War Memorials of the eastern Peak District
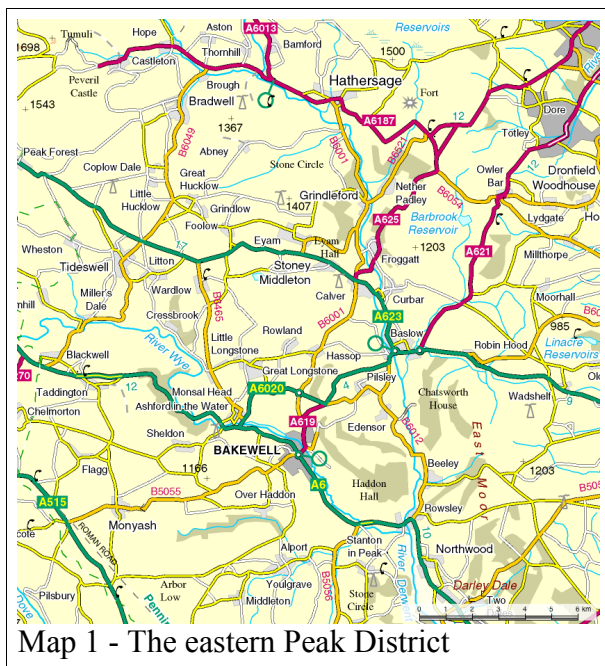

War memorial, St Michael and All Angels, Hathersage

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Map 1 - The eastern Peak District

The Memorials Today

This report describes a study of the war memorials in the towns and villages of the eastern Peak District, Derbyshire, UK. The area is bounded approximately by Castleton, Hathersage, Rowsley and Monyash, and covers approximately 250 sq. km. This is shown in Map 1 (obtained from www.memory-map.co.uk, and based on the Ordinance Survey UK 1:250000 road map)

The principal memorials were identified using the United Kingdom National Inventory of War Memorials website (UKNIWM, 2009), and were then visited, examined and photographed. Individual memorials (graves and plaques dedicated to one person) were generally excluded, as the study concentrates on collective memorials, and some additional memorials not included in UKNIWM were also found. In a few cases, the UKNIWM data were found to be missing or inaccurate, and an update was sent to the Imperial War Museum (who maintain UKNIWM). Some memorials inside churches were also excluded, when the church was found to be closed. With one exception (Nelson's monument, on Birchen Edge, near Baslow), all the memorials commemorated the two world wars. Only one of these (the memorial garden in Bakewell) commemorated a casualty of a later war (the Korean war). In all, 33 memorials were surveyed, in 21 towns and villages, during November and December 2008. 17 were stand-alone monuments, while the others were buildings, gardens, plaques or individual oddities. Collectively, they listed the names of 570 dead (408 from WW1, 162 from WW2, and 2 from other wars), and 6 memorials also listed the names of 508 who served and survived. The basic data are listed in Table 1.

More than half the memorials (19) were directly associated with a church (either in the churchyard, or inside the church), and a further 5 were explicitly Christian in form (crosses) or in the inscription. Of the remaining 9, 5 were either gardens or buildings. The most popular format (8 examples) was the celtic (or wheel) cross, usually mounted on a plinth with steps, as typified by those shown below.

Bamford 2

Curbar

Eyam

Rowsley

(The name in the picture caption corresponds with the name given in Table 1)
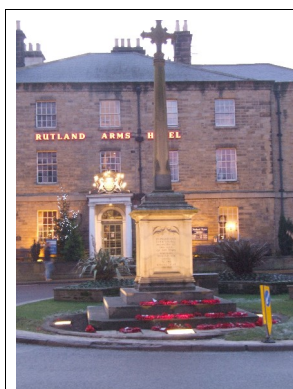
Other forms of cross, again with a plinth and steps, formed the next most common type of memorial (5 examples), as shown below:
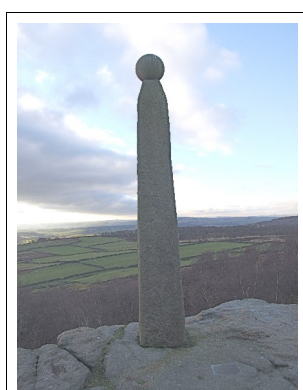

