pounds was later approved by the Finance Committee for this work. (61)

Within weeks, a campaign had been launched to re-instate the College Green site. A group of retired officers and prominent Bristolians led by Captain George Gedye, announced in letters (62) to the press in early August that a bank account – the War Memorial College Green Fund - had been opened to collect funds sufficient to move the replica of the Bristol Civic (or High) Cross from College Green to make way for a war memorial. In arguments over the best site, the Civic Cross had been raised as an impediment to further memorials on the Green. Throughout August the group conducted

an energetic campaign which can be traced in letters and articles in the local and regional press. One letter argued that the College Green site was unique in its religious character and offered ‘the quiet and restful surroundings which so many of your correspondents desire.’ Furthermore it was ‘under the shadow of the cathedral where so many of those we commemorate have met, and where their comrades and successors still meet for church parade.’ (63)

Four days later the *Western Daily Press* published a letter from ‘an ex-serviceman’ beseeching the large firms of the city to subscribe generously to a memorial that ‘will be worthy of the gateway to the West, to perpetuate the memory of citizens who gave their lives in the great war.’ (64) The campaign against the chosen site was also mentioned in subsequent letters:

Colston Avenue [is] a vacant site with no attractive surroundings or past associations which would make it either a suitable or worthy site for so great a memorial which for all time will be linked up with the naval and military forces raised by the city of Bristol, not only during 1914 – 1918, but with all past and future voluntary forces raised not for aggression, but for defence in time of need. (65)

And at a meeting of the city’s South African War Veteran’s Club (of whom it was said seventy-five per cent of the members fought in the Great War) it was unanimously agreed that the suggested site in Colston Avenue was inappropriate for the Cenotaph, and that the only position ‘worthy of a memorial to those who made the great sacrifice’ was one in College Green. (66)

Earlier that month, however, Gedye had to publicly assure campaigners that, following representations from various factions, there would be no need to move, or interfere with the Civic (or High) Cross or the statue of Queen Victoria. The advantages of College Green were enumerated :

[it] is centrally situated, easy of access by bus or tram, is on a main thoroughfare leading from the centre to the university with its magnificent tower ... College Green provides the quiet and reverential atmosphere so many desire and, in close proximity to the Cathedral, the Lord Mayor's Chapel, and Central Library, has surroundings which can never be equalled by Colston Avenue. The Memorial will not interfere with the statue of Queen Victoria or the replica Civic Cross. There is ample space on the Green to find room for large number of people, and the roads around the Green would provide space for many thousands and would be a very suitable place for the annual Armistice service. (67)

This site, it was argued, had long been associated with church parades, national services, military gatherings and other ceremonial events. For these 'and many other' reasons he concluded that College Green was the only suitable site. The campaign was augmented by a petition held at the offices of the *Western Daily Press* 'ready for signature by those citizens who favour for the Bristol War Memorial a site in College Green'. The petition had been promoted by Gedye and former commanding officers Colonels Lennard and Burges, and was intended to persuade the Cathedral authorities to reconsider its view on the availability of land adjacent to that building. (68) The wording of the petition stated:

We are strongly in favour of the Bristol War Memorial being created on College Green, which is both suitable and worthy of so great a memorial commemorating over 4,000 citizens who lost their lives during the Great War, and we welcome your decision to give your consent subject to your approval of the position and design of the memorial.

Under pressure to dispel suggestions that they had 'obstructed such a proposal' the Dean and Chapter of Bristol Cathedral agreed in early August to re-consider its previous views on the memorial's location "if requested by a really representative and authoritative opinion of the various groups concerned." (69) Speaking on behalf of the Cathedral, Narborough added that his preferred option had always been the Tramways Centre which was 'hallowed by the associations of the great Armistice Day services which have been

held there year by year'. (70) Gedye's group in their enthusiasm to gain the College Green site ignored this argument, largely because by this time the Tramways site was in the process of redevelopment. (71)

