

YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING

This is the most recognised memorial in the Ypres Salient. The Ypres Memorial to the Missing, usually called simply 'the Menin Gate', has stood for almost 100 years on the place where tens of thousands of Commonwealth servicemen marched out of the city onto the battlefields of Flanders.

Before the First World War, the Menin Gate was already an important portal to the city. The 17th century gate and defences built by the French were already gone before this war and the early 20th century city entrance was just a bridge over the moat leading through a breach in the ramparts. On both sides of the 'gate' stood two lion statues holding a shield bearing Ypres' coat of arms.

After the war, this place was chosen to be the site of a great Memorial to the Missing because of the many thousands of Commonwealth troops who had passed this way. The memorial was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. Construction took five years and it was unveiled by Lord Plumer, the general who had commanded forces the Salient for the majority of the war, on 24 July 1927. He famously encouraged the bereaved attending the ceremony to consider that their loved one 'isn't missing - he is here.'

The Last Post Ceremony is conducted by people of Ieper inside the memorial every night at 8 o'clock.



The site of today's memorial before the First World War



YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING

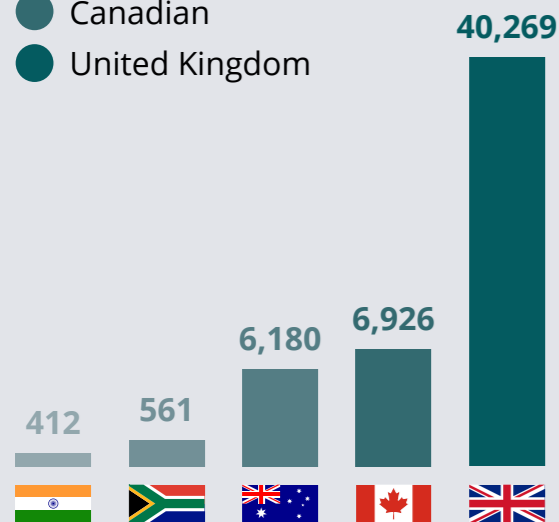
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES

Total number commemorated:

54,348

Force nationalities

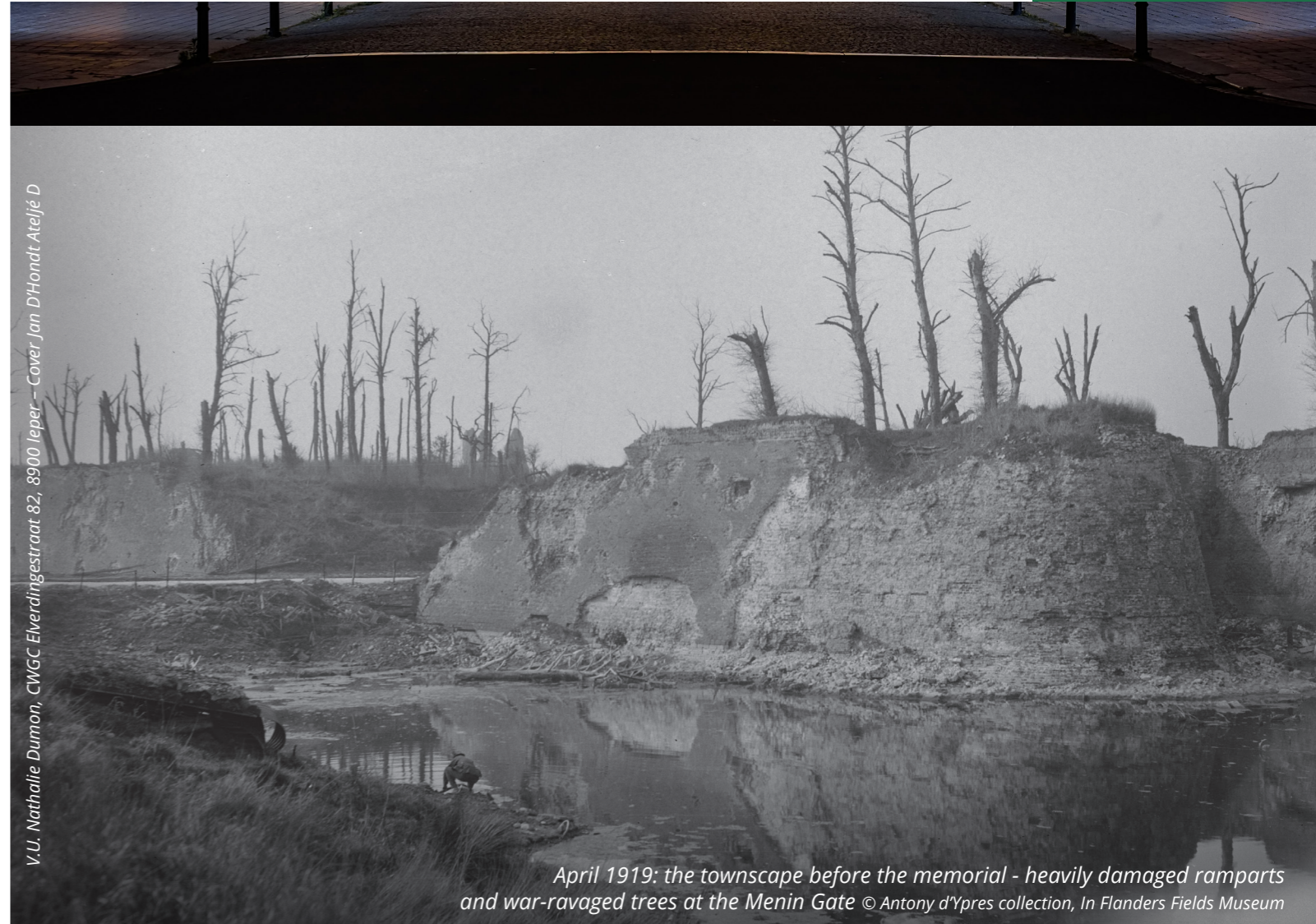
- Indian
- South African
- Australian
- Canadian
- United Kingdom