Tideswell 2

Grindleford

Bakewell 1

Castleton 2

Stone monoliths of various types formed the last group of monuments (4 examples)
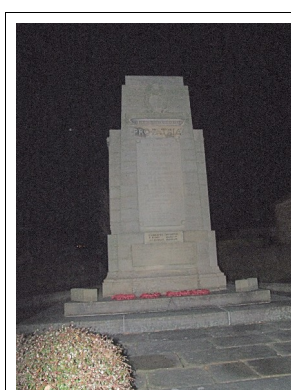

Baslow 1(Nelson's)

Monyash

Gt Longstone 2

Hope

12 of the 17 monuments (crosses and monoliths) were made of local gritstone or limestone, the remainder being granite, marble, or a mixture of types. They varied considerably in the extent and type of decoration. I classified the monument decoration as either 'Minimal', meaning little more than an inscription in plain text (6 examples, e.g. Baslow 1), 'Moderate', meaning some decoration of the monument, or a complex font for the inscription (7 examples, e.g. Gt Longstone 2), or 'Florid', meaning full, complex decoration of the monument (4 examples, e.g. Grindleford).

The three memorial halls at Hathersage, Bradwell and Ashford were unremarkable architecturally, but remained in use for community purposes. The Bradwell hall was not listed in UKNIWM.


Hathersage 2

Bradwell 2

Ashford 3

Of the three memorial gardens, two (both small, in Youlgreave and Middleton by Youlgreave) were created in 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of WW2, while the garden in Bakewell was specifically a memorial for the dead of WW2, to which a single casualty of the Korean war had later been added. The garden is quite large (750m^2 approx.), and occupies a prominent position in the centre of the town. The names of the dead are recorded plainly on a small plinth, which forms the base of a flagpole.
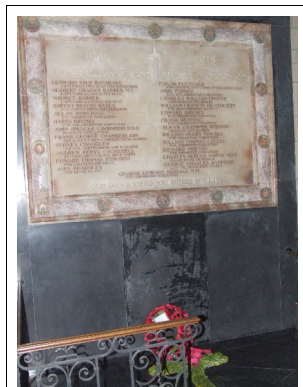
Edensor (WW1)

Ashford 2 (WW2)

Little Longstone (WW1)

Tideswell 1 (WW1)

UKNIWM lists many plaques in churches in the area covered, but most of these commemorate individuals, and quite a few churches were closed at the time of the field work. Four larger plaques which commemorate groups (villagers, parishioners) were seen and are included, shown aside.

The relatively elaborate WW1 plaques in Edensor and Tideswell churches contrast with very plain plaques in the same churches for WW2, while the WW2 plaque in Little Longstone is very similar to the WW1 example shown. Clearly fashions had changed in the intervening 25 years or so.

The remaining 6 memorials were each unique, and difficult to categorise.

The memorial in Hathersage church (frontispiece) is a complex piece of sculpture, individually designed and executed (according to a notice beside it) by a Miss Winser, whose family lived next door to the church. The sculpture is inspired by words from the 'Pilgrims Progress' (Bunyan, 1678), and is a bronze relief of the cross, flanked by angels in military garb, with below it mounted on a stone plinth, a book of remembrance listing all those who died in both world wars, and those who served and survived WW2. It is flanked on either side by original wooden battlefield crosses, the colours of the Royal British Legion, and the Union Flag.

