

WALTER ALLWARD: SCULPTOR AND ARCHITECT OF THE VIMY RIDGE MEMORIAL

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> LANE BORSTAD

INTRODUCTION

Before the First World War, English Canada reflected the shared values and experiences of an emerging nation deeply concerned with national identity and patriotism. Sculpture in English Canada around 1900, similar to nineteenth-century European sculpture from which it derived,¹ was "dedicated to the celebration of the nation's heroes, institutions, and middle class values."² In 1898, W.A. Sherwood ARCA described the relationship between sculpture and nationalism as follows:

The Fine Arts could be most effectually used to develop a strong patriotic national pride.... The heroic statues of England have made thousands of heroes. The little schoolboy winding his way through the parks of France and Germany learns more of the true meaning of patriotism as he gazes upon the bronze figures of native celebrities than he could possibly do under the guidance of the most enthusiastic teacher. Our country has no dearth of heroes.³

Hamilton MacCarthy RCA⁴, another academician and one of the leading Canadian sculptors of the day, gave expression to the traditional canon of sculpture:

Sculpture through its beauty and *al fresco* endurance is especially fitted to present and express the incidents and achievements of history; the heroes, heroines and patriots who have built up their country and the Empire upon which the sun never sets. Statues are ever present reminders to youth of the glory of the past and the potential greatness of the future, and witnesses to the power and pride which every citizen should feel in the heritage

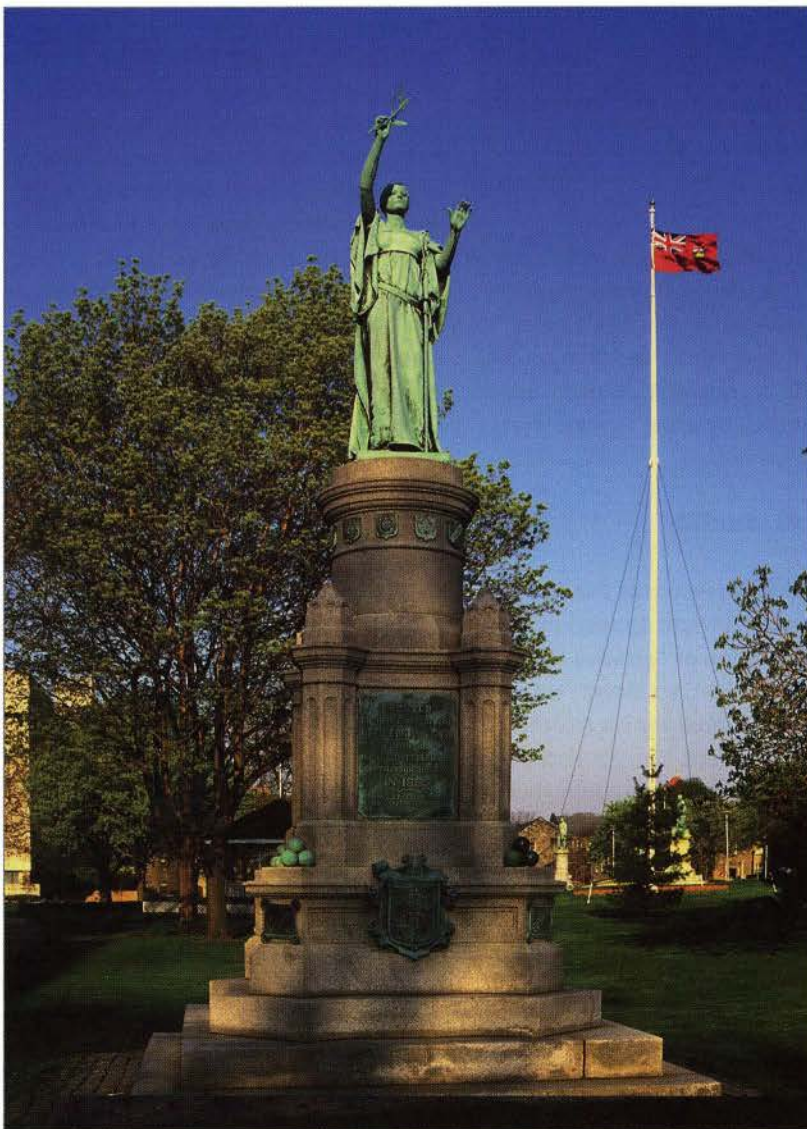


FIG. 1. WALTER ALLWARD, NORTHWEST REBELLION MEMORIAL, TORONTO (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #506), 1894-96. | LANE BORSTAD.

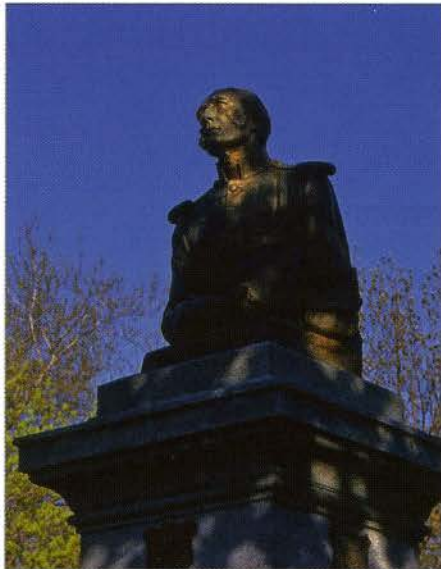


FIG. 2. WALTER ALLWARD, *ARMY AND NAVY VETERANS MEMORIAL*, TORONTO (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #523), 1906. | LANE BORSTAD.

which he possesses, and which he hopes to hand down to posterity.⁵

Walter Allward, the future sculptor and architect of the Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge, worked successfully within the academic tradition as is amply demonstrated by his early monuments to politicians and “native celebrities”.⁶ His romantic and emotional nature, however, found fuller expression in a long series of war memorials. He alluded to this romantic nature when describing the source of his inspiration:

Every true disciple of art weaves out of the dream [which] his own heart knows. There can be nothing tangible about art.⁷

James Mavor in writing about Allward in the *Year Book of Canadian Art*, 1913 stated that Allward’s:

figures tell their symbolic story with the imperturbable assurance which is the sign of all high art, “Thus and not otherwise ... must these things be”.⁸

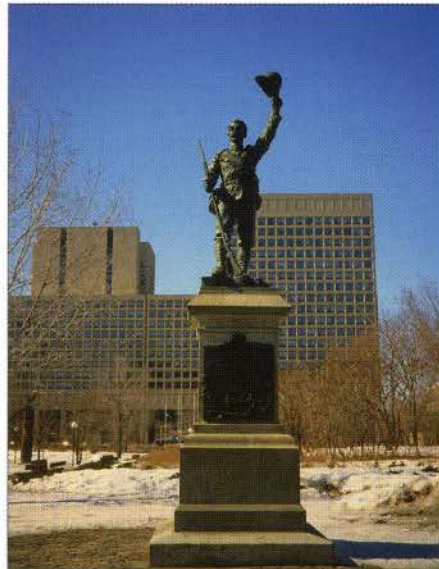


FIG. 3. HAMILTON MACCARTHY, *SOUTH AFRICAN WAR MEMORIAL*, OTTAWA, 1902. | LANE BORSTAD.

Starting with Allward’s first public commission at the age of eighteen, and culminating with his major life’s work at Vimy Ridge in France, his focus on the intangible in art drew him to evoke emotional responses by using human figures as timeless symbols.

WALTER ALLWARD

The earliest known record of the career of Walter Seymour Allward appears in the 2 March, 1895 edition of *Saturday Night*. A short notice, in the “Art News” column, noted that the model for his *Northwest Rebellion* monument (fig. 1)⁹ had been completed.¹⁰ This rather unassuming notice gives little hint of his future career as Canada’s leading sculptor of war memorials.