The deadline for signing the petition was set for 17 October. On the 15th of that month, in a final attempt at unanimity Colonel E.Knox wrote to the *Western Daily Press* in his capacity as chairman of the ex-Servicemen's War Memorial Committee to report on the meeting of ex-servicemen's organisations held at the Guildhall five days earlier. The object of this meeting was to finally quash further discussion about alternative sites. As Knox wrote, his committee (which had been formed on 5 June 1929 at a meeting of the twenty groups that comprised Bristol's ex-servicemen, and included Gedye and Lennard) had :

already accepted the site offered by the Municipal Council at the north end of Colston Avenue, and that they adhere to that decision. It strongly depreciates the re-opening of the question ... It adheres, as stated above, to the acceptance given by its members, of the offer of the Municipal Council.
(72)

Knox acknowledged the 'good faith' (73) and efforts of Captain Gedye, while alluding to not fully understanding the 'more intimate knowledge of all the circumstances which led up to the selection of the Colston Avenue site'. Such guarded comments were the nearest the public were to come to understanding the intricate politics and rivalries that had bedevilled the scheme from the start. By a small majority it had been agreed that Knox's involvement in the Colston Avenue site would remain in abeyance until the outcome of the petition was known.

On 20th October 1930 the petition, signed by 3,552 citizens (of whom 1,899 declared that they had served in the 1914 – 18 war) was presented to the Dean, H.L.C de Candole. His reply on 1st December was unequivocal:

The Dean and Chapter do not find themselves able to grant the request. The Corporation of Bristol, lessees as you know of College Green, adhere to their former decision about the appropriate site. We were ourselves also of the opinion

that the number of signatures to your petition hardly justified a reconsideration of the question. From many quarters we have evidence that there is a marked division of opinion among those actively interested in the scheme. (74)

By this date the *Western Daily Press* campaign had evaporated. In its place, the rival newspapers *The Evening Times* and its morning contemporary *The Times and Mirror*, had taken the opportunity to appeal for additional funds for the memorial (raising from its readers just under 1,700 pounds) and, in January 1931, it announced the design competition for the war memorial. The invitation was made to ‘Bristol architects’ to submit designs which would be considered by G.C.Lawrence, F.R.I.B.A. who had been appointed by the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects as assessor for this competition. (75) Having chosen from the open submission the short-listed designs were to be published in the two newspapers and voted upon by the readers. The final verdict would rest with the assessor and ‘if it is, in his opinion practicable’ would be presented to the Bristol War Memorial Committee. (76)

Three designs were selected from a total submission of eighteen: an arch in the Egyptian style submitted by C.R.Beechcroft (which eventually won third place) ; a cenotaph faced with a large cross by Adrian E.Powell (awarded second prize) and the winning entry, a stone cenotaph on a stepped plinth with four rectangular blocks and four bronze lamp standards, entered by Messrs Heathman and Blacker. In June 1931 architects drawings of the three were published in *The Builder* magazine. (77) In the drawing of the winning design, the two trams in the background carry advertising banners for the *Evening Times* and *The Times and Mirror*, details added perhaps after the competition had been won.

In his final report to the War Memorial Committee Alderman Lyne recognised that there had been some disquiet over the location of the Cenotaph, and that in the long years of discussion and prevarication there had been a national debate over the role of war memorials. He set aside any suggestions that they ‘glorified war’. Instead, he articulated the British Legion view that “the men who died and who were remembered by the Memorial had died so that mankind might learn to live at peace”, a sentiment that was

eventually compressed and written on a bronze plaque on the south-west face of the cenotaph:

Sacred to the memory of Bristol's Sons and Daughters who made the Supreme Sacrifice. They died that Mankind might learn to live in peace.

The unveiling of the memorial was a momentous occasion, a rare moment of civic unity given the chequered history of the memorial scheme. On Sunday 26th June 1932 a crowd of some fifty thousand citizens watched as the Cenotaph was formally unveiled by Field Marshall Sir William Birdwood. Somewhat pertinently, one newspaper noted that the ceremony was marked less by

the sense of poignancy of grief: rather a sense of consummation and satisfaction that at last there was a permanent memorial to the 6,000 gallant men and some few no-less-gallant women of Bristol who lived worthy of the traditions of their city and country even unto death. (78)

