

# 1 War Memorial

Walk 2: The Heart of Harrogate Town walk



UNVEILING OF WAR MEMORIAL—September 1st, 1923 in the presence of Princess Mary and Viscount Lonsdale.



Given the terrible losses suffered by so many Harrogate families during the Great War of 1914-1918, it is understandable that the creation of a memorial to the fallen was of overwhelming concern to the town's residents during the years following the armistice of 1918.

After agreeing in 1919 that the town should have its own memorial, the gardens of the Prospect Hotel – today called the Yorkshire – were suggested as an ideal site, which could create “one of the finest squares in England”. Conveyancing of the land took place on 28 May 1921, and by December 1921, the papers announced that work was underway with dismantling the Prospect Hotel's gardens.

After a competition, the commission was given to Prestwich and Sons, who brought in Gilbert Ledward to sculpt the two relief panels on the northern and southern faces of the monument. The press informed the public that during the Great War 3,614 Harrogate men had enlisted, and that from this total, 93 officers and 748 other ranks had been killed, including five women.

The death toll resulting from injuries received during the conflict was to increase this figure, but the names

inscribed on the monument were those who had died during the conflict.

As if in harmony with the dreadful event commemorated by the new memorial, the unveiling by Lord Harwood on 1 September 1923 was accompanied with dreadful weather, with overcast skies and heavy rain. But nevertheless, the square was packed to capacity by the public, who mostly considered the seventy-five feet high monument a noble conception, which remained at the heart of the town's ceremonies commemorating the victims of all wars.

After the Second World War of 1939-45, the east facing panel was re-cast to accommodate the fallen of that conflagration, and in 1975 the locality was greatly changed by the traffic exclusion orders which closed Prospect Crescent to traffic and placed the War Memorial amidst a more pedestrian friendly setting.