

# THE MAKING OF A MEMORIAL





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**D**esigning and building Manitoba's community war memorials was a remarkably complex enterprise, which is well worth examining. It is likely that we will never know exactly how any given monument came together or who was involved, but we can learn something of the process through a variety of sources.

Many memorials are the product of several different people or firms: possibly an architect or designer, a sculptor, a carver, and a monument maker, as well as the actual installers.

Before a community could even begin thinking much about designers and materials, though, it generally had to gather funds. In the majority of cases, funds were collected—in amounts from as little as fifty cents to quite large sums—from community members and local organizations, such as sports teams, churches, lodges, social clubs and business organizations. Rarely did a local government commit any money, though Neepawa was an exceptional case. Quite often, the whole effort was spearheaded by a women's organization such as the Women's Institute or the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. Energized by the wartime necessity of filling the shoes of men at the front, such groups found themselves with newly-gained confidence and hard-won credibility as they forged ahead in the pursuit of the public good (Shipley, 57).



War Memorial inscription, advising of the sponsors: "Erected by the Imperial Order/ Daughters of the Empire/ Carberry." (Historic Resources Branch)

Some communities debated the type of memorial they wanted. Should they spend their money on something practical, like a community hall? Some people argued that a useful memorial—especially if it were something they might have built anyway—would not express the deep respect for the dead that a statue, obelisk or other monument would do. Others thought that a building people

used often would keep the memory alive more effectively than a statue in the park could do. Already in 1923 the Board of Trade in Brandon had concluded that “statuary, beautiful as it is, as a war memorial is becoming threadbare” (*Winnipeg Tribune*, August 14, 1923, p. 2). They recommended the purchase of a carillon of twenty-three bells, though a year later Brandon erected a stone Cross of Sacrifice.

Once a community or committee had determined that it would erect a war memorial of some kind, it was quite common for representatives to write to the government—often the Ministry of Defence—for advice. They asked for design ideas, suggestions about suitable locations, and, of course, money. By 1919, the government had determined that it would not pay for community war memorials. Indeed, strapped as it was for cash in the post-war era, the Ministry regularly charged communities for paltry favours, such as for the train fare for the buglers it sometimes lent to unveiling ceremonies (Shipley, 62-3).



War Memorial at Douglas (Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

One thing the government would often provide was captured guns—war trophies from the front. These were collected throughout the war, and the Dominion Archivist, Sir Arthur Doughty, had the task of recording where and by which unit they had been taken, and where they ended up (Shipley, 161-4). Sir

Arthur received hundreds of requests for guns to use on memorials; by the time he was finished, 3,450 German guns were in use beside, on, or even as memorials across the country. Most have disappeared, some having rotted or been removed for safety reasons. Many others were melted down during World War II. In Selkirk, the town council decided in 1942 to turn the guns in War Memorial Park over to the local salvage committee to support the new war effort (*Winnipeg Tribune*, April 1, 1942, p. 11). Douglas, Manitoba has one of the few remaining examples – a machine gun that sits on top of its monument.



Treesbank War Shrine in 1968 (Public Archives of Manitoba, Smith Collection)

Like the one in Douglas, some of the simplest monuments are cairns, perhaps constructed by handy community members, probably from local stones. A bronze or marble plaque with inscriptions most likely came from a nearby monument maker. A more unusual “homemade” monument was put up in Treesbank even as the war still raged, dedicated to the men “who have fought, are fighting and will fight for King and Country, for freedom and for civilization” (*Manitoba Free Press*, March 10, 1917). Completed eighteen months before the Armistice, the painted wooden “Treesbank War Shrine” (since replaced by a stone cairn) was about three metres in height, with painted

inscriptions that suffered badly from weathering despite the shingled overhang protecting them. A Union Jack once fluttered from the flagpole at its peak.

Requiring the services of one or more professionals are the various tablets, obelisks, columns, etc. that make up a large number of Manitoba's memorials. These, too, are most likely to be fairly local productions, having been designed and made by whatever nearby firm was generally in charge of gravestones and similar monuments. More elaborate constructions often involved an architect working with a monument firm. The cenotaph in Stonewall, with its four lion's head fountains, is such an example. It was designed by the Winnipeg architect Gilbert Parfitt and built of Tyndall and local stone.

Many of the most complicated monuments are those topped by figural sculptures, which are most often stone (usually marble; a few granite or limestone) or, more rarely, bronze. These figures are generally standing on a stone pedestal of more or less complexity. Most often, the pedestals, with their inscriptions, were made locally or semi-locally by a monument maker (a firm which might find most of its business making gravestones), but the sculptural parts are almost always imported. The next section provides more information about figural sculptures.

Memorials in Manitoba and elsewhere range enormously in their size and grandeur, but the grief and pride that underlie them are palpable in each. We always hope that, by remembering the past, we will protect ourselves from repeating it. But even as some of Manitoba's memorials had barely been unveiled—hats only just replaced on the bared heads of bereft families and friends, the bugle back in its case—the rumblings of the next war were audible.

Not long after these memorials were erected, "lest we forget," another generation of young men was sucked into the abyss. Once that conflict had finally ended, space was found on many memorials to carve a fresh set of names. A discerning eye might detect a slight difference in the words "World War II," perhaps compacted a little to fit where, it was thought, no such addition would be needed. Sometimes a bronze or stone plaque or a separate tablet is added for the second war. On many memorials, the Korean War also finds a place. Other communities choose to add a second cairn or a nearby slab for these later conflicts.