Inside Gt Longstone church, in a frame on the wall, is a roll of honour listing all those who served in both world wars, with the dead highlighted, but with no clear indication of who served or died in each war. Comparison with the village memorial (Gt Longstone 2), and UKNIWM has enabled a breakdown of the dead against WW1 and WW2, but this is not possible for the survivors.
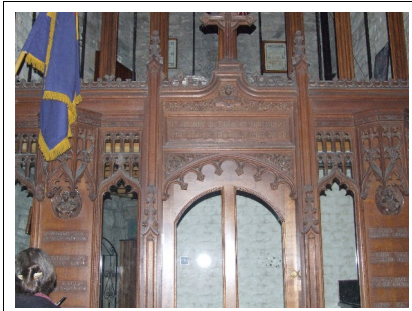
The remaining four memorials are shown below
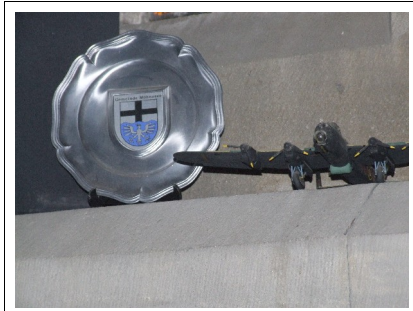
Bamford 2

Middleton 2

Castleton 1

Taddington 1

Taddington 1 is a simple wooden lytch gate, with the inscription "1914 1918" and the initials "SB". Castleton 1 (only partly shown) is a complex, intricately carved wooden rood screen, originally erected to commemorate WW1, with additional wooden panels added for the dead of WW2. Middleton 1 and 2 are modern (1995) and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of WW2, and the 6 crew of an RAAF Wellington bomber that crashed near the village in 1944, respectively. The plaque, with a picture of the bomber, is fixed to a rough stone block positioned by the recreation ground.

Bamford 2 is by far the simplest memorial in this survey, but with the most poignant tale to tell. According to the church warden, and other material in the church, the plastic model Lancaster, with its 'bouncing bomb' commemorates the fact that the 'Dambusters' (RAF 617 sqdn.) trained over Ladybower reservoir, and used the church as a turning point. In 1995, the parishioners of Bamford contacted the people of Möhnesee, one of the villages on the Ruhr destroyed when the target dam burst, and arranged to visit them as an act of reconciliation and remembrance of the German dead. Since then, the two villages have visited each other in alternate years, and exchanged gifts, including the commemorative plate exhibited beside the model Lancaster.

Origins

In his comprehensive book, Quinlan (2005) traces the origins of the British war memorial to the "commemorative statuary and the painted saints of the rood screen ..." and also states that "Britain's great churches and cathedrals were traditionally the sites where great commanders were commemorated" (Introduction, p XVI). Corke (2005) cites what is probably the earliest identified war memorial in Britain as the 10th century Sueno's Stone, near Forres in Scotland. Quinlan (2005) also outlines how, although there are memorials to many earlier wars, the numbers grew quickly in the 19th century, with "at least 1,000 .. in the UK (for) the second Boer War (1899-1902)" (p XIX). While foreign wars from the Napoleonic period onwards had attracted public interest, only relatively small numbers of (mostly professional) soldiers and sailors served and died in them, and memorials mostly celebrated victories and the great commanders (Nelson's monument being the sole example of these in this study). The massive and unprecedented casualties of WW1, to conscripts as well as professionals, affected almost every town and village in the UK, and marked "the point at which war memorials became a familiar part of the landscape" (Quinlan, 2005, p XIX). From UKNIWM (2009), nearly every parish has some form of memorial (although not all were seen in this study). This study recorded the names of 408 dead in WW1, which equates, according to my calculations, to about 5% of the male population in those parishes, using the figures from the 1911 census (Histpop, 2004-2007). Assuming half the male population was too old or young to fight, that means about 10% of the young

men died in WW1. The corresponding count for WW2 is just below 4%. See Table 2 for the details. Quinlan (2005) gives the figure for male deaths in WW1 for the UK population as 6.3% in the 15-49 age group. He cites the combination of the government prohibition on repatriation of the dead, and the "millions of bereaved without a tangible focus for their grief" (p 42) as the main reason why enormous numbers of memorials were raised, not only by communities, but by schools, businesses and others. Within the area of this study, for example, UKNIWM lists plaques of remembrance inside Lady Manners School and the National Westminster Bank in Bakewell.