In addition to the customary speeches, civic and military processions the occasion was marked by over 250 cases of fainting and heat exhaustion, sufficient to require the Marine Ambulance corps to set up a Casualty Station in a nearby car park. Reminding its readers that 'the memorial stands not only to exemplify the spirit of sublime sacrifice in war, but as a reminder to the younger generation of the price of war', a local newspaper described the scene:

One could not have wished a more fitting ceremony. The great crowd, gathered in from every part of the city, sensed the solemnity of the occasion. Voices were hushed: there was no commotion as they took their places, men, women and children, around the enclosure where the memorial stood in its shrouds. (79)

As the wreaths were laid in Colston Parade, a statue of Earl Haig, former commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force and Old Cliftonian was simultaneously unveiled

at Clifton College two miles away. It took the form of a standing figure in military dress had been funded by the school and from private donations.

Aftermath

If, as has been argued, memorials imply ‘termination’ (80) the unveiling of the Cenotaph in Bristol was an important act of closure for a matter that had ‘caused considerable concern over many years.’ (81) Although the act of unveiling had been conclusive in one respect, in others there were still open wounds. One newspaper quoted an ‘old sailor’s’ remarks that ‘Bristol had responded very well to the war, but very badly to the war memorial’ (82) another described the long and drawn out process as ‘badly bungled ... a civic nuisance’ (83).

In addition to the dominant issue of location, the saga of the war memorial aroused a number of other issues. Foremost amongst these was the value and future of existing statues and monuments in the city. An article in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* written during the height of the College Green campaign was headed ‘Scrap those Statues’ and identified the fuss over the war memorial as further evidence of

the growth of an evil which we have permitted to flourish and spread under our very eyes. No visitor to England can have failed to notice the number of statues of unknown worthies which obstruct most of the squares and open spaces. ... As matters stand at present we are allowing our cities to resemble large jumble room full of trifles that have ceased to have even a sentimental value for us. (84)

In the same letter the author argued for a campaign of ‘deliberate and judicious destruction’ on civic statuary. During this period, aspersions had also been cast on the value of other monuments, especially the replica Civic Cross which stood on College Green but was now revealed as a ‘sham high cross’, the original having been given away by the Dean of Bristol Cathedral in the 18th century. During the convoluted arguments over the location of the war memorial mixed affections had been expressed for the statue of Queen Victoria. At one point, it had been suggested it be re-located to Victoria park in the south of the city – a move certain to antagonise the Mercantile lobby for whom the

south was associated with non-Conformist manufacturers and dissenters. Another commentator likened the *impasse* over the war memorial to the failure in 1844 to raise funds and locate a statue to Robert Southey, claiming ruefully that '[t]here is no great liking for memorials in Bristol.' (85) As has been outlined above, Bristol was not unusual in displaying these tensions.

In Bristol, however, the arguments were almost entirely focussed on location. Apart from an aberrant suggestion that the memorial might be incorporated as part of the proposed new municipal buildings at College Green there was very little argument about the *iconography* of the proposed structure. (86) After some intense debate, which resulted in the abandonment of an utilitarian memorial, all parties agreed that it should be a free-standing monument – a cenotaph or obelisk of a 'reverential nature' that would, as Heffernan points out, conform to a narrow range of architectural types. (87) In Bristol, it was the location of the monument – and to a lesser degree the issue over funding – that was the key points of dispute and contestation.

There appears never to have been any suggestion that the Bristol war memorial would be funded through the public purse. Once it had been accepted that the memorial would be a stone monument of a 'reverential nature', schemes were suggested to raise money from public subscriptions and appeal. At the heart of the appeal was the British Legion and its network of ex-serviceman's organisations who went to football grounds and other public events to collect small sums. Lyne later wrote that 'no memorial of the kind in the kingdom was more truly built by the efforts of the small people who gave their services and their mites with great willingness.' (88) Funding of public monuments and amenities has long been an issue in the city of Bristol. Cabot's Tower and Colston's statue were both initially to be funded by public donation – as was the Central Library and the Museum and Art Gallery – but in all cases the actual amount of public contribution was pitiful and the projects were only completed because either the merchants (as a group or as individuals) or one (or a group) of the South Bristol Liberal, Non-Conformist industrialists interceded with financial support. In the aftermath of the Great War neither faction adopted the Cenotaph as a project. This inaction should be compared to other acts of commemoration which were willingly visited on the Bristol landscape – for example, the statue to Earl Haig in Clifton College and the Wills Tower