Memorial at Elm Creek. The red stone directly below the obelisk is engraved "To the immortal memory" of the sixteen men (their names on the sides of the stone) from the district who died in the Great War. Five battle sites are listed on the back. The lower, dark grey stone, tablet at the bottom was added later, and reads "In memory of those who gave their lives in the war of 1939-1945. It lists 21 names. (Gordon Goldsborough, Manitoba Historical Society)

## Planning the Memorial

We know of no detailed information on the processes that must have attended the commissioning, planning, design, manufacture and construction of any Manitoba monuments. But there is good information available on the design and manufacture of the memorial in Moosomin, Saskatchewan— which is on the Trans-Canada Highway not far from Virden— and it is reasonable to assume that the process was not so different from what went on in many Manitoba towns. (See the entry for Moosomin, on the website “We will Remember.”)



Italian-produced Bronze Soldier at Moosomin, Saskatchewan (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

In Moosomin, initial planning and fundraising began as early as 1919. The process officially started early in 1923, with an advertisement in the local newspaper seeking sculptors and marble firms to provide sketches and design ideas within a budget of \$4,000. The response was surprisingly broad: a dozen

firms or individuals (including a sculptor from California) submitted ideas, but the committee was able to winnow these quickly down to three or four as they had already decided they wanted a bronze statue of a soldier standing on a stone monument with names carved into it.

The successful bidder was Guinn and Simpson, of Portage la Prairie, which we know to have been responsible for a number of monuments in Manitoba. Reportedly, they recommended their design number 172 to Moosomin, which seems to suggest that they may have had at least 171 others available. Apparently, despite the firm's experience, a delay was caused when they learned that they would require a larger main stone on which to carve the more than 60 names of Moosomin war dead—a much longer list than they had expected.

It appears that Guinn and Simpson placed an order for a bronze soldier figure with an Italian bronze foundry in June 1923, about the same time they began work on the granite base. The majority of the Italian figures that were imported to Canada were carved in marble, but the people of Moosomin made the wise, if expensive, decision to use the much more durable material. It seems that the bronze figure was cast in Florence from a plaster model made in Carrara by a sculptor named Sergio Vatteroni. Once cast, it was shipped by steamer to New York, making its way to Moosomin via Montréal. Delays caused by shipping difficulties meant it could not be unveiled on November 11th of that year, as planned, but had to wait until the late summer of 1924.

A site was selected at a downtown intersection, needing only to have a deep pothole filled (perhaps the reason that such a prominent site was still available) and concrete poured. The Government of Saskatchewan lent the town an engineer to help with the planning and technical aspects of that project, and the work was carried out by volunteers. Another provincial government department provided blueprints for landscaping.

We can thus see that a lot of people were involved in the planning, design and erection of this monument. This does not even include the many who involved themselves in fundraising, including an energetic local girls' club formed specifically for the purpose.

Looking back from nearly a century later, it may come as a bit of a surprise that a small prairie town was blithely ordering bronze statuary from Italy and corresponding with Californian sculptors, but this is the story of many such memorials in Manitoba and elsewhere. Of Manitoba's many memorials topped

by figures, all of the marble figures are almost certainly imported from Carrara, with the supporting plinths etc., and their inscriptions, and sometimes relief carvings, having been done more locally. That being said, a number of these figures were designed by local sculptors, and several other figures were actually made in Canada—a few even in Manitoba. Following is an effort to identify and describe the major factors—materials, firms, and people—in the making of Manitoba’s war memorials between the wars.

## Design and Craftsmanship

Across Canada, figural memorials were one of the most popular types, and Manitoba has many examples. Though some are rather generic, many others are fine works of art, and evoke strong emotional reactions. They are most often carved in marble, but a few are bronze or carved in granite.

The first thing to understand is the basic differences between the common materials used for figural sculptures such as these. The two most likely materials are bronze and stone, with bronze being particularly long-lasting, and also by far the more expensive option. Stone ranges from quite soft and subject to weathering (such as marble) to very hard (igneous rocks such as granite) though no stone is as robust as bronze. Stone monuments of all kinds are also vulnerable to vandalism; they may be broken when hit with a hard object, and paint is difficult or even impossible to remove completely.

The nature of bronze casting makes it a highly repeatable material. Putting it very simply, a mould is made from a full-sized sculpture (probably a plaster cast made from an original modeled in clay) and that mould is used to make any number of identical hollow bronze casts. Although many casts may be made, they are not considered to be copies of an original. Until the early 1920s, there were no facilities for casting large-scale bronzes in Canada, and figures from before (and many from after) that time were most likely cast in Europe or perhaps the United States. Bronze is a very expensive material, and bronze sculptures are a big investment. Theoretically, though, they will last forever. Though there is a long history of bronze sculptures being melted down to make different sculptures, or weapons, this was more of a risk in centuries past.

Stone statues must each be carved individually. However, when most of Manitoba's memorials were made, it was possible to purchase a quasi-mass produced, albeit hand-carved, figure. As this section will explain, the majority of stone memorial figures in Canada (and elsewhere, including Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand) were carved from marble in workshops in Carrara, Italy. The carving was done by individuals, and the figures range widely in quality. The Carrara quarries would also carve in marble figures originally sculpted in clay by Canadian artists, giving us several examples in Manitoba of Italian marble carvings whose original designer was Manitoban. At least one Canadian firm also had a stable of stone carvers who turned out multiple copies of an original design.

### Marble Figures

All of the marble figures on World War I memorials in Manitoba and elsewhere are almost certainly of Italian manufacture. In general, a local memorial manufacturer would have been the go-between for ordering these figures, and would have installed them on bases made here. The origin of these figures in Italy helps explain why their uniforms are not always 100% accurately Canadian, though the carvers were usually careful to put a maple leaf where Canadian uniforms had this symbol (on the cap and collar). Few names of sculptors have come down to us, though the figures at Newdale and Dauphin are said to have been carved by a Signor Nicolai Rumbollo or Rombello (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 20 June 1924 on the Dauphin memorial; Directorate of History and Heritage on Newdale). Many of these Italian marbles are quite generic—they would probably have been selected from a catalogue or a generalized description, and often resemble each other quite closely. Two examples, from Dugald and Roblin, suggest the range.