Allward was born on November 18, 1876 in Toronto. He attended Dufferin Public school in the east end, learned carpentry from his father and, aside from anecdotal references to playing in the clay banks of the Don Valley, little else is known relating to his youth. The earliest references to

artistic training or temperament come from Frederick Challenger who mentions Allward trying painting at William Cruikshank’s studio in 1890.¹¹ A year later he attended evening modeling classes at Central Technical school on College Street. In order to “improve his natural talent as a draughtsman”,¹² he joined a sketching club (Toronto Art Students’ League). Allward’s only other formal training was limited to a period of four years (1891-1895) as draughtsman for the firm of Henry Gibson and Charles Simpson¹³ that he later described as his “little instruction in architecture in early years”.¹⁴ This was followed by employment at the Don Valley Pressed Brick Works where he executed designs in terra-cotta for architectural decoration. Among the other sculptors employed to produce designs was Hamilton MacCarthy¹⁵ already quoted above, who also went on to a successful career as a sculptor and designed many memorials in Canada. While still designing terra-cotta reliefs, Allward received his first public commission, the monument to commemorate the *Northwest Rebellion* of 1885.¹⁶

EARLY MEMORIAL COMMISSIONS

In 1894 Allward began work on the *Northwest Rebellion* (fig. 1) in rented studio space on Adelaide Street East and the following year moved his studio to Room 19 of the Studio Building; the same studio in which he had taken his first art classes from William Cruikshank five years earlier. Working for the McIntosh Granite Company, Wilson Grey designed the elaborate base of the monument itself and Allward was awarded the subcontract to model the simpler and more elegant figure of Peace that stands on the top.¹⁷ The overall design is reminiscent of the nearby *Niagara Volunteers* monument by Robert Reid, which was erected in 1870¹⁸ and is in stark contrast to the simplified forms favoured by Allward in all his later commissions.¹⁹ There

is already an indication of the meticulous attention to detail that Allward maintained throughout his career and which often resulted in his failure to complete commissions within the promised time.²⁰ Grey's pedestal was in place by January of 1896, but portions of Allward's clay models were only "massed in" with much work "yet to be done."²¹ This is the monument Allward later referred to when he described a confrontation between himself and a memorial committee:

I haven't had an easy time. I remember that one of my first committees sent guards to look after what they regarded as their work. I was doing a detail figure for a memorial for which a big tombstone building firm held the main contract. I did not get it though when they thought it ought to be done, and they began to nag. I said at last, "if you do not stop hurrying me I'll break the figure". They took me literally. Next day came men to place scaffolding about the completed work and a guard to watch me as I worked.²²

Despite a tough start, in the next decade Allward became one of English-speaking Canada's most sought-after sculptors of historical figures for such organizations as the Normal School Education Museum, the Province of Ontario, and the Federal Government in Ottawa. He also received major private commissions such as that in Brantford, Ontario to commemorate Alexander Graham Bell's invention of the telephone in that city.²³

In 1904, he received his second war memorial commission, the *Army and Navy Veterans Memorial* to commemorate the War of 1812, (fig.2). This small work represents a new direction in Allward's career. His previous work commemorated famous statesmen where he had been constrained by tradition and conventions of portraiture. Hale wrote that Allward's figure tells:



FIG. 4. WALTER ALLWARD, *SOUTH AFRICAN WAR MEMORIAL*, TORONTO (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #524), 1907. | LANE BORSTAD.

the tale of soldiers whose battles were fought long ago, here indeed is a little neglected shrine of art. For the half figure of [the] soldier, with his empty coat sleeve and his eager wonderful old face is absolutely haunting.²⁴

While still maintaining the careful descriptive details, he had chosen to emphasize the humanity and pathos of the old soldier. In contrast, Hamilton

MacCarthy's *South African War Memorial* (1902), accurately records the costume and details of the soldier (fig. 3) and through its accuracy, conforms to the traditional canon of sculpture, which MacCarthy advocated.²⁵ This canon sought to represent incidents, achievements and heroes; not the human and personal experience of those incidents and achievements.



FIG. 5. WALTER ALLWARD, PLASTERS FOR STRATFORD WAR MEMORIAL (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #537), 1922.

The *South African War* (1892-1902), also known as the Boer War, was the first time Canada's troops were in an overseas expedition. Two hundred, sixty-seven Canadians who served in South Africa died. Allward's memorial to the South African War²⁶ (fig. 4) shares some of the personal qualities first seen in the old soldier of the *Army and Veterans Monument*. The sculpture is by far the most grand and ambitious that Allward had yet created. Its figures do not lapse into anonymity by the use of traditional, static or conventional poses. The success of the monument lies in Allward's ability to fuse both individual emotions and responses to war with the nationalistic aspirations of the country. The individualized figures of the soldiers "take away all cheap necessity for heroic pose or theatric gesture"²⁷ and the idealized figure:

is the young mother, Canada, sending out her sons to battle for the Empire. And there is that in her attitude, in the heroic soul of her imprisoned in the inflexible bronze, that makes one glad of one's country.²⁸

Allward chose his own mother as his inspiration and model.²⁹ The soldiers appear believable as young men being sent to war. They display no false bravado, heroics or drama. This personal touch and the sheer ordinariness of the soldiers make the sculpture accessible to the viewer and lend a timeless quality to Allward's work that is often lost in other war memorials.

Although the Canadian government at the time stated that this use of Canadian soldiers overseas did not set precedent, history would prove them wrong. In 1914, Canada was again at war. This time over 600,000 Canadian soldiers served abroad; 66,655 gave their lives.

WORLD WAR I MONUMENTS IN CANADA

World War I not only had a profound emotional impact upon Allward, it had a major effect upon his career as a sculptor. Already proficient at designing large-scale monuments, he turned his skills toward the production of memorials in response to the grief and pride felt by Canadians at the close of hostilities. As a result of "the general wave of enthusiasm for building monuments that swept the country",³⁰ Allward received commissions for memorials in Stratford (fig. 5), Peterborough (fig. 6), and Brantford (fig. 9).

The first commission, *Stratford War Memorial*, 1920-1922 (fig. 5) was the only monument of the three new commissions completed in its entirety by Allward. His initial tender was dated September 9, 1920³¹ and by 1922, the figures were complete. A Canadian Company, The Architectural Bronze and Iron Company of Toronto, did the casting in March of 1922.³²

At Stratford, Allward used two free standing allegorical figures. Gone are all references to specific place and time. Rather than portray a Canadian soldier in a traditional pose, Allward stated that the figure "on the high ground expresses the better, the spiritual man, while going down into the valley is the disarmed figure of strife, the group showing the supremacy of right over brute force".³³

These are not "heroes, heroines and patriots"; nor do they represent the "incidents and achievements of history." By avoiding the stock stereotype emblems and attributes so typical of his contemporaries,³⁴ Allward aligned himself closer to the French romantic tradition of Auguste Rodin than the academic sculpture tradition of Canada. *Stratford* represented the culmination of a stylistic evolution that can be traced



FIG. 6. WALTER ALLWARD, ALLEGORICAL FIGURE FROM PETERBOROUGH WAR MEMORIAL, PETERBOROUGH (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #535), 1921.

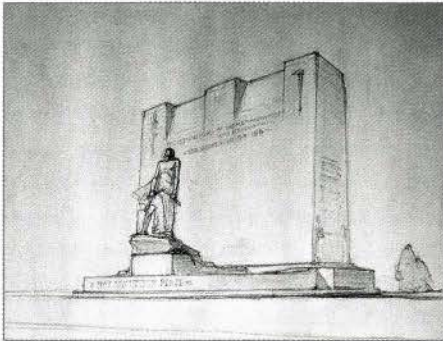


FIG. 7. WALTER ALLWARD, SKETCH FOR BRANTFORD WAR MEMORIAL (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #221), C. 1921.



FIG. 8. WALTER ALLWARD, PHOTOGRAPH OF PLASTER MODEL FOR BRANTFORD, C. 1921.



FIG. 9. WALTER ALLWARD, BRANTFORD WAR MEMORIAL, BRANTFORD (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #538), 1930.

in Allward's career from the traditional biographical representation of Simcoe (Toronto) through progressively bolder designs of *South African Memorial* (Toronto), *Baldwin and Lafontaine* (Ottawa) and *Bell Telephone Memorial* (Brantford).

This evolution continued in the commission Allward received in 1918, for the *Peterborough War Memorial, 1918-1922* (fig. 6). The sketch model was completed in November 1920³⁵ and once again, Allward designed the monument with two large allegorical bronze figures similar to *Stratford*. Here, Allward's romantic debt to Rodin is again evident in the handling of the figures and treatment of surfaces. More importantly, however, is the use of a wall to define the space. This results in a stage like setting upon which the characters act out their dramatic confrontation. The drama becomes even more powerful when the viewer enters the defined space.

Allward explained that one figure is standing:

with outstretched hand, the idle shield worn on the back of the figure and an idle sword expressing the idea that there can be no further conflict. On the right is the figure of strife or barbarism, beaten and retreating before the strength of civilization, the sword has fallen to the ground and the flambeau has been extinguished.³⁶

Here are the lofty and universal ideas, dramatic gestures, and powerful silhouettes set against the sky that Allward came to favour. The models for the Peterborough figures were finished by Allward in 1921 but he was unable to complete the commission because he won the competition for the *Canadian Memorial in France* and subsequently left for England in June 1922.³⁷

He was also unable to complete *Brantford War Memorial (1921-1930)* and the city of Brantford was never to receive its memorial as originally conceived.³⁸ The initial design of the monument was to include a group of bronze figures representing humanity depicted by:

the wounded figure of a recumbent youth gazing up at the cross, while a mother, with head held high, typifies unbroken faith and patriotic fervor; a third figure is in the attitude of prayer.³⁹

As Allward states, these figures were never completed because "of my whole time being given to Vimy".⁴⁰

Among Allward's drawings several sketches may relate to the Brantford figures, but none agrees exactly with the description quoted above. One drawing (fig. 7) inscribed as the Brantford war memorial⁴¹ represents the breaking of the sword rather than a recumbent youth and

mother. There are also no drawings that include pylons in a configuration similar to the completed monument (fig. 9).