Type, Design, and Decoration

Quinlan (2005, p 43) states that "the most common memorial type is a bronze soldier on a stone plinth", but that is not true of the eastern Peak District, where the cross predominates, and there are no bronze soldiers. Table 3 analyses the decorative styles of the crosses, monoliths and complex plaques. Abstract patterns - mainly celtic interwoven curves and circles - are the most common, followed by plant themes, principally oak leaves, English rosettes and wreaths, plus a few vine leaves, acorns and a couple of unidentified flowers, possibly lilies at Eyam and sunflowers at Rowsley. The most common figure is of an angel, sometimes holding a sword, followed by the 'pelican feeding chicks'. Among the inanimate themes, the sword and the cross are the most common. UKNIWM declares the object on the Stoney Middleton memorial to be an anchor, but it is broken, and may be a cross or a sword. It is accompanied by a tool, possibly a mason's trowel, and may even be a masonic symbol. Some of these themes are illustrated below.

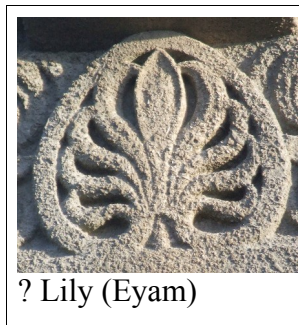Abstract and sun cross (Bamford 1)

Oak leaves, abstract and wreath (Curbar)

Angel with sword (Castleton 2)
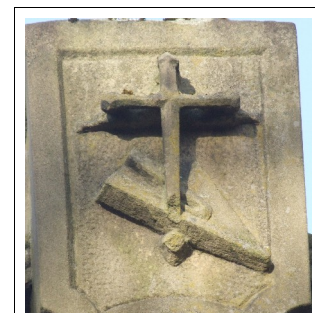

? Sunflowers (Rowsley)
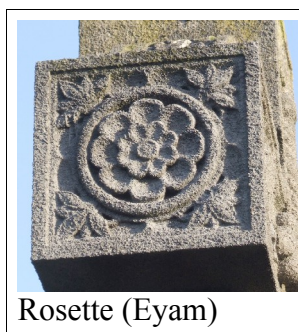

? Lily (Eyam)

Pelican & chicks (Taddington 2)

Abstract patterns (Baslow 2)

Cross and trowel (?) (Stoney Middleton)

Rosette (Eyam)

The 'Pelican & chicks' is a Christian symbol representing Christ sacrificing his blood for mankind, according to Saunders (2003).

All but one of the memorial crosses (Bradwell being the exception) are surrounded by some form of enclosure, such as a low fence, posts and chain, a kerb, or paving. These are purely symbolic, as they do not prevent entry, and perhaps represent the boundary between the land of the living, and land dedicated to the honoured dead. Archaeologists such as Bevan (1999) would recognise liminality here.

Although the analysis of inscriptions is more a matter for local historians, it was observed that almost all names were inscribed in alphabetical order, with only four memorials including rank. Where rank was mentioned, officers were rare, which accords with Mansfield's (1995) observation that "the predominance of privates with a sprinkling of NCOs is a common pattern in country war memorials" (p 70). Two famous names, both majors, were noted in this study: B.Z. de Ferranti, the son of the pioneer electrical engineer is commemorated at Baslow, and William Cavendish, heir to the Duke of Devonshire, is commemorated at both Ashford and Edensor.

Mansfield (1995) outlines some of the conflicts that occurred after the war over the issue of remembrance, and describes how many memorials were set up by local committees of worthies and/or ex-servicemen, who raised funds both from the public, and from wealthy individuals. In some places there were rival committees, and even the erection of two or more memorials in the same place. In this study, many villages have more than one memorial for WW1, but for the most part, the duplication is between a memorial inside the church, and an external memorial of some kind. Only Ashford and Bradwell 'double up' in having both both a cross and a memorial hall. No evidence of local conflict was found, although Mansfield also mentions, in passing, (p 72) that soldiers from Eyam, while on leave, took part in a trade union demonstration in March 1918.