Oak Bank/Dugald and Roblin (both Alan MacLeod, by permission)

These off-the-shelf Italian marbles vary greatly in sculptural quality, in expression, and in verisimilitude as Canadian soldiers. The young man in Dugald, (moved from Oak Bank), for instance, sports a puffy cap quite unlike those worn by Canadian soldiers. Comparing his uniform with several others also illustrates the extent to which these figures vary in attention to detail and in

quality. Compare the collar, epaulettes, and buttons of the Oak Bank figure with those worn by the helmeted figure at Roblin, where these details have real depth. The fabric of the Roblin tunic has been sculpted so as to look pliable, like a real garment over flesh and bone, where the Oak Bank figure looks too smooth—almost inflated. Look now at the faces of the two figures; notice the modeling of the cheekbones and chin, the expression in the eyes, and even the hair.

We don't know what the process was for ordering these figures, so we can't know whether a community could pay more for a statue by a more talented or experienced sculptor, or whether it was just luck. Many figures, however, resemble each other so closely in pattern that we might imagine they were ordered from a catalogue description. The figures at Newdale and Binscarth, for example, might have been described almost identically in a catalogue. It might run something like this: "Standing figure of a soldier looking forward, with rifle at his side. Available with either helmet or cap, in any national uniform as specified."



Memorial figures at Newdale and Binscarth (Historic Resources Branch; Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Such a description basically describes both figures, but they are very different as realized. Aside from details such as the fact that the Newdale soldier—who also

appears as an adult man—is combat-ready with webbing (personal load-carrying equipment) and a helmet, our young Binscarth soldier is stiff and expressionless, with far less depth about his uniform. Both figures stand at attention (the Newdale figure with his left leg slightly advanced), but the Newdale soldier is far more naturalistic than the static Binscarth figure, who looks as if he might be holding his breath. Each of these memorial figures is an equal expression of the loss experienced by its community, but such details mean that some speak to us more eloquently today.

It is instructive to look farther afield, to other countries that were purchasing Italian marble figures in memory of their dead. A look at a figure from New Zealand suggests that our hypothetical catalogue description might not be far off.



War Memorial figure from Miller's Flat, Otago, New Zealand, a town with a current population of about 200. Fifteen names are carved on the ornate supporting structure. With a different hat, this figure might well stand on a memorial in Manitoba. (Adrian Pratt)

He is nearly identical in pattern to our Newdale and Binscarth figures. A variant from Australia shows a slightly more swashbuckling fellow than we usually see on Canadian memorials, but the general type is unmistakable. Other Australian memorials show a more staid soldier at attention.



Bonny Doon, Australia: a marble figure of an Australian soldier of which similar versions appear in other towns. (Allan Russell)

In addition to the standard figures produced by quarries, Carrara sculptors would also work to designs that were sent to them. This resulted in a number of more individualized figures, including some to which we can attach the name of a local or Canadian sculptor. To help us understand how this process might have worked in the case of an individually-commissioned work, we can look at the Ontario sculptor Frances Loring and her memorial for the Law Society of Upper Canada, in Toronto. (Law Society website.)

Loring began by working on a clay model, which the committee then reviewed and, after suggesting a few modifications, approved before she made a full-sized plaster cast that would be used by the eventual marble carvers to create an exact copy with the help of calipers and precise measurements. The cast was shipped to Italy, and Loring herself went to Carrara after it to select the marble to be used

for the sculpture, and to supervise its carving. This is obviously a much more involved process, for a memorial done for an organization with deeper pockets than most Manitoba towns, but it does give us a notion of the general process by which a Canadian sculptor's work in a Canadian location might actually have been carved by Italians in Carrara.



Loring's figure for the Law Society of Upper Canada (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Manitoba has several examples of marble figures designed by a local sculptor, as we shall see. It is not known at this time whether the Italian sculptors would have worked from a small plaster or clay model, from photographs of a model, or, as in the case of Loring's work, whether a full-sized plaster model would actually have been sent to Italy.

### Challenges of Marble

Unfortunately, marble is not a particularly robust material for outdoor use. Though some marble figures are still in surprisingly good condition, others are badly worn. There must have been considerable variation in the quality of the marble available, even from the same quarry, as the state of these figures can vary greatly from location to location. Many have suffered badly over the years from weathering, vandalism, or both. More often than not, inscriptions have been done in harder stones, but in cases where they were done in marble, some have weathered to the point of illegibility.



Two Manitoba memorials showing differing, but severe, effects of weathering on marble. The figure on the right also appears to have been attacked by vandals. (both Alan MacLeod, by permission)

### Other Stone Figures

Marble was the most common stone for war memorial figures, but limestone, sandstone and granite were also used. Limestone, a sedimentary rock of which marble is a metamorphic form, is softer than marble, while sandstone (also sedimentary, but mostly made up of tiny grains of the hard mineral quartz) is somewhat harder. The igneous rock granite is harder yet, making it difficult to carve but extremely durable. At the Russell memorial, Emanuel Hahn's Grieving Soldier figure (illustrated below under "Emanuel Hahn") is carved in granite. It was supplied by the Thomson Monument Company, where it (and several others that found homes across Canada) was carved to Hahn's design by company artisans. The figures of the Belgian Monument in Winnipeg (see below under "Hubert Garnier") are carved from andesite, a hard igneous rock from Haddington Island, BC.

