



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/emp/embed/smpEmbed.html?playlist=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fplayer%2Fplaylist%2Fp01zn55b&title=World+War+One+At+Home%3A+Newtownards%2C+Co+Down%3A+Snow+Memorial&product=iplayer>

Newtownards in County Down is a busy market town, thronged with cars and shoppers.

After the war, it saw the creation of an extraordinary memorial.

When the fighting ended in 1918 the country was in mourning. Memorials were erected in many towns and villages. They were a focus for people to gather and to grieve for those who never returned home.

But in Newtownards, where unemployment was high, the challenge of raising money to fund a memorial proved difficult.

Professor Fran Brearton, of Queen's University Belfast and the Arts and Humanities Research Council, has studied the story. Professor Brearton describes how, in 1924, frustrated ex-servicemen took matters into their own hands at the town's Bowling Green.

Location: Newtownards, County Down, BT23 7PA

Image of former soldiers at the snow memorial, March 1924

World War One At Home Newtownards Co Down Snow Memorial

http://www.ulsterwarmemorials.net/html/newtownards_county_down.html

The unemployed ex-soldiers of Newtownards took full advantage of the great amount of snow on Monday to remind the townspeople of an honour due them in keeping with that done the ex-soldiers of all the towns in the North of Ireland.

A vast heap of snow was collected in the centre of the Bowling Green and a large number of hands soon joined in the formation and moulding of what eventually proved to be a snow memorial to fallen heroes.

A massive pedestal standing eight or nine feet in height was first constructed, with four guarding pillars. On top of this pedestal one of the workers perched himself in an attitude similar to that on other properly constituted war memorials, with the representation of a rifle through his arm, and with "tin hat" and other accouterments complete. In front in large letters was a placard "Lest we forget." The erection attracted considerable attention.

The War Trophy Gun presented to Newtownards in 1919 or "scrap heap," as some person properly dubbed it, still hides its head behind the walls of the butter market, about the only place fit for its reception.

Four young Newtownards men were summonsed for obstruction in Castle Street (beside the Bowling Green) by standing on the footpath. Defendants denied causing any obstruction, and moved away when they were spoken to. They said that they had gone down to see the snowman.

A fine of 2s 6d. and 2s costs (24p) was imposed in each case.