The architect credited with the construction of the memorial was Walter Allward's eldest son, Hugh L. Allward⁴² and it may be that Hugh in fact is responsible for the design. A third architect is also associated with the project. Undated blueprints in the Ontario Archives entitled *Proposed Memorial Gallery - Brantford War Memorial* are signed by C. H. Brooks, Architect.⁴³ The monument depicted is identical to the monument as built in Brantford. It is not possible then to assign exclusive credit for the Brantford memorial to Walter Allward. He may have been responsible for the initial concept. His plaster model included pylons and a grave below that strongly foreshadow the concept for Vimy, but the orientation and the lack of figurative sculpture differ from *Brantford* as executed (fig. 8).

PERSONAL DRAWINGS AT THE START OF THE WAR

Walter Allward never took an active part in the war, nonetheless he "reacted strongly to the brutality of enemy invasions and conquest".⁴⁴ A series of pen and ink drawings dating from 1913/14 give a very personal self-portrait of the artist as he approached mid-life, a successful sculptor



FIG. 10. WALTER ALLWARD, *THE MUSICIAN* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #18), 1914.

of public monuments. The drawings have a dark, ominous, and melancholic quality that reflects Allward's romantic nature and show him to have been a private and introspective individual. They also are marked by a strong spiritual quality that reappears in the form of Christian symbols of sacrifice and resurrection in all of his later monument studies. Here are the private emotional struggles that he wove into his

public art. The folly inherent in the pursuit of earthly pleasure, the passage of time, inevitability of death, personal sacrifice, a sense of entrapment, all form themes throughout the balance of his career.

In *The Musician* (fig. 10) a cellist sits in a small enclosed space reminiscent of a jail cell with a high barred window to the left. A sleeping mat and bowl, the only

furnishings, are placed on the floor to the right and in the space above the musician floats a group of faint intertwined figures. By dividing the composition in half with the dark heavily drawn figure of the cellist at the bottom and the lightly drawn cloud of figures at the top, Allward suggests the division between an earthly sphere of existence and a heavenly one. The link between the two is provided by the upward glance of the player. Allward, himself a cellist, may be portraying divine inspiration for the creation of the arts – the artist and his muses.⁴⁵

Like *The Musician*, the composition of *Death of Artist* (fig. 11) is divided into two realms. The drawing depicts the interior of an artist's studio with the figure of the artist lying dead or dying on a bed to the left. A mourning figure is collapsed across the artist's body. On the right, is a large painting of a crucifixion set on an easel. A small table with palette and brushes is placed at its base. In the centre of the picture, a bearded face floats above the scene. The painting of Christ's death, on the right, parallels the artist's death, on the left. The position and identification of the artist's death with the sacrifice of Christ evokes the image of the misunderstood and self-sacrificing artist whose greatness is only recognized after death. The reference to resurrection is reinforced by the pale line drawing of a bearded Christ floating near the painting. This drawing is the earliest use of overtly Christian religious symbols which Allward used extensively in his later designs and drawings made during World War II.⁴⁶

Another drawing, *The Sculptor's Studio* (fig. 12), also incorporates religious symbolism in its church-like setting but evokes even stronger allusions to death. Lying on the floor is a nude female figure in a cruciform position. The large wound on her side reinforces the association with Christ. Auto-biographical elements are present as



FIG. 11. WALTER ALLWARD, *DEATH OF ARTIST* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #19), C.1914.

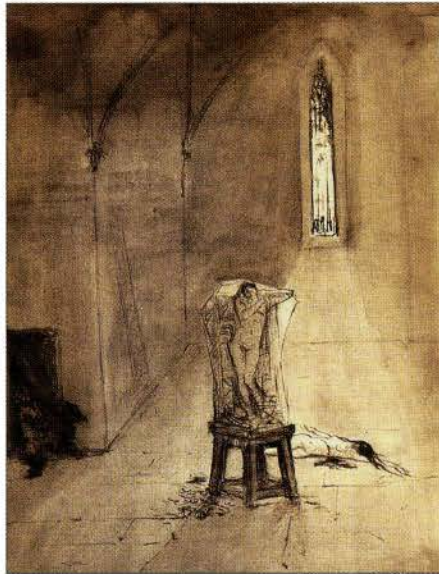


FIG. 12. WALTER ALLWARD, *UNTITLED - SCULPTOR'S STUDIO* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #20), C.1914.



FIG. 13. WALTER ALLWARD, *THE INQUISITION* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #21), C. 1914.

this is clearly a vaulted, Gothic-style sculptor's studio as seen by the unfinished statue at the center of the composition. The ladder that leans against the wall may allude to Jacob's vision of a ladder between earth and heaven (Genesis 28:12) or to the ladder used at Christ's crucifixion in the Descent from the Cross. In either case, the suggestion is spiritual in nature; the Ascension to heaven or an allusion to the sacrifice of Christ similar to that in *Death of Artist*. Also similar to *Death of Artist* is the reference to death in the act of creation: the painting remains unfinished on the easel; the sculpture remains unfinished on the stand. In this case, however, it is the model who is dead.

The Inquisition (fig. 13) is dominated by violence. This image portrays a male figure bound and hung by the wrists being stretched by a rope tied about his ankles. This work maintains the left-right juxtaposition of conflicting narrative elements as the robed figures, sitting in judgment on a raised dais to the right, are balanced by the tortured figure to the left. The artist palette and brushes beneath the

unfortunate individual, add an autobiographical note in keeping with Allward's other works of this period. The artist is held responsible for some unknown crime and suffers the torture by the cloaked members of the inquisition. The all-suffering artist and critical dispassionate audience seem to be implied.

A final image from this series of drawings (fig. 14) summarizes the tragedy and hopelessness of the war years. Christ has returned only to find a battlefield strewn with the bodies of the dead.

Allward did not abandon the personal expressive elements displayed in his drawings when confronted with the demands of public monuments. By 1914, he had already left behind the sculpture advocated by his Canadian contemporaries such as Hamilton MacCarthy, who stated that "the highest plane in statuary [is] reached in the Ideal single figure, commonly armed and emblematic".⁴⁷ Personal and emotional elements animate Allward's largest commission – *The Canadian Memorial in France*.

CANADIAN BATTLEFIELDS MEMORIALS: THE COMPETITION – FIRST STAGE

The federal government discussed the erection of a memorial to honour Canada's casualties of World War I as early as 1917 and on 2 September, 1920, the Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission (CBMC) was constituted by Order in Council.⁴⁸ The role of the commission was to oversee:

(1) Eight memorials of a permanent character and worthy of the events commemorated.

(2) That a competition in design, open to all Canadian architects, designers, sculptors and other artists should be held to determine the design or designs to be adopted.⁴⁹

The first meeting of the commission was held in November 1920, at which time it was decided that a two-stage competition would be held and that not less than ten, nor more than twenty, competitors in the first stage would be invited to submit models for the second and final stage.⁵⁰ *The*



FIG. 14. WALTER ALLWARD, *THE BATTLEFIELD* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #117), C. 1916.

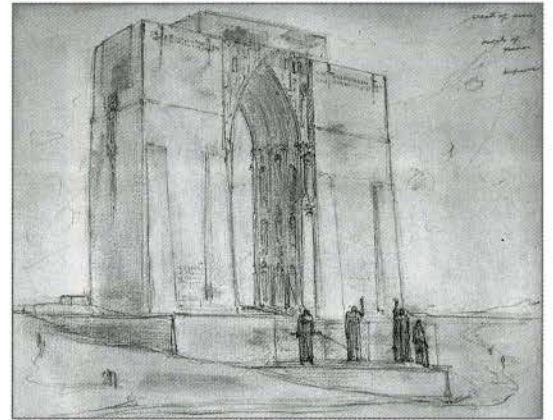


FIG. 15. WALTER ALLWARD, *MEMORIAL STUDY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #226), C. 1921.

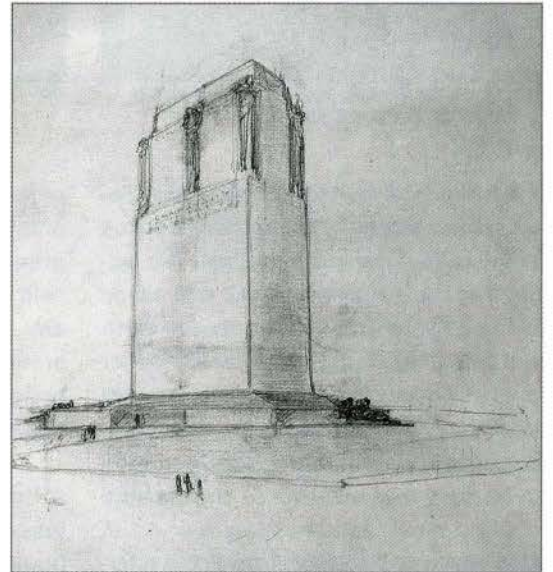


FIG. 16. WALTER ALLWARD, *MEMORIAL STUDY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #235), C. 1921.