## Bronze Figures

Bronze is probably the most durable material for statuary, though its cost made its use quite rare. Most bronze figures were cast in Europe, but in 1920 the Canadian William A. Rogers Limited Company published a catalogue of memorial designs which, though it focussed largely on plaques, also featured several images of bronze figures. Of particular interest to Manitobans is the over-life-sized statue of a pensive infantryman, leaning on his rifle, with his chin resting on his hand. According to the catalogue, Rogers was at that time the only bronze foundry in Canada that had successfully made large casts like this, but even more interesting is that we recognize the figure as a cast from a model by a St. Boniface sculptor named Nicolas Piroton (see below for more information).

Perhaps not surprisingly, given its cost, the majority of Manitoba's bronze figural monuments are found in Winnipeg. These include the St. Boniface Memorial, the Next of Kin Memorial on the Legislative Grounds, the Canadian Pacific Railway Memorial, now at Deer Lodge, and the Bank of Montréal memorial at Portage and Main. Bronze figures elsewhere are the figure of a soldier in greatcoat in Neepawa, probably from Italy, and the figure of the "Herald of Peace" — an angel blowing a bugle — in the Memorial Room in Carmen's Memorial Hall. This figure was definitely cast in Canada, as it also appears in the Rogers catalogue of 1921.

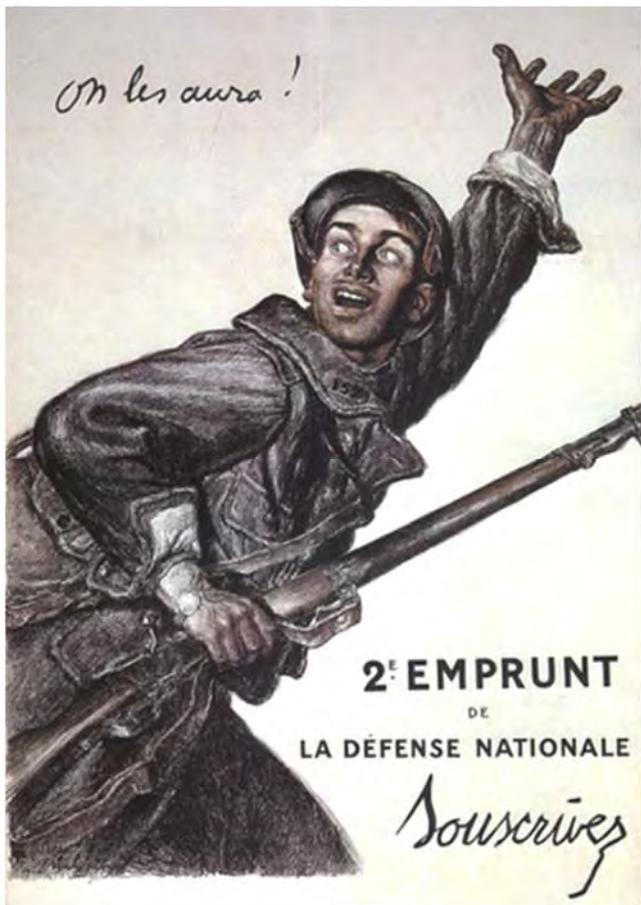


"The Herald of Peace," in the Memorial Room of Carmen-Dufferin's Memorial Hall  
(Historic Resources Branch)

## Individual Sculptors and Designers

Eugène Benet

Creator of the figure topping the St. Boniface War Memorial (unveiled in 1920), Eugène Benet was a well-known sculptor in Paris. His design for the *Le Poilu Victorieux*, which we find on this monument to the fallen French of Western Canada, was widely marketed by the Durenne foundry in Paris. Indeed, it is believed that over 900 casts of this figure were made, making it the most common work of public art in France. The design is thought to have been based on a celebrated war poster showing a charging French soldier, one arm outstretched and a rifle in the other, shouting encouragement to his compatriots (Sherman, 189). On the sculpture, however, the rifle is moved to the left hand, while the upraised right hand waves a wreath of victory. It is a rare example of a French soldier on a Canadian war memorial, and may have been a gift to St. Boniface from the French government. The memorial at St. Claude—designed in Manitoba—also features a French soldier.



"We'll get 'em!" A French war recruitment poster.



War Memorial in Beaumesnil, France  
(Codepem)



St. Boniface War Memorial  
(Tamara Wally; André Levesque)