at Bristol University. While keen to commemorate named individuals neither group, it would seem, could lend much support to a memorial to the 'Common Man'. The early enthusiasm in Bristol for a utilitarian – as opposed to reverential – scheme could be seen as a continuation of the Victorian, patrician tradition exemplified by Bristol's Society of Merchants in their founding of schools and almshouses for the poor. Such an approach, however, does not *honour* the common soldier by democratising the process of commemoration: instead, it continues a patrician tradition of providing alms for the 'worthy poor'. A memorial that emphasised the inclusive ideal of 'Nation' did not sit easily on a landscape that had been repeatedly contested by those only too keenly aware of class and religious divisions within that nation. It might be argued that since the Cenotaph did not represent the partisan ideals of either one or other of the city's two power bases, but stood outside, or even above them, then neither faction was given to champion it. This was, perhaps, the single most difficult obstacle that its supporters had to overcome.

We can now only guess at the true origins of the tension between the various factions involved in locating the Bristol Cenotaph. If as the press suggested there were 'darker and deeper reasons' why the Colston Parade site was chosen over College Green, we might conclude that the enmities between the Non-Conformist manufacturer families of South Bristol and the Tory Merchants of the City continued to be played out in the post-war period. Perhaps, having forsaken the consecrated site near the Cathedral, the high church Tory lobby agreed to the Colston Parade site because of its association with the man himself? Indeed one could argue that the eventual site for the Cenotaph occupies a neutral space that is equidistant from the Tory heartland of Clifton and from the docks and factories that were the domain of the Non-Conformist manufacturing families. What is indisputable is that the prolonged and very public saga of the Bristol Cenotaph was considered a poor reflection on the city and its leaders.

Coda

Memories of the bitter Cenotaph dispute soon resurfaced after the Second World War. Although a memorial committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor, Alderman James Owen, there seemed to be little enthusiasm in the city for monuments.

In an echo of the debate some twenty years earlier, several newspapers argued that there was a need for ‘some living tribute to the memory of those who gave their lives to save civilisation from jungle law.’(89) It was argued that a memorial should ‘take the form of a useful project of permanent value’ such as a multi-purpose building for youth organisations, literary societies, arts clubs, etc.’ (90) Two familiar obstacles surfaced: a public appeal for a memorial appeal would likely flounder, and secondly there were two outstanding memorial schemes which the city had yet to complete – the King Edward Memorial scheme in Clifton, and the King George V Memorial layout in the city centre which had been interrupted by the war. One suggestion given consideration was that ‘some worthy relic of the city’s bomb damaged buildings should be preserved as a ruin’. In due course, the shattered remnants of St Peter’s Church were set aside for this purpose, though it was not until the 1990s that attention was given to how exactly the ruin should be contextualised and presented. More typically, the city in 1946 was anxious not to incur ‘too great an expenditure’, nor to embark on a project that would take many years to complete. Apart from the addition of the numerals ‘1939’ and ‘1945’ to the Cenotaph in Colston Avenue, the War Memorial Committee decided that ‘consideration of the various proposals should be deferred’ while hoping that publicity in the local press ‘will result in the opinion of the general public being ascertained.’ (91) A pious hope that lacked the means of realisation.

Notes

1

S.Michalski, *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage 1870 – 1997* (London 1998) 82.

2

ibid., 78.

3

E. Carter, J. Donald and J.Squires, *Space and Place: Theories of Identities and Location* (London 1994) ix.

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E.Hobsbawm, *op.cit*, 88.

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K.Inglis, Entombing Unknown Warriors: From London and Paris to Baghdad, *History and Memory*, 5 (1993) 7 – 31.

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J.Winter, *op.cit.*, 90.

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J.E.Young 'The Counter-Monument: Memory against itself in Germany Today' ed. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Art and the Public Sphere* (Chicago 1992) 52.

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R. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* (Oxford 1996).