Conditions of Competition in Design for Eight Memorial Monuments to be erected in France and Belgium was issued 20 December, 1920 with the deadline for submission of proposals set for 15 April, 1921.⁵¹

ALLWARD'S DRAWINGS FOR THE CANADIAN MEMORIAL IN FRANCE

In the fall of 1920, Allward, in his mid forties with a substantial body of work behind him, was one of the leading sculptors in English Canada. The highly emotional

rather than intellectual base for his art, visible in his drawings just considered, became the hallmark of all of his later work. As he himself later stated:

Back of all high art, I am convinced there must be - not so much the intellectual - must be truly and loftily the emotional. There is no artist like the heart.⁵²

The preliminary designs for the Canadian Memorial in France or Belgium demonstrate this tendency to emotion over intellect, which set Allward's

final design apart. Confronted with the magnitude of World War I, he sought to express loss, sorrow and futility. By 1920, the stark reality of the cost in human lives overwhelmed the feelings of patriotism expressed in his *South African Memorial*. The stoic mother who sent her sons to war in 1902 has now returned to foreign shores to gather up the dead (fig. 17). Death, which predominates his personal drawings, now became central to his memorial studies and the thoughts that inspired them. As he wrote in 1922:

Without the thought of the dead we could not have carried on, during the war, or afterwards. It is this feeling I have tried to express.⁵³

The recurrent reference to dreams in the personal drawings of the period also reappears when, in the same interview of 1922, Allward famously revealed the inspiration for his design to Anne Perry:

When things were at their blackest in France, during the war, I went to sleep one night after dwelling on all the muck and misery over there. My spirit was like a thing tormented. So I dreamed. In my dream I was on a great battlefield. I saw our men going by in thousands, and being mowed down by the sickles of death, regiment after regiment, division after division. Suffering beyond endurance at the sight, I turned my eyes and found myself looking down an avenue of poplars. Suddenly through this avenue, I saw thousands marching to the aid of our armies. They were the dead. They rose in masses, filed silently by and entered the fight, to aid the living. So vivid was this impression, that when I awoke it stayed with me for months.⁵⁴

In trying to capture the intangibility of the dream and his own romantic sentiment, Allward produced hundreds of drawings that finally culminated in his design for what would become the Vimy Ridge War Memorial.⁵⁵

It is not possible to reconstruct the development of his ideas in detail, but it is possible to see a general trend from traditional concepts such as Gothic triumphal arches with allegorical figures of the “People of France and Defenders” (fig. 15), to a highly personal final concept. Many of the drawings, for example (fig. 16), reflect the work of the Imperial War Graves architects, in particular Edwin Lutyens.

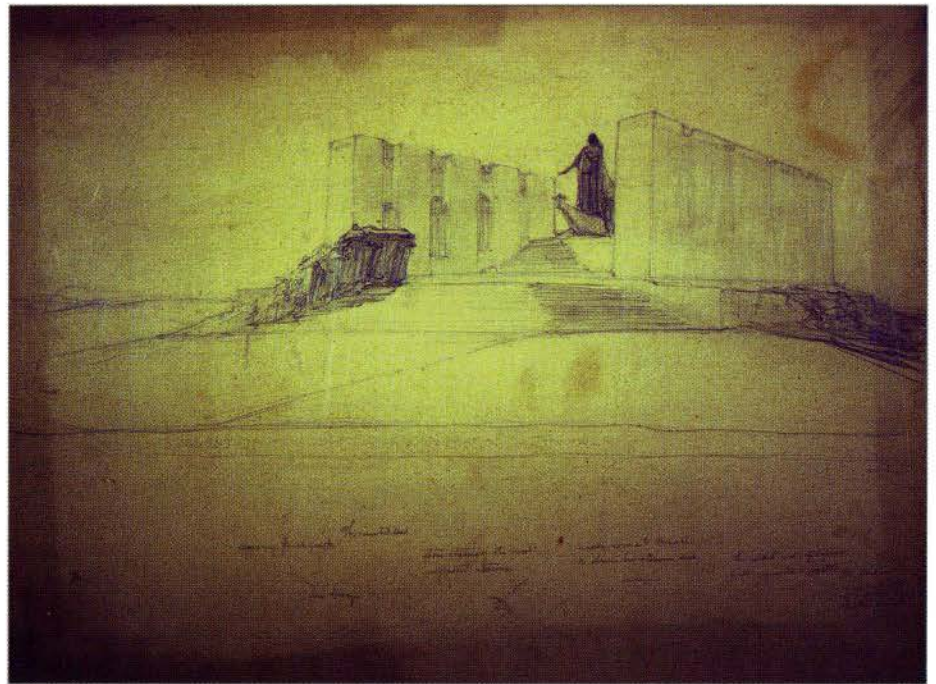


FIG. 17. WALTER ALLWARD, *CANADIAN MEMORIAL IN FRANCE, ROUGH SKETCH* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #237), 1921.

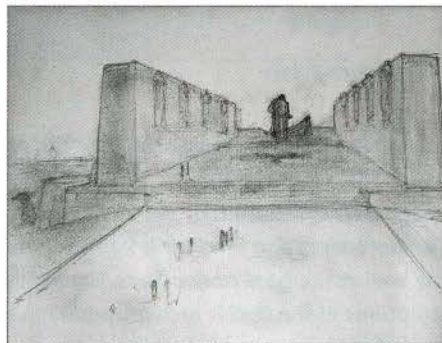


FIG. 18. WALTER ALLWARD, *MEMORIAL STUDY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #236), C. 1921.

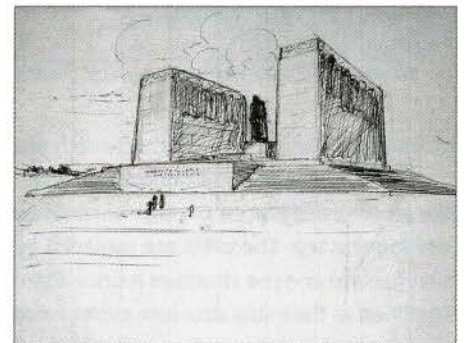


FIG. 19. WALTER ALLWARD, *MEMORIAL STUDY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #235), C. 1921.

One series of drawings entitled *Canadian Memorial in France, Rough Sketch* (fig. 17) shows clearly what must be one of Allward’s initial designs and one that provided many elements for the final monument. It was labeled by Allward: “Canada comes to France to claim her glorious dead”, “the immortal dead” and “the solid walls of defense” and “the failure of Germany on the wall of broken France”. The figure of Canada and the walls of defense evolved as Allward simplified the design and removed the overt references to the dead (figs. 18, 19). Direct

references to France, victors or the defeated, are eliminated and the dead are replaced by a symbolic tomb (fig. 20). Lutyens’s *Stone of Remembrance* may be the source (see Gavin Stamp’s article in this issue).⁵⁶

A parallel source of inspiration appears to have come from earlier Allward ideas for memorials. These include a *Sketch for the Plains of Abraham*, 1913 (fig. 21) and *Sketch for a Memorial on the St. Lawrence River* (fig. 22), which may have been conceived as a memorial to the sinking of the *Empress*

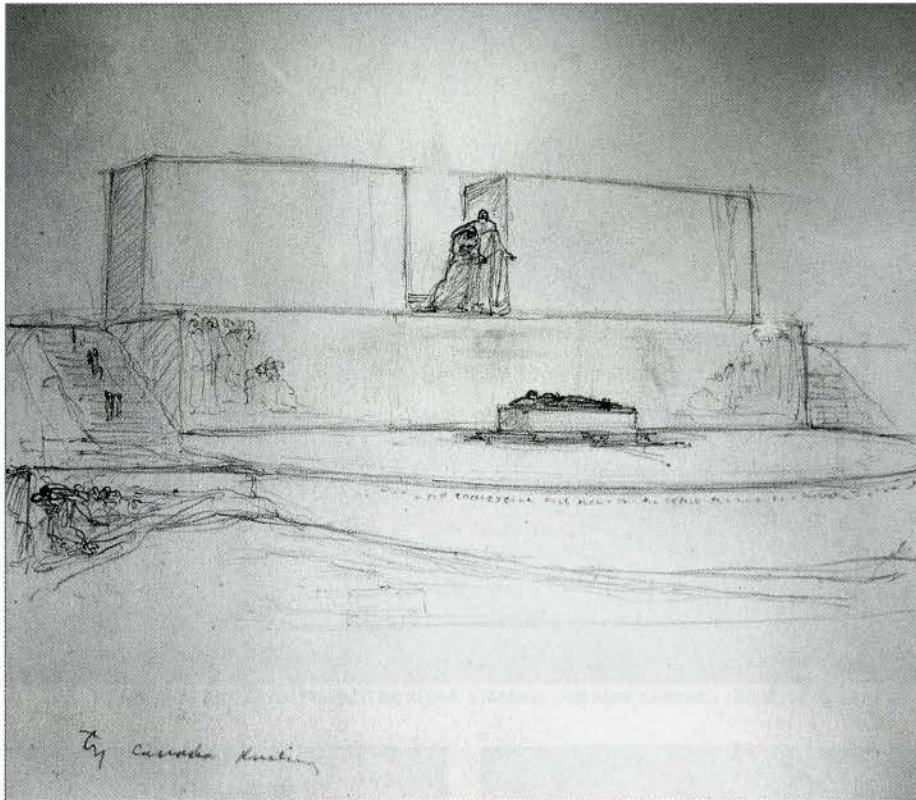


FIG. 20. WALTER ALLWARD, *VIMY MEMORIAL STUDY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #242), C. 1921.