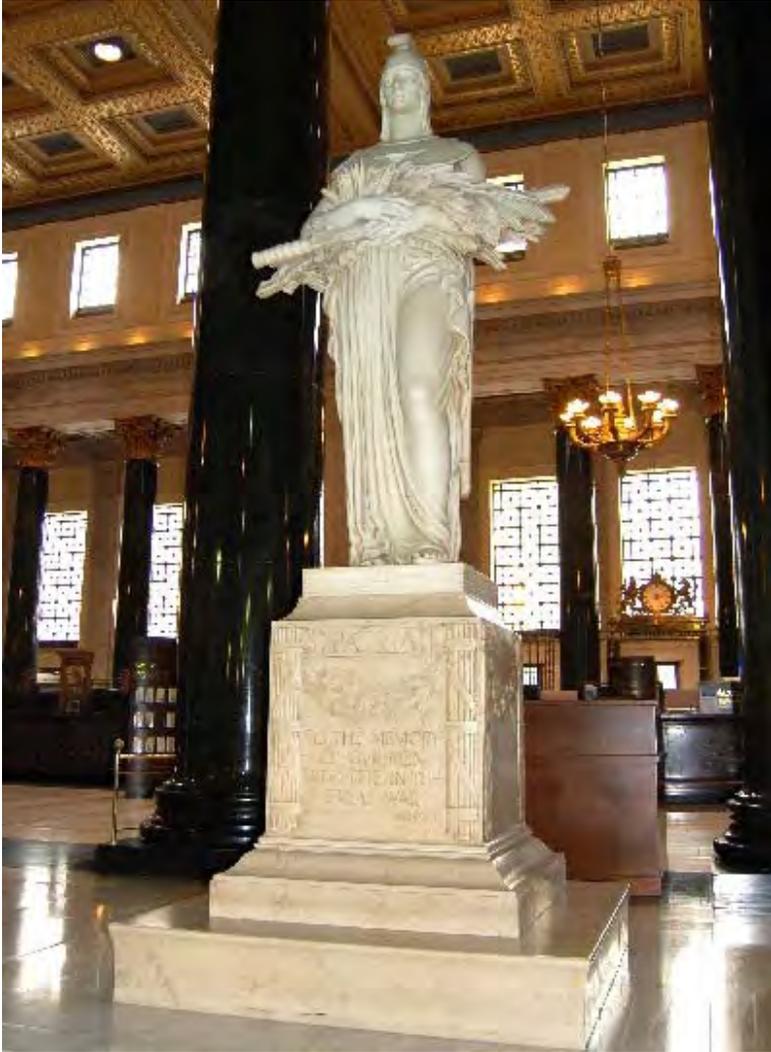
Benet was born in Dieppe in 1863, and studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In addition to many widely-known examples of public art in France, he sculpted a figure of Jean Vauquelin (a French 18th-century naval hero) for Montréal (1930). Benet died in Paris in 1942.

### James Earle Fraser

Born in Minnesota in 1876, and studying in Chicago and Paris, James Earle Fraser was a prominent American sculptor. His large oeuvre of figurative sculptures includes many well-known commemorative sculptures and memorials. When the Bank of Montréal announced an international competition to choose a sculptor to create a memorial to its 230 fallen employees, Fraser submitted two designs. Both were chosen: a soldier in bronze (wearing American uniform), unveiled in 1923, stands guard in front of the Winnipeg bank branch at Portage and Main, and a white marble allegorical figure of Victory, carrying a sword sheathed in palm fronds, stands in the main branch in Montréal. Fraser died in 1953.



Bank of Montréal monument in Winnipeg (BMO Archives, 1928)



Fraser's figure of Victory in the banking hall in the Bank of Montréal head office. (BMO Corporate Archives 08-04-2008)

### Hubert Garnier

Sculptor of the figures for the Belgian War Memorial, Hubert Garnier was born in 1903 in Chasseneuil, France, and settled in St. Boniface with his parents about ten years later. He studied art in Winnipeg, Chicago and Vancouver, became an adept carver, and apprenticed with artists in Paris, New York and Chicago before returning home. He died in Winnipeg in 1987 after a productive career.



Exterior Stonework by Garnier at the Hotel Vancouver, opened 1939 (Harry Palmer Photographs [cropped])

Garnier carried out carvings at New York's Rockefeller Centre, Vancouver's Lion's Gate Bridge and Hotel Vancouver, and elsewhere. Manitoba projects include carvings at the Winnipeg Hudson's Bay store, the Winnipeg Auditorium (now Archives) and Federal Buildings, and the Tier Building at the University of Manitoba, as well as the bronze doors at Shaarey Zedek synagogue, among many others (for a complete list, see "Boulevard Provencher").



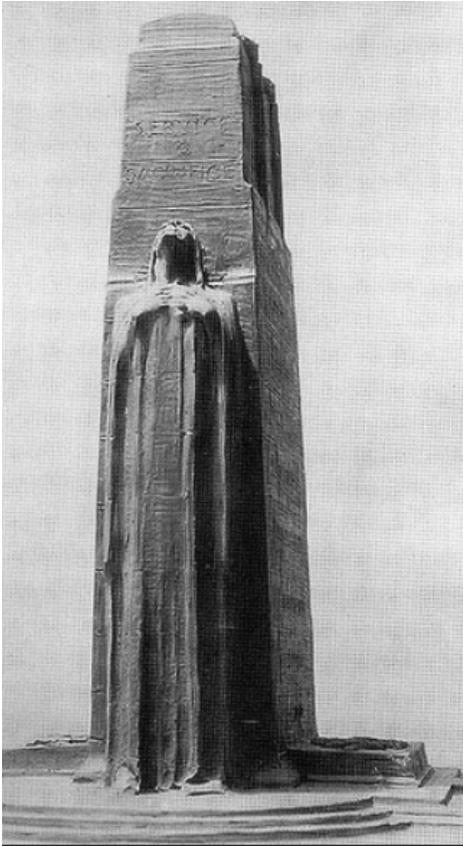
Hubert Garnier at work on the Belgian War Memorial, 1938. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba, N17244)



The unveiling of Garnier's Belgian Monument in October 1938. (supplied by Evelyn Baltessen.)

## Emanuel Hahn

Born in Reutlingen, Germany in 1881, Emanuel Hahn moved with his family to Canada at age seven. He studied art and design in Ontario and Stuttgart, and went on to a distinguished career as a sculptor, starting with Toronto's McIntosh Marble and Granite Company in 1901. He created many works of public art, amongst which some particularly widely-recognized examples are his 1937 designs for the Bluenose on the Canadian dime and the Wapiti on the quarter.



Plaster model of Hahn's winning, but rejected, design for the Cenotaph in Winnipeg

From 1908-12, Hahn worked as an assistant to Walter S. Allward, who would later create Canada's war memorial at Vimy Ridge. In 1906, he also began working on contract with the Thomson Monument Company, a 40-year professional relationship which saw him become chief designer. Many of Thomson's advertisements feature his designs, but they rarely promoted him by name after the war lest his German roots lose them business. Their fear was not unfounded: in 1925 Hahn's design beat out 47 others to unanimously win the competition to design Winnipeg's cenotaph, but his German birth caused an uproar and he ultimately lost the commission.



