

# The People's Pilgrimage

When: end of the ceremony  
Where: the Cenotaph

People queue to lay flowers and wreaths

Outpouring of bouquets

- two legless soldiers on tricycles
- policemen
- badly wounded men
- unemployed ex-servicemen
- bereaved
- elderly people
- children
- regiments, businesses, trade unions, clubs, societies and other organizations

Queues:

- 2 in Trafalgar Square:
- 1 down Northumberland Avenue to Victoria Embankment and back to Northumberland Avenue to the Strand
- 1 from Admiralty Arch to Piccadilly Circus
- Another down Horse Guards Avenue
- Another on Horse Guards Parade

Failed attempts to regulate tributes

Tribute-giving continues at night and through the weekend

On Saturday people from outside London, also Children's Day

During the night, people from Office of Works arranges flowers to secure the best effect possible

More people on Saturday  
Homages left on the grave, too

on Monday, official mourning ended, traffic begins again, but pilgrimage continues

on Wednesday the grave's closure is postponed because there are too many visitors, same numbers even after it's closed

Flowers cleared on 17 October 1921  
USA confer Congressional Medal of Honor on the Unknown Warrior

Another queue from the Cenotaph to Westminster Abbey, but some people give up and fail to reach the Unknown Warrior's grave

Armistice Day

Complaint: Armistice Day doesn't have to be a day of national grief, but a celebration of victory.

Temporary stone of the grave is replaced by the official one

Protest: it's a Christian message and we don't know the warrior's faith

Public mourning stretches way beyond Armistice Day

Poppies begin to be associated with war.  
An organization (British Legion) is created to sell them for the benefit of ex-servicemen.

Required creation of local memorials

Complaint: Scarce public funds devoted to creation of memorials, while they could be used to take care of veterans.

Some memorials are opportunist

Few precedents for this

Members of Red Cross units have duty to search for graves, register them and take care of them

Ritual of commemoration used for propagandistic purposes. Fundamental to assert that the fallen had not died in vain

Battlefields and war cemeteries attract growing numbers. Mostly relatives of the fallen and veterans, while some are tourists

Trenches and devastated earth are being hidden, remaining trenches used as memorials or tourist traps, villages rebuilt with cafes and souvenirs from the battlefields