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For more information please scan here.



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April 1919: the townscape before the memorial - heavily damaged ramparts and war-ravaged trees at the Menin Gate © Antony d'Ypres collection, In Flanders Fields Museum



BRIGADIER GENERAL CHARLES FITZCLARENCE

Born in Ireland, Charles was a professional soldier before the First World War. He fought at Mafeking in 1899 and was awarded the Victoria Cross. By the time war broke out in August 1914 he'd risen to the rank of Brigadier General and led the 1st Guards Brigade at Ypres. He was killed in action on 12 November 1914. He is often referred to as the 'General Officer Commanding the Menin Gate', as he is the highest-ranking officer commemorated on the memorial. Look for his name on Panel 3.

1



2



4

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1** You're standing in front of the Menin Gate facing leper (the Cloth Hall belltower perfectly framed underneath the gate).

Look up to see the big stone lion lying on top of the memorial, a symbol of both Flanders & Britain. Underneath, the inscription reminds us what to remember here: 'TO THE ARMIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE WHO STOOD HERE FROM 1914 TO 1918 AND TO THOSE OF THEIR DEAD WHO HAVE NO KNOWN GRAVE'. Look out for the visibly repaired war damage on this façade sustained during the Second World War.

- 2** Walk inside the memorial into the 'Hall of Memory' and take a look at the thousands of names inscribed on the walls. In the middle of the arch there are stairs on each side of the road. Take those on the left-hand side.