of Ireland in May 1914. In the *Sketch for the Plains of Abraham*, a tall Gothic tower-like structure is placed on high cliffs overlooking the sea. The cliffs are replaced by high ground and the structure is once again simplified as the initial structure evolves into a massing of rectilinear forms reminiscent of the pylons ultimately used by Allward at Vimy. The introduction of the long horizontal wall behind the vertical elements anticipates Allward's design and was labeled: "Symbolic figure above & guarding the tomb below the resting figure with broken wings" and "comrades of the dead Peace keeping and guarding the tomb" (fig. 23).

By combining elements from the Vimy Memorial Study with other sketch designs illustrated here, Allward arrived at his final, *Design for Canadian Memorial for Vimy Ridge or Other Sites* (fig. 24). The pylons, now two in number, have been moved

behind the wall of defense and the figure of Canada returns to the wall, mourning the dead now represented by the tomb below. The defenders and mourning figures flank the wall at the base of the stairs. The jamb sculptures of the Gothic arch proposal have ascended to the top of the pylons.

Allward explained the finished design in the following allegorical terms:

At the base of the impregnable wall of defense are the Defenders; one group showing the Breaking of the Sword, the other the Sympathy of the Canadians for the Helpless. Above these are the mouths of guns, covered with olive and laurels. On the wall stands an heroic figure of Canada, brooding over the graves of her valiant dead; below is suggested a grave, with helmet, laurels, etc. Behind her stand two pylons symbolizing the two forces – Canadian and French – while between, at the base of these,

is the Spirit of Sacrifice, who giving all, throws the torch to his Comrade. Looking up, they see the figures of Peace, Justice, Truth, Knowledge, &c., for which they fought, chanting the Hymn of Peace. Around the figures are the shields of Britain, Canada and France, On the outside of the pylons is the Cross.⁵⁷

THE COMPETITION - SECOND STAGE

When the results of the preliminary stage of the competition were made public on 21 April, 1921, Allward's design was one of the seventeen chosen from the 160 submissions.⁵⁸ After reviewing the seventeen submissions, the assessors⁵⁹ recommended on 10 September that two designs alone should be executed. The assessors' report stated:

Of these designs... that by Mr. Allward, which in our opinion is specially fine and makes a very high appeal to the imagination, we suggest should be erected once only... It is a design of such individuality and complexity that its character precludes it from the possibility of repetition.⁶⁰

This recommendation conflicted with the wishes of Percy Nobbs, the architectural adviser to the CBMC, who expressed on numerous occasions his preference for a series of smaller monuments.⁶¹ The consensus was, however, in Allward's favour and his design soon received public approval. A. Y. Jackson, the outspoken member of the Group of Seven, came to the defense of the design in a letter to the editor of the *Canadian Forum*:

The Allward design was really *hors concours*. It went beyond and above anything the framers of the competition conceived of. He ignored the restrictions the other competitors accepted. After seeing his design one feels there should have been no restrictions and not that he should have worked within them.

Then, as there is to be one dominant memorial, the other memorials should be designed in relation to it. The second prize design bears no relation to the first, fine as it may be by itself. When one tries to form a conception of the Allward monument and the four or five replicas of the Clemesha⁶² monument along the battle line one is acutely conscious of discord.⁶³

Second place went to Frederick Chapman Clemesha from Regina and the monument he designed was eventually placed at Saint-Julien in Belgium. The remainder of the sites uniformly received a stone of remembrance (not unlike Lutyens's Great War Stone or Stone of Remembrance) with the names of the local battles engraved on it.

Having won the competition for the memorial, Allward spent the remainder of 1921 and the spring of 1922 preparing to move to Europe in order to oversee construction of the memorial. On 12 April, 1922, Allward was honoured at the Arts and Letters Club's final dinner of that winter. The program for the evening, presided over by Vincent Massey, included a one-act comedy of the "near north" entitled *From their own Place* with Arthur Lismer playing one of the character parts, and a valedictory of Allward given by Robert Holmes, supplemented by photos by M. O. Hammond "thrown upon the screen".⁶⁴ His studio and house sold, the Allward's departed for Belgium on 6 June, 1922.⁶⁵

VIMY RIDGE MEMORIAL

Allward's *Design for Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge or Other Sites*, according to the assessor's report:

was suited to a low hill rather than to a continuous and lofty bluff or cliff like Vimy Ridge, where the delicacy of line would be

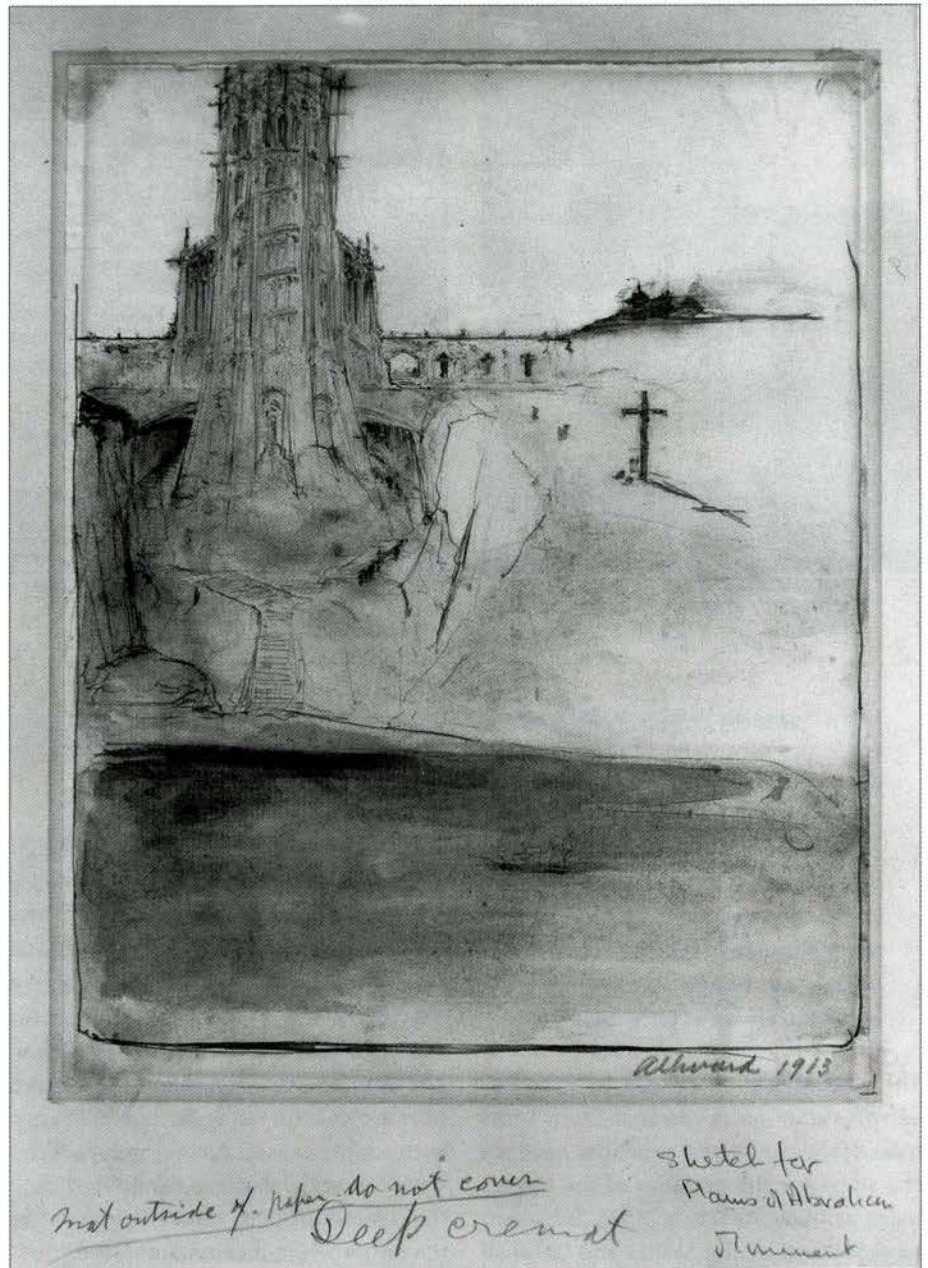


FIG. 21. WALTER ALLWARD, SKETCH FOR THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM MONUMENT (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #205), 1913.

lost in the mass of the ridge. On the Hill 62... it would command the whole of the area of the Ypres Salient.⁶⁶

The desire by the CBMC to place the memorial on Hill 62, near Ypres in Belgium, ran counter to the desire of Prime

Minister King, who stated in the House of Commons on 22 May, 1922:

I wish to say just one word in regard to this [matter] and the work of the War Memorials Commission... I hope the commission will consider very seriously indeed - I know in



FIG. 22. WALTER ALLWARD, SKETCH FOR THE MEMORIAL ST. LAWRENCE (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #203), UNDATED.