Hahn and his bronze 'Tommy in his Greatcoat' (1923), used for several memorials. (Baker)

Despite this handicap, Hahn's five distinct soldier figures appear on war memorials in at least 19 communities across the country. Manitoba has an example of his "Grieving Soldier" in Russell. The actual carving was done in granite by company stone carvers following Kahn's original bronze, which stands in Westville, Nova Scotia. This design was his most popular, and other companies borrowed heavily from, or even nearly copied it, for their own business. Manitoba has an example of this in Killarney. Carved of marble in Italy, Killarney's figure was supplied by Hooper Marble and Granite, of Winnipeg. Hahn died in Toronto in 1957.



Manitoba's version of Hahn's Grieving Soldier, in Russell. (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

### Coeur de Lion MacCarthy

Coeur de Lion MacCarthy (1881-1979) was the son of Hamilton MacCarthy, a sculptor responsible for a range of war memorials, especially for the Boer War. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) commissioned the younger MacCarthy to create a bronze memorial to the 1,125 CPR employees killed in the war. Three were cast: for Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Winnipeg's was unveiled in 1922.

MacCarthy also created war memorial figures in bronze for Lethbridge, Alberta, Trois-Rivières and Verdun, Québec, and Niagara Falls, Ontario.



Winnipeg's CPR Monument, 1922 (Historic Resources Branch)



MacCarthy's Grieving Soldier in Lethbridge, Alberta (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

As Alan MacLeod has observed, MacCarthy's war memorial figures exhibit an emotional range probably unmatched among Canada's war memorial sculptors, from the CPR's graceful angel bearing a peaceful fallen soldier to heaven, through Lethbridge's mourning soldier resting on arms reversed, to the determined infantryman in Trois-Rivières, apparently about to plunge his bayonet into the viewer below.



Monument des Braves, Trois-Rivières, Québec. (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

## Nicolas Pirotton

Nicolas Pirotton was born in Liège, Belgium in 1882, and immigrated to St. Boniface in 1907. Here he pursued his *métier* as a stone carver. In 1917 he founded his own studio, specializing in commemorative and funerary monuments, on the Rue Dubuc; in the late 1920s he was advertising “Marble and Granite Monuments.” Pirotton was active in the community, founding the Belgian Relief Fund and being an amateur actor and cornet player, among other accomplishments (“Nicolas Pirotton”). He served St. Boniface as alderman from 1930 until his death in 1943.



Nicolas Pirotton

Pirotton was responsible for a number of war memorials in both Anglo and Francophone communities. The figure in Morden and the face in the arch in St. Andrew’s have also been attributed to him, probably incorrectly (Shipley, 133). Pirotton was for a time foreman and plant superintendant with the Western Stone Company (*Winnipeg Tribune* 22 November 1943, p. 11), which is credited with manufacturing the Morden monument. However, that monument dates from 1921, and Pirotton had left the firm four years before. Also, the Morden figure is stylistically very different from Pirotton’s more sophisticated pensive soldier figure, which must have been designed slightly earlier, and which was used on monuments in St. Claude, St. Pierre-Jolys, Emerson and MacGregor, and in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. We know that the Weyburn figure was carved in Italy (*Winnipeg Tribune* 27 May 1924, p. 12), and it is likely that the others were also. The figure also appears, in bronze, in the 1920 catalogue of the foundry

department of Canadian William A. Rogers Limited, and in bronze it was used for a memorial in Ganonoque, Ontario.



Pirotton's pensive soldier in McGregor (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

Another figure, of a soldier holding a rifle in his left hand and a grenade in his right, appears in bronze in Brockville (1924). It is said to have been modelled as a portrait of Major Thain Wendell MacDowell, a local man who had been awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Vimy Ridge (Brockville Museum). The figure was cast by the Allis Chalmers Company of Toronto. The town of Meaford, Ontario appears to have another cast of the same figure. Orangeville, Ontario has a very similar figure, but with the rifle resting on the shoulder. This may be Pirotton's work, or that of an imitator. Like McCarthy's soldier in Trois-Rivières, these figures are quite unusual among Canadian memorials in depicting a soldier in the very moment of combat.



Brockville War Memorial (Brockville Museum) and a detail of the figure (Alan MacLeod, by permission)

It is tempting to think that Piroton's design was influenced by Benet's dynamic "Poilu Victorieux" figure for St. Boniface, on which Piroton had done the final preparations before it was mounted on its pedestal several years earlier (*Winnipeg Tribune*, September 14, 1920, p. 1). The energetic posture of the Brockville figure is quite a departure from Piroton's earlier pensive soldier, and even the position of the body, with a rifle in his left hand and his right hand raised (in this case to throw a grenade rather than to wave a wreath of victory) is similar.

## Marguerite Taylor

Born Marguerite Jud in Paris in 1886, Mrs. Hilliard Taylor (as she usually called herself professionally) learned her art in the Paris studio of Antoine Bourdelle, who was in turn a pupil of the great French sculptor Auguste Rodin. She met her husband, Hilliard Taylor, in Paris, and came with him to Winnipeg in the early years of the 20th century, where she maintained a studio. Among her many works is her bust of Chief Peguis in Winnipeg's Kildonan Park. Taylor's own favourite sculpture was her 1927 statue of Canada personified as a woman, on the war memorial in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. She received the commission after winning a national competition.