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See also E. Laurier and D. Atkinson, ('A Sanitised City? Social Exclusion at Bristol's 1996 International Festival of the Sea', *Geoforum*, 29, 2, (1998) 199-206.

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M.Dresser, *Slavery Obscured: the Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port* (London, 2001)

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C. Clarke, *Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol* (Bristol, 1922) ; J. Latimer *The History of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the city of Bristol* (Bristol, 1903).

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B. Little *The Story of Bristol* (Bristol, 1991) 64.

25

Edward Colston 1636-1721 was born in Bristol, but from the age of 18 lived in London. A trader with Spain and other Mediterranean countries, he also became a member of the Royal African Company in 1680 and took an active part in the planning and financing of slaving ventures to Africa, his name appearing in the company records for 11 years. Colston was a popular benefactor to the City of Bristol, providing money for various charities throughout his life. The bronze statue by John Cassidy was erected in Colston Avenue, Bristol and unveiled on November 13th 1895.

26

R. McGrath, *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol* (Bristol,1975) 211.
S. Morgan, 'Memory and the Merchants: Commemoration and Civic Identity', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 1998 4 (2) (2000) 103 – 113.

27

In 1902, five years after the opening of the Cabot Tower, the Wills family funded a new museum and art gallery for the city, and a decade later donated one hundred thousand

pounds for the completion of new university buildings. Significantly, its crowning glory, the Wills Memorial Tower, is some 30 metres taller than the Venturer-funded Cabot Tower several hundred years away. See also K. Walton *Bristol Art Gallery, 1905 – 1980* (Bristol, 1981) 4 ; J.S. Watkins *Furnished with Ability: the lives and Times of the Wills Families* (Bristol 1991) 112.

28

Burke was elected as an MP for Bristol in 1774, a seat he held for six years. Engraved on the plinth are the words: "*I wish to be a member of parliament to have my share of doing good and resisting evil*". The bronze statue, by James Havard Thomas (1854 – 1921) standing in Colston Avenue, is not, as is often stated, a replica of a marble one in St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster. For an analysis of the confusion surrounding the 'replica' sculpture see D. Merritt, 'Bristol's Statue of Edmund Burke', in Reflections: the Newsletter of the Edmund Burke Society, *The University Bookman*, 42 (2002) 57 – 58.

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M. Heffernan, 'For Ever England: the Western Front and the politics of remembrance in Britain' *Ecumene*, 2 (3) 1995, 293 – 324.

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R. Samuel, *op.cit.*, (1996).

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K. Grieves, 'Investigating local war memorial committees: demobilised soldiers, the bereaved and expressions of local pride in Sussex villages, 1918 – 1921', *The Local Historian*, 30 (2000) 39 – 58.

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A. King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: the Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford 1998).

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A. King, *ibid*, 2 – 3.

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N. Johnson, 'Cast in Stone: monuments, geography and nationalism', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* (1999) 51 – 65.

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C.M.Boyer *The City of Collective Memory* (Massachusetts 1996) 32.

For further reflections on the issue of collective memory see J.Young, *The Texture of Memory* (Yale, 1983) and P.Nora, *Les Lieux de Memoire*, (Paris, 1984 – 92).

38

J. Bodnar *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton 1992) 8.

39

ibid., 149.

40

M. Rowlands, Remembering to Forget: Sublimation as Sacrifice in War Memorials, in A. Forty and S.Kuchler (eds) *The Art of Forgetting* (Oxford 1999).

41

M. Cousins, 'Inside, Outside', *Tate Magazine*, Winter 1996, 36 – 41.

42

J. Winter, *BBC History*, November 2000, 22 – 25.

43

K. S. Inglis, 'The Homecoming: the War Memorial Movement in Cambridge, England', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 27, 1992, 583 – 605.

44

For an examination of utilitarian memorials in Britain see A.Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919 – 1946* (Oxford, 1994), and B.Osborne, 'In the Shadow of the Monuments', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 7 (1) 2001, 59 – 82 ; A.King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain* (Oxford 1998) 65-70..

45

Cited in A.King, *op.cit.* 68.

46

M.Rowlands, *op.cit.*, 131.

47

K.S. Inglis, 1992, *op.cit.*, 583 – 605.