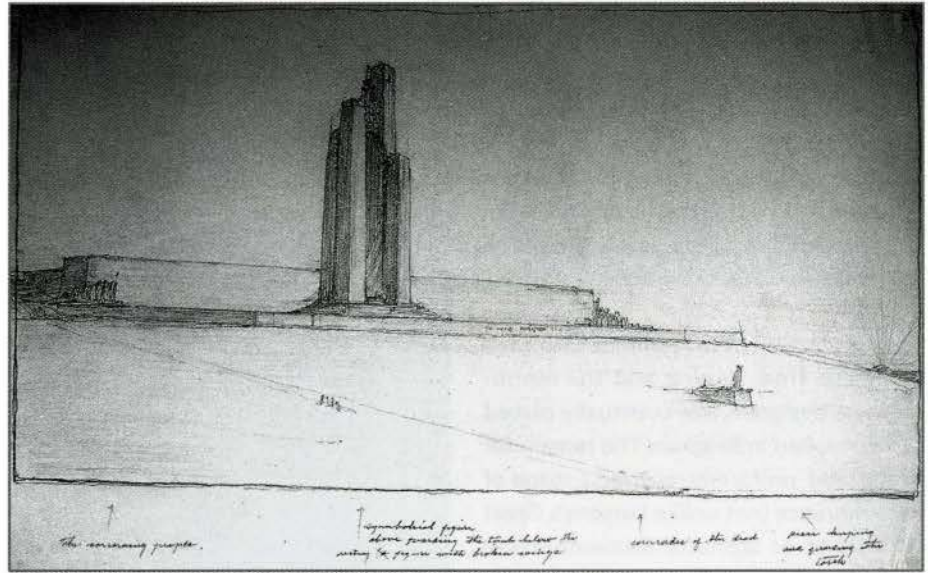


FIG. 23. WALTER ALLWARD, MEMORIAL STUDY (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #249), C. 1921.

fact it is considering it - the advisability of acquiring a very considerable tract of land along Vimy Ridge as a permanent memorial. Whilst sculpture may do a great deal to commemorate the sacrifices of our men, Vimy itself is one of the world's great altars, on which a perceptible portion of our manhood has been sacrificed in the cause of the world's freedom. As a national memorial nothing can equal the preservation of the ridge itself.⁶⁷

The sentiments expressed by King received unanimous support from both sides of the House and appear to have set the stage for the erection of the monument at Vimy. As late as 1923, however, expenditures by the Militia and Defense Department for the year 1923 record an allocation of \$10,000 on the contract price for the design of a monument on Hill 62. An experimental model of the memorial, built of canvas and plaster, was to be erected at the Hill 62 site to ascertain the suitability of the design and to decide upon the actual scale upon which the design would be carried out.⁶⁸ There is no indication that this model was built⁶⁹ and

the final location of the memorial at Vimy thus appears to have acquiesced to the desire of the Federal Government.

After several months of searching for a suitable studio in Belgium, and Paris, Allward finally settled on a studio in London. The search for suitable stone for the memorial proved less rapid and delayed the initial construction as Allward toured quarries in Europe and the British Isles. The stone ultimately chosen came from the eastern Adriatic coast near Split, but problems with supply caused further delays.⁷⁰ The Vimy Memorial was not completed until the summer of 1936, nineteen years after the battle which it commemorated.

The Memorial was unveiled 26 July, 1936 by Edward VIII and the President of France before an assembled audience of 100,000 people, including Canadians who had made the "pilgrimage" to Vimy. With the exception of the veterans, interest in a memorial on foreign soil to a war nearly twenty years in the past seemed to have waned among Canadians. Very little

coverage of the event was given by the news media and discussion of the monument was limited to patriotic statements. The British press, on the other hand, gave extensive coverage of the opening with multiple full-page stories appearing in most British newspapers.⁷¹ This may be partly due to the involvement of Edward VIII, but many of the stories discuss the nature of the Canadian monument.

Prime Minister King only visited the Vimy Memorial several months later while in Europe on other government business. On 11 October, 1936, he wrote a long entry in his diary about his day's activities. As for Vimy, he was less impressed with the Monument than with the lovely day and the appearance of the grounds:

The monument is exceedingly fine and impressive. One feels however, that it would be more suitable if it were a European monument to which all nations in the allied forces in the War had contributed, instead of Canada's monument. One cannot but feel that a sense of proportion and of the fitness of

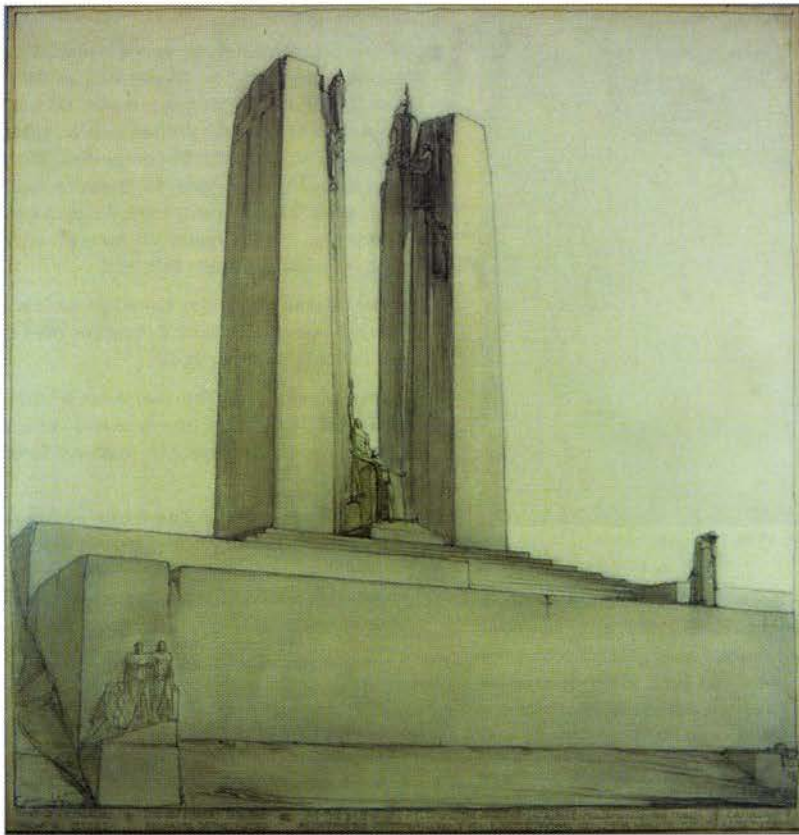


FIG. 24. WALTER ALLWARD, *DESIGN FOR VIMY* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #254), 1921.

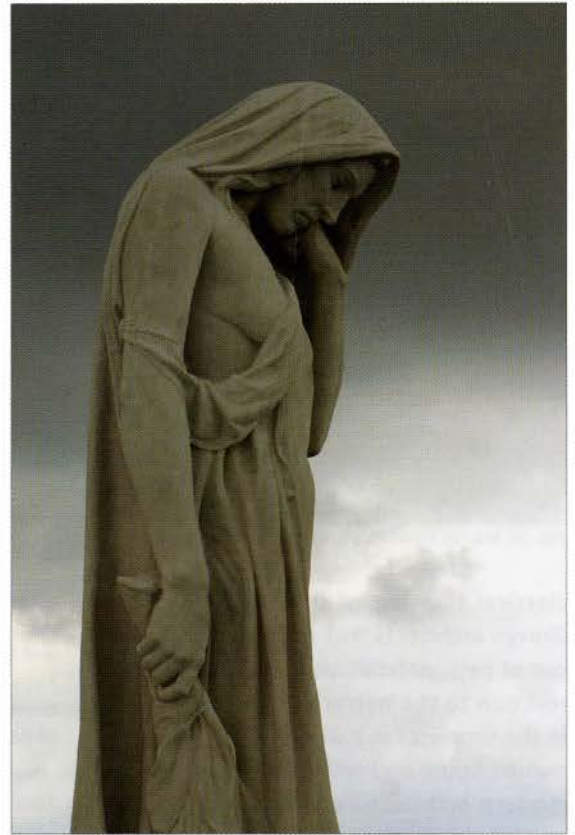


FIG. 25. WALTER ALLWARD, *CANADA* (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #539), 1936. | LANE BORSTAD.

things is lacking in anything so pretentious in comparison with the memorials of countries most concerned. It is in fact the most pretentious war memorial in the world.⁷²

RETURN TO CANADA

Beginning with hundreds of drawings for the initial design competition in October 1920 to the completion and unveiling in July of 1936, Allward was occupied solely with the Vimy Memorial. For fourteen of these years (1922-1936) he was resident in London, England and effectively removed from the Canadian art world.