One possible reason why crosses predominate in the Peak District may be the strong local tradition of cross-building. Sharpe (2002) describes the many stone crosses to be found in the Peak District, erected from Saxon times up to the 19th century, to mark boundaries, markets, preaching points and events, including 25 within the study area. Many of these no longer survive, or do so only as fragments. However, those shown below could not be missed while surveying the nearby war memorials. The typology is according to Sharpe (2002).

'Corn Law' cross, Stoney Middleton
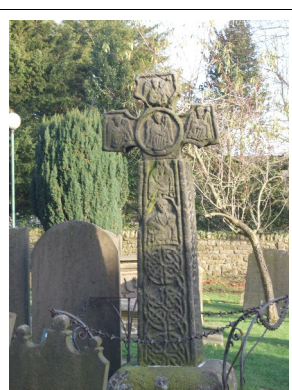
Saxon Cross, Eyam

14th century cross, Foolow
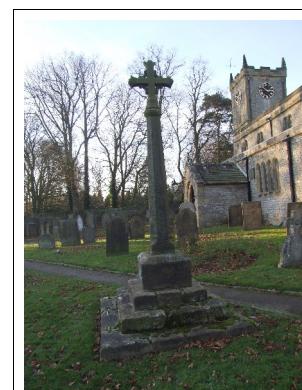
Churchyard cross, Gt Longstone

Market cross, Gt Longstone

Saxon cross, Bakewell

Market cross, Monyash

Sharpe also mentions Wellington's Cross on Baslow Edge, which was erected in 1866 "as a balance to the Nelson monument, and to record a visit by the Iron Duke" (p 91). I have not counted this as a war memorial, since Wellington had a long political career after the Napoleonic wars.

As can be seen, these older crosses closely resemble the war memorial crosses, in size, in having a plinth and steps, and being constructed of local stone. They lack the liminal enclosures of most war memorials, the fences at Bakewell and Eyam being relatively recent, and clearly intended to protect the ancient monuments from the public.

Conclusion

War memorials in the eastern Peak District share their origins with many others in Britain, in the carnage of the trenches of WW1, but the stone crosses, which are much more common here than in Britain generally, exhibit a style shared with their local predecessors, which were already in use as public monuments, such as market crosses, before the war. As elsewhere, a minority of communities chose to create 'useful' memorials such as village halls and gardens. The people of Bamford, Middleton and Youlgreave also chose to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of WW2 in their own unique way.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

UKNIWM - the United Kingdom National Inventory of War Memorials, an on-line database of most of the memorials in the UK, maintained by the Imperial War Museum - see UKNIWM (2009) in the references below.

WW1 - World War 1

WW2 - World War 2

Tables

Table 1 is the index of all the memorials, and gives details of location and type. All measurements and details of materials etc. were recorded during this fieldwork.

Table 2 analyses death rates by village, and lists the numbers of survivors on the memorials.

Table 3 analyses the decorative style of each memorial, where relevant

A full set of photographs of all the memorials surveyed in this study is available from the author.