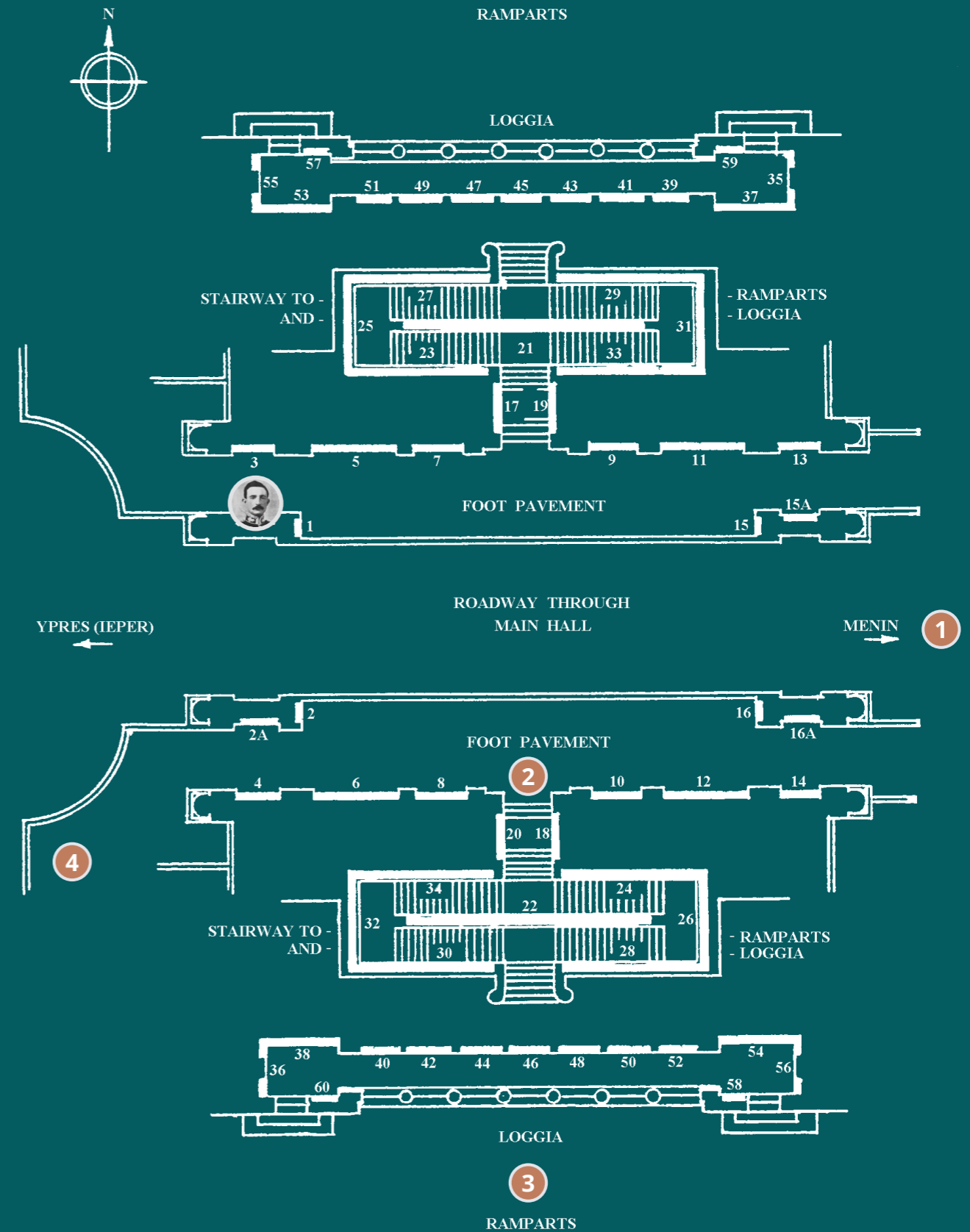
On top of each staircase entrance there's another inscription, this one written by the IWGC's literary advisor, Rudyard Kipling. Wreaths are often here, having been laid during recent Last Post ceremonies.

- 3** Follow the stairs until you reach the top of the rampart wall. Here you will discover a small memorial field. Take in the view into the city centre.

The rampart walls were used by troops during the 1914-1918 war. Dugouts were made here from September to November 1915 by the British 117th Tunnelling Company. These were the first tunnelled dugouts in the Salient; many more would follow.

- 4** Take the path downwards to the western side of the Menin Gate and take a moment to appreciate the architecture of the memorial.

On top of this side you can see the a sarcophagus - an empty tomb, symbolic of the missing soldiers remembered name below. On both sides of the façades, you can read the words 'PRO PATRIA' (For Country) & 'PRO REGE' (For King).



In the area

The Menin Gate stands right next to leper city centre. In Flanders Fields Museum is only a five minute walk from the memorial. On the street into the city centre you will find our CWGC Information Centre. Walk along the rampart walls to visit Ramparts Cemetery at Lille Gate.



Westtoer bike routes nearby

- leperboog
- Vredesfietsroute
- Gent-Wevelgem in Flanders Fields - 128 km
- Frontroute 14-18
- Crossen door de bossen met Jaek en Nink (kid friendly cycle route)



Westtoer walking routes nearby

- Stadswandelroute leper
- Vestingroute



Not all parts of the memorial can be accessed step-free



Street parking nearby



Seats present at Loggia level