An article in the *Globe and Mail* compared the the welcome given Allward with the civic welcome given by Toronto to the movie star Mae West and was:

chagrined to think that same honour has not been paid to him. Unfortunately knighthood no longer is in flower in the Dominion and the nation apparently has been too preoccupied with other problems like unemployment and western debts to pay tribute to the man who put Canada on the map artistically in Europe.⁷³

If the public seemed little concerned with Allward's achievements, he did receive recognition from other sources. The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada awarded him Honorary Fellowship in the Institute; Queen's University, Kingston, conferred an honorary Doctor of Laws; University of Toronto, an honorary LL.D.⁷⁴ On June 30, 1938, Prime Minister King moved in the House of Commons, seconded by the leader of the opposition Richard Bennett:

that this House desires particularly to express its appreciation of the services of Mr. Walter S. Allward, who, as the designer and architect of the memorial at Vimy, has given to the world, a work of art of outstanding beauty and character.

Through the years to come the Vimy memorial will remain the symbol of Canada's efforts in the war, and its tribute to those who, on the field of battle, sought to preserve the free institutions of mankind.⁷⁵

CONCLUSION

King's assessment in 1936 of Allward's monument has been disproved by thousands of visitors every year for the past 90 years. Allward brought a viewpoint to Vimy very different from the formal



FIG. 26. WALTER ALLWARD, VIMY RIDGE MEMORIAL, FRANCE (BORSTAD CATALOGUE #539), 1936. | LANE BORSTAD.

classical training of the Imperial War Graves architects. His conception grew out of personal disillusionment with and reaction to the horror of war. He spoke in the timeless language of the symbolic human figure and with his own brand of modern architecture, expressed in the striking simplicity of his wall surfaces and towering pylons. The visitor to Vimy Ridge today is moved by the mourning figure of Canada (fig. 25) and responds to the solemn grandeur of the architecture unaware of any pretentiousness such as King detected (fig. 26). Because the figures speak directly to the emotions rather than act strictly as religious symbols, they are accessible to those who bring to the memorial their own experiences of sorrow, loss, and hope.

NOTES

1. It is not surprising that there is a continuation of the British tradition of sculpture in Canada. Many of this country's early sculptors were born and trained in Britain prior to coming to Canada. Hamilton MacCarthy (1846-1939), the premier sculptor in late nineteenth century Canada, was successful and active member of the Royal Academy in London, Alfred Howell was born in England and trained at the Royal College of Art. Charles Adamson (1881-1959) came from Dundee, Scotland where he had a studio. Jacobine Jones (1898-1976) was born and trained in London and exhibited at the Royal Academy and Paris Salon. (*Lawrence Hayward Collection*, Artist files. Department of Art, Queen's University, Kingston).
2. Elsen, Albert E., 1974, *Origins of Modern Sculpture: Pioneers and Premises*. New York, George Braziller, p. 3.
3. Hopkins, J. Castell, ed., 1898, *Canada - An Encyclopaedia of the Country*. Toronto: Linscott Publishing Company. The section called The Development of Sculpture in Canada is written by Hamilton MacCarthy.
4. Hamilton MacCarthy was born in London England in 1846 and received his early artistic training there at the Marylebone Art School. He was a member of and exhibited regularly with the Royal Academy prior to coming to Toronto in 1885. The following year (1886) he exhibited five portrait busts with the Ontario Society of Artists. In 1887 he exhibited with the Royal Canadian Academy and Montreal Art Association. He received his first Canadian monumental sculpture commission in 1887 (*Egerton Ryerson*, Toronto, unveiled 24 May, 1889). He moved to Ottawa in 1899 where he continued to exhibit regularly with the RCA, OSA and MAA until the 1920s. He died in 1939 at the age of 93 (*Lawrence Hayward Collection*, Artist files. Department of Art, Queen's University, Kingston. Heyward has published *Canadian Sculptors Biographed: Walter Seymour Allward 1876 - 1955*. Kingston, Lawrence Hayward, 2003.
5. Hopkins: 382.
6. Early monuments include: Annie Pixley, 1896; Lord Tennyson, 1897; Sir Charles Tupper, 1898; Hon. Dr. Rolph, 1899; Hon. A.S. Hardy, 1899; Sir Oliver Mowat, 1900; Sir Wilfred Laurier, 1900; Sir George Brown, 1900; Sir George Ross, 1901; John Graves Simcoe, 1903; Sir Oliver Mowat, 1905; John S. MacDonald, 1909; Baldwin and Lafontaine, 1914; Edward VII (unfinished), 1912; Alexander Graham Bell, 1917.
7. Miller, Muriel. "Famous Canadian Artists - Walter S. Allward". *Onward* (Toronto) 49, no. 2 (8 January, 1939), p. 21-22.
8. Mavor, James, 1913, *The Year Book of Canadian Art: 1913*, comp. The Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, p. 252.
9. Borstad, Lane, 1990, *A Catalogue of Drawings and Sculpture of Walter Seymour Allward (1876-1955)*, MA Thesis, Queen's University. Numbers in brackets following the captions to illustrations refer to this catalogue.
10. Art Notes. *Saturday Night* (Toronto), 11 January, 1896, p. 9.
11. Challener, Frederick, *Biography of Walter Seymour Allward. 1955 (?)*, Typed Manuscript, Queen's University Archives, Allward Fonds, p. 1.
12. Mavor: 251
13. Henry Simpson was a Toronto born architect who had studied under E. J. Lennox and in New York. He returned to Toronto in 1888 and was in partnership with Charles Gibson by 1890. During the time Allward was apprenticing as a draughtsman, Simpson and Gibson designed Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Queen Street, and Bethany Chapel, University Avenue (Arthur, Eric, 1986, *Toronto: No Mean City*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, p. 158).
14. Perry, Anne Anderson. "Walter Allward: Canada's Great Sculptor". *National Pictorial*, (1 March, 1922), p. 8-9, 55.
15. Guthrie, Ann, 1986, *Don Valley Legacy - A Pioneer History*. Erin, Ontario, The Boston Mills Press, p. 155.
16. Northwest Rebellion is now more commonly known as the Riel Rebellion after the Metis leader Louis Riel. Riel was found guilty of High Treason and hung in 16 November, 1885.
17. Challener: 1
18. Ontario Archives, MV 1294, *Hammond Notebooks*: p. 4