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Town/Village	Nat Grid Ref SK+	UKNIWM Ref	Type	Height (m)	Listing Reg(iment), date of death place of death	Location	Enclosure (size in m)	Date erected (if known)	Notes
Ashford in the Water 1	19506 69708	14387	Celtic cross	3.00	Name	Churchyard	No		WW2 on separate plaque
Ashford in the Water 2	19506 69708	14389	Plaque	0.50	Name, reg	Churchyard	No		
Ashford in the Water 3	19719 69766	14388	Building			Edge of village	No	1929	
Bakewell 1	21811 68498	14392	Simple cross	4.50	Name	Centre of village	Roundabout		
Bakewell 2	21769 68498	14393	Garden		Name	Centre of village	Large garden		Memorial garden, central inscribed plinth and flagpole
Bamford 1	20749 83376	1472	Celtic cross	5.50		Churchyard	Garden 10x10	1922	7 shell casings around base
Bamford 2	20749 83376	14258	Other			Inside church	No		Model Lancaster + commemorative plate
Baslow 1 (Nelson's)	27900 72949	57257	Monolith	3.00	Name, rank, year	Open country	No	1810	Obelisk with globe
Baslow 2	25214 72370	14398	Celtic cross	4.30	Name, rank, reg, dod	Churchyard	4x4		Has gate to road
Bradwell 1	17472 81088	14430	Celtic cross	3.50	Name	Churchyard	No		
Bradwell 2	17319 81321	none	Building			Centre of village	No	1923	
Castleton 1	15029 82908	605	Other	4.50	Rank, name, reg, dod, pod	Inside church	No	1919	Rood screen with plaques
Castleton 2	15037 82808	604	Simple cross	3.00	Name	Centre of village	10x10x10	1919/1934	Triangular enclosure, year of service on roll of honour only
Curbar, Calver & Froggatt	24757 74415	637	Celtic cross	3.50	Name	Churchyard	No		Names grouped by 3 villages
Edensor	25087 69913	14465/14468	Plaque	3.00	Name, rank, reg	Inside church	Rail, 1x2		WW1 – marble plaque, WW2 - alabaster plaque
Eyam	21774 76411	14475	Celtic cross	3.50	Name, dod	Churchyard	3x3	1921/1947	
Great Longstone 1	20029 71931	57270	Other	0.80	Name	Inside church	No		Roll of honour, inc Lt Longstone, Wardlow, Hassop and Rowland: difficult to separate WW1 from WW2
Great Longstone 2	19929 71806	14486	Monolith	3.00	Name	Centre of village	3x3	1920	Gt Longstone only
Grindleford	24259 77831	628	Simple cross	4.20	Rank, name, dod, age	Centre of village	5x5	1922/1947	Surrounded by small garden, with drinking fountain by road
Hathersage 1	23377 81903	3435/14499/14500	Other	2.00	Rank, name, reg	Inside church	No		Sculptured plaque, plus book of remembrance and 2 battlefield crosses
Hathersage 2	23242 81223	none	Building			Edge of village	No		
Hope	17337 83488	14279	Monolith	4.00	Name	Centre of village	3x3		Cenotaph style
Little Longstone	18782 71636	14538/14539	Plaque	0.30	Rank, name, dod	Inside church	No		2 plaques in church porch
Middleton by Youlgreave 1	19564 63180	57220	Garden			Centre of village	Garden 4x6	1995	Memorial garden, 50th anniversary, no names
Middleton by Youlgreave 2	19564 63180	19157	Other	0.70	Rank, name, age	Centre of village	No	1995	Rough stone block + plaque, picture of Wellington bomber, date of crash
Monyash	15016 66556	14420	Monolith	3.50	Name, reg	Centre of village	3x3		Tapered pillar with cap
Rowsley	25481 66070	14427	Celtic cross	3.50	Name	Churchyard	No		
Stoney Middleton	23164 75488	698	Celtic cross	3.50	Name	Churchyard	No		
Taddington 1	14194 71111	none	Other	3.50		Churchyard			Lytch gate, 1914-18, no names
Taddington 2	14194 71111	14476	Simple cross	3.50	Name	Churchyard	4x4		
Tideswell 1	15257 75753	14479/14481	Plaque	1.50	Name, rank	Inside church	No		Separate plaques for WW1 and WW2
Tideswell 2	15169 75638	14482	Simple cross	6.00	Name	Centre of village	12x4.5		Same names as Tideswell 2, plus some more
Youlgreave	21221 64393	14526	Garden	0.50		Churchyard	Garden 1.7x1.4	1995	Garden with plaque, 50th anniversary of end of WW2, no names