48

J. Belsey, *The Forgotten Front: Bristol at War, 1914 – 1918* (Bristol 1986) 73.

49

ibid., 73

50

Lyne, *Bristol Evening Post*, 8th November 1946..

51

During the 1920s Bristol's Remembrance Day services were held around a temporary cenotaph approximately two metres high which was erected annually on St. Augustine's Bridge in the Tramways Centre..

52

Proceedings of the Council, 8th January 1929, Bristol Public Records Office (hereafter Bristol PRO).

53

Proceedings, 24th September 1929, Bristol PRO.

54

The Special War Memorial Committee comprised:

Alderman Frank Sheppard *

Mr Frederick Berriman *

Mr Edwin Parker *

Mr Charles Gill *

Mr Walter Hennessy *

Mr Robert Lyne

Mr Adam Cottam Castle

Mr John Inskip

Mr Arthur L.H. Smith

Mr Ernest Brookhouse Richards (resigned November 1929, replaced by

Mr James Bicker) Richards was Council representative on the Bristol and District War Pensions Committee.

Those marked with an * voted for the Berriman amendment of 8th January 1929 which proposed that any memorial should 'take the form of some provision for the dependents of those who made such sacrifice'. The amendment was carried 49 votes to 17, with five abstentions.

55

Bristol Times and Mirror, 6th November, 1929.

56

Proceedings, 26th November 1929, Bristol PRO.

57

Bristol Times and Mirror, 27th November 1929.

58

Written by Chas. Wells under the strapline 'Notes of the Day', 12th November 1929.

59

Composed of elected councillors, Watch Committees controlled city and borough forces and were the centres of power in borough policing, including operational policy. They acted under the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act which empowered Local Authority Watch Committees to set up Police Forces.

60

Report, 17 June 1930, Bristol PRO.

61

Proceedings, 14th July 1931, Bristol PRO.

62

Exponents of the College Green site and the signators to the letters of July 1930 were:

P Burges	(Col., late Commanding 12 th Btn. Glos. Regt)
RL Austin	(Major Royal Artillery (T) retired)
GS Castle	(LT Col T.A. reserve)
TA Green	(Lt Col TA, late commanding S.M.F.A.)
G.E.Gedye	(former Captain)
L.B. Cogan	(Captain RNR)

A further six ex-Servicemen started the petition and put their names to an accompanying letter : CH Bacon (Royal Irish Regiment), WA Bezer (Royal Irish Regiment), PC Nash (The Devonshire Regiment), WH Barnes (12th Glo'sters), H Essex Lewis (Royal Field Artillery), AH Spreckley (Grenadier Guards).

63

Western Daily Press, 2nd August 1930.

64

'Ex-serviceman', *Western Daily Press*, 6th August 1930.

65

Western Daily Press, 15th August 1930.

66

Western Daily Press, 20th August 1930.

67

Western Daily Press, 15th August 1930.

68

On 31st July, Lyne (accompanied by Col. E. Knox DSO and Capt. G.S. James, leading members of the ex-servicemen's memorial committee) had met at Lloyds Bank, Corn Street Bristol, with the leading petitioners to consider their draft letter. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the 'letter should be published in the Press with a view to ... testing the strength of public opinion in favour of erecting the Memorial on College Green'. The letter was published on 1st August and subsequently it was decided to start a petition 'as the only practice way in which a definite expression of opinion could be obtained'. (Newspaper cutting, 21 October 1930, Newspaper library, 1102.9).

69

Letter of 31st July by F.D.V. Narborough, Canon-in-residence, Bristol Cathedral, to George Gedye, reprinted in *Western Daily Press*, 2nd August 1930.

70

ibid., 2nd August 1930.

71

The Tramways Centre was the terminus for the tram and later bus services in the city. Boats used to moor there until the early 1900s, when the river was gradually covered over. Up to that point the River Frome flowed as an open river into the harbour, but in 1891 the authorities set to work to cover over the area in order to cope with ever increasing road traffic. By 1893 the Frome was no longer to be seen. The exposed waters of the harbour to the right of the Tramways bridge was covered over in the late 1930's to form the City Centre Gardens

72

Western Daily Press, *Letters to the Editor*, 15th October 1930.