19. The figure of Canada is very similar to that of Daniel Chester French's *The Republic* at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893. This was a sixty-four foot allegorical colossus conceived by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and created by French.
20. Other monuments to suffer from this problem were *Bell Telephone*, *Edward VII*, *Brantford War memorial*, *Peterborough War Memorial* and *Vimy Ridge*.
21. *Art Notes*: 9. A description of the clay models is given which describes the difficulty experienced in deciding on the right dress for the figure as well as pointing out details such as the use of maple leaves for the wreath.
22. Perry: 8.
23. Works include: Memorials to *Annie Pixley* (1886); Busts of *Lord Tennyson* (1897), *Sir Charles Tupper* (1898), *Hon. Dr. Rolph* (1899), *Hon. A.S. Hardy* (1899), *Hon. Sir Oliver Mowat* (1900), *Sir Wilfred Laurier* (1900), *Sir George Burton* (1900), *Hon. Sir George Ross* (1901); Large scale memorials to *John Graves Simcoe* (1903), *Nicholas Flood Davin* (1903), *Hon. Sir Oliver Mowat* (1905), *Hon. John Sandfield MacDonald* (1909), *Baldwin and Lafontaine Memorial* (1914) and *Alexander Graham Bell* (1917). He also received a commission to sculpt *King Edward VII* (1912) which was never completed. The figures of *Truth and Justice* from the Edward VIII memorial were eventually placed in front the of Supreme Court in Ottawa.
24. Hale, Katherine. "Walter S. Allward Sculptor". *Canadian Magazine* 52, no.3 (January, 1919): p. 785.
25. See the article published by McCarthy in 1898 (Hopkins: 398).
26. The South African War (Boer War) took place between Britain and the South African republics of South Africa from 1899 to 1902. Canadian troops distinguished themselves in battle and their success became a source of national pride for English-speaking Canadians. Criticism of the British leadership helped fuel Canadian self-confidence and national identity.
27. McFarlane, Arthur. "The Work of Walter Allward". *Busy Man's Magazine* (Toronto) 19, no 1, (November, 1909): p. 31.
28. Hale: 787.
29. *Hammond Notebooks*: entry 46.
30. Shipley, Robert, 1987, *To Mark Our Place: A History of Canadian War Memorials*. Toronto, New Canada Publications, p. 21.
31. This tender is contained in a letter to W. Preston, Chairman of the Soldiers War Memorial, Stratford now in Queen's University Archives, Allward Fonds, Undated Correspondence file.
32. The quote included picking up the plasters at Allward's studio, casting in bronze, delivery to Statford and erection of the figures within a three month time frame and at a cost of \$4,600.00. (Queen's University Archives, Allward Fonds, Undated correspondence file, quote from C. Marchant, Assistant Manager Architectural Bronze and Iron, 10 March, 1922.)
33. Allward quoted in *Construction*: 13 (August, 1920) p. 264.
34. See Hamilton MacCarthy in Hopkins: 381
35. *Saturday Night*, (13 November, 1920), p. 5
36. *Ibid*.
37. In a memo to the Battlefields Memorial Commission in 1934, Allward claimed that he suffered a personal loss of \$500.00 on Stratford for leaving before completion of the monument and \$10,000.00 on the Peterborough memorial as a result of having a London sculptor build the full scale figures. Queens University Archives, Allward Fonds, Miscellaneous, *Memo of Losses re Vimy*, [1934]
38. "W. S. Allward, Noted Sculptor has Created Many Fine Designs". *Brantford Expositor*, (September, 1923), no page.
39. *Souvenir of the Dedication of the Brant War Memorial*. Brantford, Brant War Memorial Association, 25 May, 1933, p. 2.
40. *Memo of Losses*: 3 (see note 37 above).
41. The name Brantford is erased but legible.
42. *Souvenir*: 16. Walter's son had established an architectural firm in Toronto in partnership with the son of G. W. Gouinlock designer of the I.O.F. Temple for which Walter Allward received his first private commission in 1899. Walter Allward is listed as designer and Sculptor; Hugh Allward - Architect in charge; and H. Dunnington-Grubb as Landscape Architect. Dunnington-Grubb in collaboration with W. L. Sommerville (architect) carried many commissions in Ontario which incorporated sculpture by such sculptors as Frances Loring, Florence Wyle, Emanuel Hahn and Elizabeth Wyn Wood. For a study of this collaboration between architecture, landscape design and sculpture see Coutu, Joan, 1989, *Design and Patronage: The Architecture of the Niagara Parks 1935 - 1941*, MA thesis, Queen's University.
43. Ontario Archives : Accession number 10696.
44. *RCA Memorial Exhibition*: Art Gallery of Toronto. 1955, n.p.
45. Interview, Peter Allward, 28 July, 1988.
46. During World War II Allward produced a series of drawings that he referred to as "war cartoons".
47. Hopkins: 381.
48. A committee was created in Parliament 21 April, 1920 to "Report on memorials to be erected on battlefields to commemorate heroism of Canadians" (*Parliamentary Debates - Commons*, 1920: p. 1461-1462) and tabled its report in the house 6 May, 1920 (*Parliamentary Debates - Commons*, 1920: p. 2078).
49. Library and Archives Canada, *Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission*, RG 24, vol. 1845, file GA Q 11-28, Conditions of Competition in Design for Eight Memorial Monuments to be erected in France and Belgium, 20 December, 1920, p. 5. The eight original sites selected were: Saint-Julien; Passchendaele; Observatory Ridge; Vimy Ridge; Dury Crossroads; Bourlon Wood; Courcellette; Hospital Wood.
50. Brigadier-General H. T. Hughes was appointed Chief Engineer of the entire project; Honourable S. C. Mewburn, Chairman of the Commission; Colonel Henry C. Osborn, Honorary Secretary; and Percy E. Nobbs, MA, FRIBA, RCA architectural adviser to the Commission.
51. Library and Archives Canada, *Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission*, RG 24, vol. 1845, file GA Q 11-28, *Conditions of Competition in Design for Eight Memorial Monuments to be erected in France and Belgium*, 20 December, 1920: p. 4.
52. Miller: 21-22.
53. Allward quoted in Perry, Anne Anderson, "Walter Allward: Canada's Sculptor". *Studio*, 75 (April, 1922), p. 123.
54. *Ibid*.
55. Challenger: 8.
56. Allward's note to "try Canada Kneeling" confirms the identification of this drawing as an early concept for the Mourning Canada at Vimy. It is also drawn on the reverse side of letter head paper for his 1920s studio in Toronto.

57. Osborne, Henry C., "Brief History of the Competition for the Canadian Battlefield". *Construction*. 14 (December, 1921): p. 369
58. The designs selected from the first stage were reproduced in *Construction*: June, 1921, p. 160-172. Library and Archives Canada, *Canadian Battlefields Memorials Commission*, RG 24, vol. 1845, file GA Q 11-28, Conditions of Competition in Design (Second Stage) for Eight Memorial Monuments to be erected in France and Belgium, 4 May 1921. The competitors for the second stage were: W. Allward; C. Burgess; C. Clemesha; C. Cobb; P. Domville and L. Husband; W. Gagnon and A. Clarence; G. Hill; A. King; F. Lessore; R. Perry; K. Reay; S. Richie; D. Rowat; R. Traquair; J. Vanier; and P. Wilson. All appear to have been architects except George Hill the only other sculptor to have been selected for the second stage.
59. The assessors consisted of Professor Charles H. Reilly, OBE, BA, FRIBA, representing the Royal Institute of British Architects (London); M. Paul Cret, representing the Société Centrale des Architectes (Paris) and Mr. Frank Darling, FRIBA, RCA, representing the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.
60. Library and Archives Canada, CBMC, 1921: p. 10.
61. Nobbs, Percy. "Battlefields Memorials". *Construction*, 13 (November, 1920): p. 334-335; "Canadian Battlefields Memorials Competition - Notes on First Stage". *Construction* 14 (June, 1921): p. 160-172.
62. F. Chapman Clemesha was a Regina architect whose design was chosen for monuments to be erected at the seven other sites (*Construction* 1920: 335).
63. Jackson, A. Y. Letter to Editor re: Allward Memorial. *Canadian Forum* 11, no. 18 (March, 1922): p. 559.
64. Challenger: 11.
65. In his *Memo of Losses*: 1, (see note 37 above) Allward claimed that he had to sell his house at a loss and "because of haste I had practically give all my furniture and studio effects away... as I had not time to have a sale." He received the final signed contract just ten days before leaving for England.
66. *Construction*, 1921: 368.
67. Debates in the House of Commons, 22 May, 1922: p. 2101
68. Osborne, 1921: 370.
69. The payment records of the Militia and Defence department record only expenses "in connection with the manufacture of a 12 foot model of the C.B.M. monument" (*Sessional Paper* No. 1, 1923, P-155). This is probably the model entitled *Vimy War Memorial* displayed in the Architectural Exhibit at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1923 according to *Construction*, September, 1923, p. 316-317).
70. Extensive documentation of Allward's search for an appropriate quarry can be found in Queen's University Archives, Allward Fonds.
71. There are three volumes of British press clippings at Library and Archives Canada from the weeks leading up to the opening. These include several hundred periodicals including larger London ones such as *The Illustrated London News* and the *Times*.
72. Library and Archives Canada, *King Papers*, October 11, 1936: p. 393.
73. Marchington, William. "Recognition of Allward Compared to Welcome Accorded Movie". *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 10 February, 1937, p. 3. For an earlier Marchington article complimentary of Allward, see Pierre du Prey's postscript to this issue of the *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*.
74. *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*. 139, no. 3 (March, 1937): p. 38; *Queen's Review* 11, no. 5 (May, 1937): p. 126; MacDonald, Colin. *Dictionary of Canadian Artists*. Ottawa: Canadian Paperbacks, 1967: p. 11.
75. *Journals of the House of Commons*, 76 (1938): p. 555. King visited the memorial 12 October, 1936 and the delay of two years before Allward's official recognition is unexplained. King was impressed with the memorial for on the same day as his visit he telegraphed Vincent Massey, High Commissioner in London, with orders to halt negotiations regarding the transfer of ownership of Vimy to the Imperial War Graves Commission of Britain. In King's opinion: "We are inclined to the view that the memorial ... should be regarded as property of our own government" (Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, vol 6298, file 40-1-2 vol. 3, 13 October, 1936).