War Memorial figure in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, unveiled 1927 (Faster than Light Communications)

Probably her most familiar work is her figure for the Next-of-Kin Monument on the Legislative Grounds in Winnipeg, from 1922. She sculpted the figure in London, England (as she did with all of her large works), using as her model a soldier who was a veteran of the horrors of Passchendaele. Nonetheless, the figure is a rare example of a joyous figure on a war memorial, because she chose to depict the moment when peace was declared, noting that she "wanted to do a happy soldier so the bereaved wives and mothers would not be too much saddened when they looked at it." Marguerite Taylor died in Winnipeg in 1964.



Marguerite Taylor with the plaster cast of her soldier figure for the Next of Kin monument. As with most of her large works, she sculpted it and had it cast in bronze in London, England (*Winnipeg Free Press*, 13 April 1963, p.17).

### Gilbert Parfitt

Gilbert C. Parfitt was born in England in 1887. Having studied architecture there, he immigrated to Winnipeg in 1912, where he became Provincial Architect in 1923. In addition to the cenotaphs in Stonewall (1922) and Winnipeg (1928), he is known for his work on a wide range of buildings, including the Tier and Buller Buildings at the University of Manitoba, the Cathedral Church of St. John in Winnipeg, and several consolidated schools. He died in Vancouver in 1966.



The Stonewall Cenotaph (Historic Resources Branch)

## Monument Firms

Three firms dominated the war memorial business in Canada in the postwar period: Thomson Monument Company, McIntosh Granite Company, and Canadian William A. Rogers Limited (later Frank G. Tickell). All were located in Toronto, produced catalogues, and marketed their wares more or less aggressively to towns and institutions across the country. Smaller firms with a more local clientele also did memorial work, and some had connections to foundries or quarries in Europe. Among others, Guinn and Simpson of Portage la Prairie and Hooper Marble and Granite of Winnipeg did work for memorials in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

### Thomson Monument Company

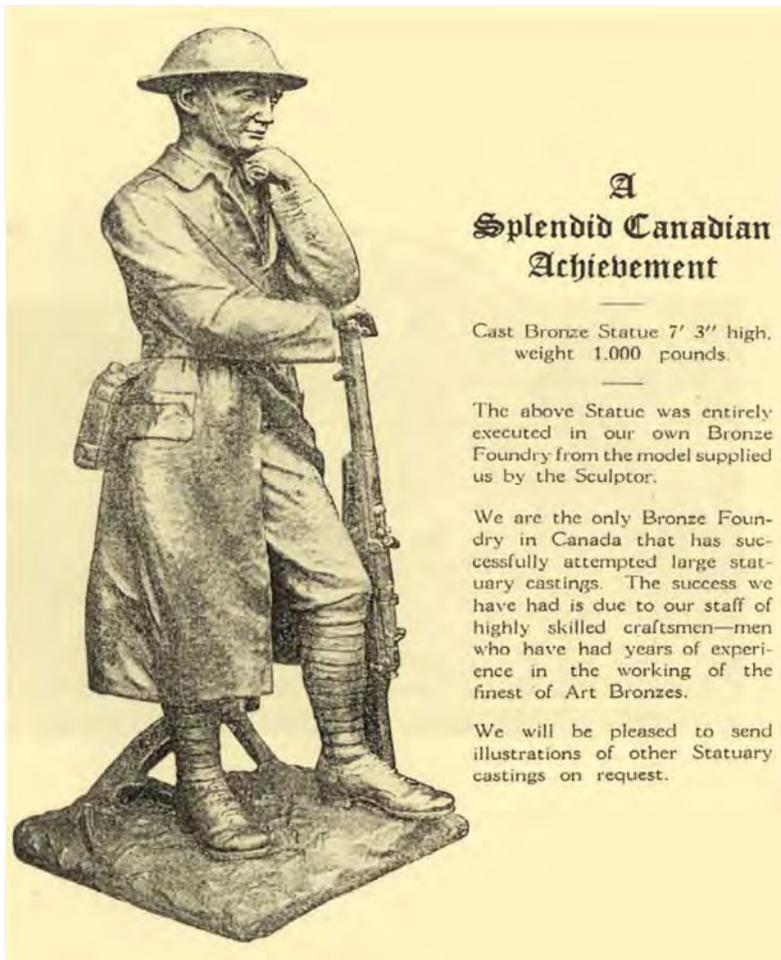
The Thomson Monument Company regularly published advertisements in the interwar period, inviting communities or institutions to order war memorials from them. The one below, which appeared in *Saturday Night* in 1922, depicts a design model by their chief designer Emanuel Hahn (see above) for a memorial that was eventually used in Moncton, New Brunswick and Lindsay, Ontario.



This advertisement from the Thomson Monument company makes no mention of their German-born chief designer.

