



Reputed to be the tallest in the country with four clock faces, the Nicholson War Memorial, known locally as the 'Monument' is a well-known landmark for people visiting the town of Leek. It stands proudly at the junction of several roads leading into the town centre with its gates facing Derby Street. The memorial was built in 1925 by Sir Arthur and Lady Nicholson in memory of their son, Lieutenant Basil Lee Nicholson, who was killed in action at Ypres, Belgium, in 1915, and also in memory of the men of Leek and District who fell in the First World War.

The Nicholson War Memorial, Leek, Staffordshire

This striking war memorial has four clock faces, is built of Portland stone on a red brick interior and stands some eighty feet high. The contractors responsible for building the main structure were Messrs E. and A. Frith of Macclesfield. The cost, in 1925, was £16,000.

THE BATTLES

The names of the 419 men who gave their lives in the First World War are inscribed on two bronze tablets on the sides of the memorial facing Fountain Street and Ashbourne Road. An unusual feature (and a mystery to most casual observers) is the carving of nine words above the clock faces, beneath the cornicing. These are names of towns and villages in France and Belgium where the Leek Battery, a Territorial unit of the Royal Field Artillery, saw action. Lieutenant Nicholson was an officer in the Leek Battery. The place-names read:

HOOGE, LOOS, YPRES, SOMME,
BELLENGLISE, RAMICOURT, BOHAIN,
LENS, GOMMECOURT.

In 1949, two further bronze tablets recording the names of the 101 men of Leek and District who fell during the Second World War were added to the front of the memorial facing Derby Street, either side of the main gates. In 2005, a further fifteen names were added. These were of men and women of the armed forces who had inadvertently been omitted in 1949 and, unusually for a war memorial, the name of the one person to be killed in Leek as a direct result of enemy action (a bombing raid on the town in 1941).

80th ANNIVERSARY

2005 also saw the 80th Anniversary of the unveiling of the Nicholson War Memorial. A commemorative service was held in September of that year when the memorial was rededicated by the Bishop of Stafford and the fifteen additional names unveiled.