Table 1 - Location and type

Town/Village	No. of dead			Male Population			No of survivors		
	WW1	WW2	Other	1911 Census	%killed WW1	%killed WW2	WW1	WW2	Other &NK
Ashford in the Water	19	3		317	6.0%	0.9%			
Bakewell	66	24	1	1485	4.4%	1.6%			
Bamford	16	18		477	3.4%	3.8%			
Baslow	22	13		408	5.4%	3.2%			
Bradwell	31	6		645	4.8%	0.9%			
Castleton	8	9		254	3.1%	3.5%	84		
Curbar, Calver & Froggatt	19	2		370	5.1%	0.5%			
Edensor & Chatsworth	25	6		140	17.9%	4.3%			
Eyam	23	6		565	4.1%	1.1%			
Great Longstone	12	9		247	4.9%	3.6%			221
Grindleford (Eyam Woodlands)	16	12		183	8.7%	6.6%			
Hathersage	23	22		775	3.0%	2.8%		21	
Hope, Aston & Thornhill	11	7		490	2.2%	1.4%	102		
Little Longstone	2	1		59	3.4%	1.7%			
Monyash	13	1		182	7.1%	0.5%	32	17	
Rowsley	9	3		166	5.4%	1.8%			
Stoney Middleton	14	4		248	5.6%	1.6%			
Taddington	6	2		183	3.3%	1.1%	31		
Tideswell	73	8		932	7.8%	0.9%			
Totals	**408**	**156**	**1**	**8126**	**5.0%**	**1.9%**	**249**	**38**	**221**

Notes

1 - No significant change in these parish populations from 1911 to 1931 census

2 - Grindleford parish was formerly called Eyam Woodlands

3 - 6 dead on Middleton memorial excluded, as not from the parish

4 - Some figures excluded from counts, to avoid double counting, where names appear on both memorials in village.

Table 2 - Death rates

Town/Village	Type	Height (m)	Overall	Oak_leaves	Wreath	Rosettes	Flowers	Acorns	Angel	Pelican_&_chicks	Lamb_of_God	Sword	Anchor	Cross	Abstract	Gothic_window	Other	Material
Ashford in the Water 1	Celtic cross	3.00	Minimal															Gritstone
Bakewell 1	Simple cross	4.50	Minimal												x			Limestone
Bamford 1	Celtic cross	5.50	Minimal											x	x			Limestone
Baslow 1 (Nelson's)	Monolith	3.00	Minimal															Gritstone
Baslow 2	Celtic cross	4.30	Moderate												x		Roundels, "IHS"	Gritstone
Bradwell 1	Celtic cross	3.50	Minimal	x	x			x										Limestone
Castleton 1	Other	4.50	Moderate			x			x							x	Vines	Wood
Castleton 2	Simple cross	3.00	Florid		x				x		x				x		Angel/knight with sword	Gritstone
Curbar, Calver & Froggatt	Celtic cross	3.50	Moderate	x	x										x			Granite
Eyam	Celtic cross	3.50	Moderate	x		x	x			x		x			x		Lily ?	Other stone
Great Longstone 2	Monolith	3.00	Moderate	x		x		x						x			"Liberty", other plants	Gritstone
Grindleford	Simple cross	4.20	Florid			x			x	x		x		x	x	x		Marble
Hathersage 1	Other	2.00	Moderate						x			x		x				Metal
Hope	Monolith	4.00	Moderate	x	x												"Pro Patria"	Limestone
Monyash	Monolith	3.50	Minimal															Gritstone
Rowsley	Celtic cross	3.50	Florid					x							x		Sunflowers ?, odd typeface	Gritstone
Stoney Middleton	Celtic cross	3.50	Moderate		x	x							x	x			Mason's tool?, crossed swords	Gritstone
Taddington 2	Simple cross	3.50	Florid							x	x	x			x			Other stone
Tideswell 1	Plaque	1.50	Florid												x	x	Vines, soldier, sailor	Metal
Tideswell 2	Simple cross	6.00	Moderate	x		x											Cornices	Other stone
Counts				6	5	6	2	2	5	3	1	5	1	4	9	3		

Table 3 - Decoration