Canadian William A. Rogers Limited Foundry Department/  
Frank G. Tickell

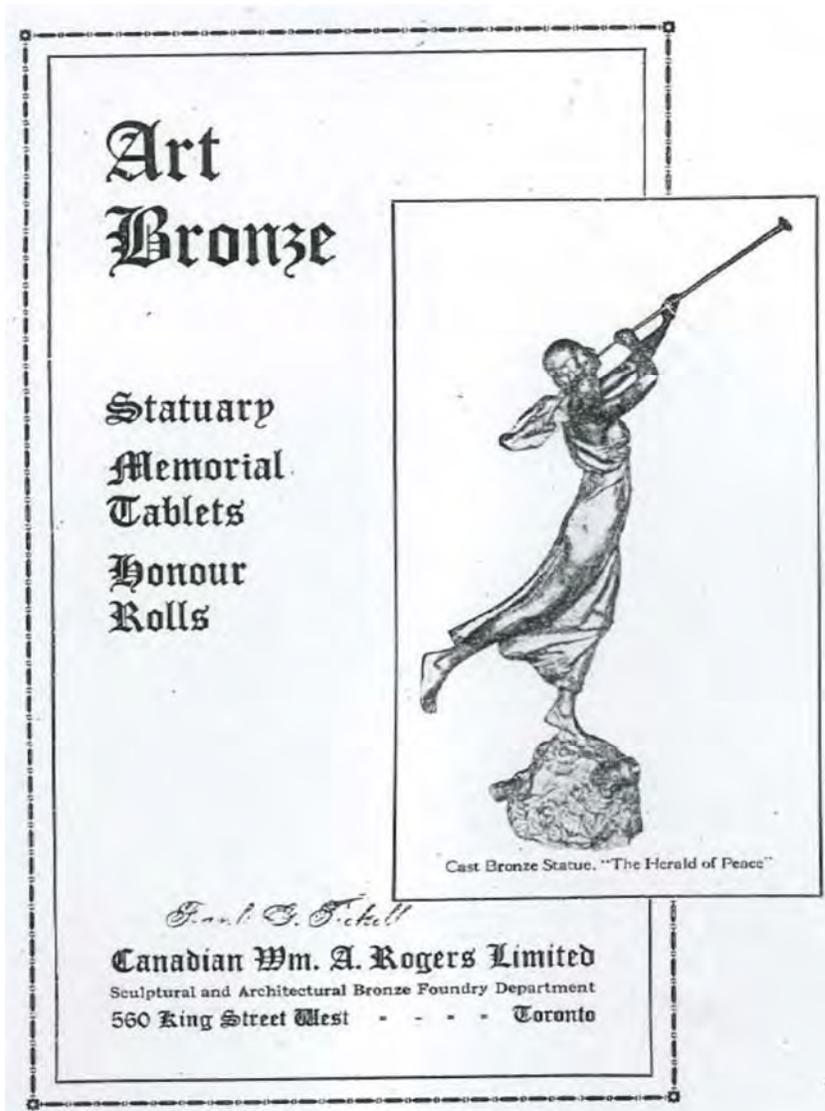
The William A. Rogers Company foundry was taken over in the early 1920s by a former employee, Frank Tickell. A catalogue from December 1920 illustrates “Memorial Tablets and Honour Rolls that other Townships, Schools, Churches, etc., have erected” and offers to prepare sketches of any design, without obligation. This catalogue also illustrates a bronze casting of Piroton’s pensive soldier, calling its production a “Splendid Canadian Achievement.”



A page from a 1920 catalogue indicating that nowhere else could a community acquire a large-scale bronze cast in Canada such as this one designed by Nicolas Piroton. (Library and Archives Canada RG24, Volume 4262, File Part 1)

The presence of an advertisement in the *Free Press* in 1919 indicates that the Rogers Foundry was actively seeking contracts outside of central Ontario. It may well be that many of the numerous plaques and tablets found in churches,

schools and other institutions through Manitoba were obtained from them. We know that the elegant bronze figure in the Memorial Room in Carman's Memorial Hall came from there, as it is illustrated in the catalogue as "The Herald of Peace." Like the much-larger Pirotton figure, it is described as having been made entirely in the Rogers foundry "from models supplied us by the sculptors," though in this case we do not know who the sculptor was.



Catalogue illustration of a bronze angel figure like that in the Carman Memorial Hall (Library and Archives Canada, RG24, Volume 4262, File Part 1)

### McIntosh Granite Company

The McIntosh Granite Company briefly employed Emanuel Hahn as a designer in the early 20th century. It was responsible for constructing a range of memorials, mostly in Ontario, including those in St. Catherine's, Ayr, North Bay and Brockville. McIntosh may well have supplied memorials to Manitoba towns, but as yet we do not know.



North Bay, Ontario monument, 1922. The figure is by C.D. MacKenzie of Toronto, and was said to have been the largest bronze ever cast in Canada at that time. (Francoise Noel)

## Manitoba Firms

Further research would no doubt turn up other firms and individuals involved in war memorial work across the province. For instance, the Memorial and Tile Company of Winnipeg constructed Transcona's obelisk of British Columbia granite, unveiled in 1931. The Sutherland Company, of Brandon, provided the Italian-carved figure and other components of Boissevain's memorial, unveiled in 1924. In the *Winnipeg Tribune* of April 21, 1926, we see that William Tucker, "local stonemason and builder of the Tyndall Great War Memorial" had "several large orders. . . and more to come" for monumental work.

## Samuel Hooper

Samuel Hooper, born in England in 1851 and immigrating to Canada in 1869, was an architect and sculptor. His extensive experience in stonework encouraged him to buy into the monument firm of David Ede, whom he eventually bought out to form Hooper Marble Works. Although he became primarily an architect, being appointed Manitoba's first Provincial Architect in 1904, Hooper Marble and Granite continued to supply monuments. Despite Hooper's death in 1911, the firm continued to operate; in the early 1920s, it was advertising regularly in the newspaper, with a factory in St. Boniface and a showroom at Portage and Spence, in Winnipeg. Hooper was contracted to put up a handsome obelisk in Humboldt, Saskatchewan in 1920.

## Guinn and Simpson

Guinn and Simpson, of Portage la Prairie, is still operating as a memorial maker. This firm was contracted to construct memorials in Manitoba, including the grand example in Dauphin, and Saskatchewan.

The company began as the Neepawa Marble and Granite Works in 1905, when the Guinn brothers announced that they could provide "Scotch and American Granite, Italian and American Marble" as well as expert workmen and the "latest designs to choose from." By 1912 they had bought out a monument company in Portage la Prairie, and joined with the undertaker, Jack Simpson, to form Guinn & Simpson, with headquarters in Portage.

In about 1925, brothers Ed and William split the business: Ed continued with Guinn & Simpson in Portage, and William took on the Neepawa operation, using the name Neepawa Stone & Marble Works.