73

ibid.

74

Reply from the Dean, H.L.C de Cadole,

75

Evening Times, 20th January 1931.

76

Evening Times, 20th January 1931.

By 10th November 1930 the Council's War Memorial Committee consisted of :
Mr Robert Lyne, Alderman Frank Sheppard, Mr John Inskip, Mr Owen, Mr George Plum,
Mr Arthur L.H.Smith, Mr Parish.

77

The Builder 19th June 1931.

The winning design is rectangular slab of Portland stone – shelly limestone - set on a stepped plinth with plain square blocks approximately 1.1 metres high at each corner. The top is moulded in the form of a fascine with scrolled consoles at either end and a sarcophagus on top. At the centre of both the north-east and south-west faces is a large wreath with a central sword. The dates "1914" and "1918" were carved below the wreath, on either side of the sword. The dates "1939" and "1945" were subsequently added. Below the dates are bronze plaques with a band of service badges, including those of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force, running around the monument at the level of the plaques. The plaque on the north-east face of the monument carries the legend:

"O VALIANT HEARTS WHO TO YOUR GLORY CAME
THROUGH DUST OF CONFLICT AND THROUGH BATTLE-FLAME:
TRANQUIL YOU LIE, YOUR KNIGHTLY VIRTUE PROVED,
YOUR MEMORY HALLOWED IN THE LAND YOU LOVED:
SPLENDID YOU PASSED, THE GREAT SURRENDER MADE
INTO THE LIGHT THAT NEVERMORE SHALL FADE
ALL YOU HAD HOPED FOR, ALL YOU HAD, YOU GAVE
TO SAVE MANKIND, YOURSELVES YOU SCORNED TO SAVE."

The plaque on the south-west face is inscribed:

"SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF BRISTOL'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS, WHO
MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE. THEY DIED THAT MANKIND MIGHT
LEARN TO LIVE IN PEACE"

On the narrow, south-east and north-west facing, sides are the arms of the City of Bristol in bronze. Some 10 metres from each of the square blocks at corners of the plinth there are four bronze openwork lamp standards with globe lamps each with a lion's head roundel on every side. The reference to 'daughters' is an unusual, possibly unique, feature of the Bristol monument.

78

Bristol Evening Post, 27th June 1932.

79

Bristol Evening Post, 27th June 1932.

80

D. Lowenthal, *op.cit.*, 323.

81

Editorial, *Bristol Evening Post*, 27th June 1932.

82

press cutting file , April 1930, Bristol Central Library.

Also cited in D.Boorman, *At the Going Down of the Sun : British First World War Memorials* (York 1988) 154 - 155.

83

press cutting, 22nd October 1930. The Cenotaph is recorded in the Bristol Urban Archaeological Database as BUAD 529M.

84

Oliver Walker, *Bristol Evening Times*, 16th August 1930.

85

Uncredited newspaper clipping, dated 23rd July 1930, Bristol Central Library.

Robert Southey (1774 – 1843) was a Bristol born dramatist and writer, and a friend of Wordsworth and Coleridge. For thirty years (1813 until his death) he was the Poet Laureate.

86

One of the councillors – Mr Culverwell - suggested this during the November 26th meeting

(reported in *Bristol Times and Mirror*, November 27th 1929).

87

M.Heffernan, *op.cit.*, 300 – 301.

88

Lyne, *op.cit.*, 1946.

89

Evening Post, 19th March 1946.

90

Western Daily Press, 30th March 1946

91

Notes of the War Memorial Committee, reported in *Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror*, 30th March 1946.

Illustrations

- Figure 1 The face of the Bristol Cenotaph, Bristol (source: Paul Gough)
- Figure 2 The Cenotaph, Bristol (source: Paul Gough)
- Figure 3 City coat of arms, Bristol Cenotaph (source: Paul Gough)
- Figure 4 Memorial plaque, Bristol Cenotaph (source: Paul Gough)
- Figure 5 Armistice Day, Bristol November 2001. General view of the
Cenotaph and the statue to Edward Colston, St. Augustine's Parade.
(source: Paul Gough)