



## REMEMBRANCE: WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

By Simon Barrow

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### *1. Why does Remembrance matter?*

Since 2007 (and especially in its *Re-imagining Remembrance* report<sup>1</sup>, first published in 2009 and re-issued several times since), Ekklesia has argued that the way we remember war and work for just-peace in the world today are intimately connected. How we understand and commemorate the past is about what we choose to take into the future, and the kind of future we envisage.

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<sup>1</sup> Re-imagining Remembrance, by Kate Guthrie (Ekklesia 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015):  
([http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/research/reimagining\\_remembrance](http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/research/reimagining_remembrance))

By the same token, the symbolism, language and ideology of remembrance tell us about (and shape) who and what we value mostly deeply. As philosophers and theologians going back to Plato (*anamnesis*), Augustine and Aquinas suggest, we humans are possessed by much understanding that is transmitted from the past and inculcated in us through processes of representation, repetition, recapitulation and re-consecration.<sup>2</sup>

That is what is going on in organized, ritual remembrance activity. To a significant extent this helps set the moral and political agenda in relation to war and peace. It is a form of learning and establishing attitudes and norms which runs deep and goes well beyond surface rhetoric, though that can help to reinforce it. We need to reflect in far greater depth on these processes.

## *2. What has been happening to Remembrance recently?*

As Ekklesia's 2014 analysis and commentary observed and demonstrated, the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, marked extensively last year, was used to ratchet up national Remembrance commemorations, seeking to win over new generations to the habit of a certain kind of annual observance: one that gives a central place to military image and ideas.<sup>3</sup>

In 2014 this included a major attempt by a number of military historians and pro-military politicians to combat the "futility of war" narrative that has grown up around what is still, implausibly enough, referred to in some circles as the 'the Great War'.

The current armed forces themselves were also drawn into what looks to be an ever-deeper relationship with the practice, delivery and iconography of Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day.

There is a correlation here with the kind of remembering involved in Armed Forces Day, instituted by the UK government in place of Veterans Day in 2009, and marked on the last Saturday of June each year. This uses similar symbolism to "show your support for the armed services".<sup>4</sup>

## *3. How can we move forward in our remembering?*

This year, as the last post sounds on 11 November 2015, we have another significant opportunity to look at where the land lies in our forms of remembering the tragedy of war, and to consider how those seeking a New

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<sup>2</sup> 'A Theological, Historical, and Social Study of Anamnesis in Christian Liturgy' – A Canadian Catholic Perspective, 23 April 2012: <https://catholiccanada.wordpress.com/2012/04/23/a-theological-historical-and-social-study-of-anamnesis-in-christian-liturgy/>

<sup>3</sup> 'How to remember war so as to invest in peace', by Simon Barrow (Ekklesia, 2014): <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/21205>

<sup>4</sup> Armed Forces Day (Wikipedia): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed\\_Forces\\_Day\\_\(United\\_Kingdom\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed_Forces_Day_(United_Kingdom))

Remembrance (one which seeks alternatives to armed conflict, rather than its justification or glorification) might orient themselves in 2016 and 2017 towards the next major landmark, which will be the commemoration of the end of the First World War.

This is a process Ekklesia, as part of its commitment to ‘making peace practical’, will continue to invest in. Our ‘Make the Christmas Truce Permanent’ appeal touched a positive nerve with many people last year. Our aim, in collaboration with other agencies who wish to strengthen resources for peacebuilding in an alarmingly fractured world, is to highlight the enormous opportunity provided by a commemoration, in three years time, which will be focusing on the *end* of a war.

#### ***4. What can focusing on the END of war achieve?***

The end of the First World War, as journalist Paul Mason has presciently pointed out, came about as a result of a popular mobilisation, and a revolt against war itself by those who were conscripted and paid (often meagerly) to prosecute it on the German side.<sup>5</sup> A series of mutinies across the country, led by sailors throughout the industrial cities of northern Germany, eventually forced the Kaiser to abdicate and terminated the conflict that had led to the slaughter of millions of working people on both sides.

As Mason observes: *“These incredible events do not fit easily into the narrative the mass media has been feeding us about the 1914-18 war. We’ve had TV presenters telling us most soldiers ‘actually enjoyed the war’; we’ve had the former education secretary declaring Britain’s most famous anti-war play – ‘Oh What A Lovely War’ – to be full of left-wing myths.*

*“But the termination of war by working-class action fits uneasily at a deeper level: for most of history the existence of a workforce with its own consciousness and organisations is an afterthought, or an anomaly.”*

What is more, he points out, those same German workers, communities and trade unions – including people involved in libraries, schools, choirs, nurseries and more – had tried equally hard to stop what became the First World War.

#### ***5. What are the differences between mobilising for war and peace?***

It was the fever of ‘war nationalism’, conveyed with enormous symbolic and rhetorical force, drawing on a version of history stressing heroism and destiny, and emphasising the malevolence of ‘the enemy’, that eventually drowned out the cause of peace across the entire political spectrum in pre-First World War

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<sup>5</sup> ‘How did the first world war actually end?’ by Paul Mason (Channel Four, 8 August 2014): <http://blogs.channel4.com/paul-mason-blog/world-war/1240>

Germany – and most notoriously in the churches, whose religion of peace was hijacked by national and military aspirations (in other countries too) on a massive scale. After the war, Hitler and his allies, understanding that militarism is not ‘natural’ and can be opposed concertedly, set about crushing those political and civil movements which had seen through the brutality and deception of ‘war nationalism’.

Even so, Mason continues, *“We know now, thanks to the publication of records and memoirs, that it [would have been] entirely possible to have stopped the First World War. Key members of the British cabinet were against it; large parts of the social elite in most countries, including Germany, were stunned and appalled by the unstoppable process of [military] mobilisation.*

*“Within 18 months of its outbreak, dissident German socialist MPs were leading mass strikes, demonstrations and riots against the war. Despite censorship, mobilisation and the natural moral solidarity people have with troops sent to the front, the German arms industry was repeatedly hit by strikes after 1916.”*

## ***6. Where does the challenge of a contemporary movement for peace lie?***

The point in all this is that just as war mobilisation crosses political and social frontiers, and depends ultimately on the cultivation of a quiescent cultural acceptance of conflict as normative, so the movement against war needs to build its bridges far and wide, to be radical in its ambition, and to generate a popular culture of critique and resistance towards what in the 1960s was dubbed the ‘military-industrial complex’, and in the twenty-first century might be referred to more appropriately as the ‘military-technological complex’.<sup>6</sup>

As part of this shift, the politics, motivation and technology of peacemaking needs to be seen and understood not simply as an outlook directly confronting the militarisation of our public imagination, but as the new logic of human and ecological civilisation in an era where our exponential, technical capacity for self-destruction (from war and terror to climate change) is in danger of dwarfing, or more accurately deforming, our ethical and spiritual capacities.

Equally, the task of displacing warmaking with a new logic of peacebuilding is one that cannot simply be left to political rulers, but has to involve broad civil movements, concerted media interventions, and ground-up projects for change (such as Ekklesia’s ‘peace chaplaincy’ proposal, perhaps) that together seek to grab the initiative, reframe the debate, and hold politician and leaders to account in a fresh way.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. ‘Military-Technology Complex: Billion-Dollar Secrets’, *Bloomberg Business News*, 20 June 2015: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/b/9df8864d-cd70-41da-9bb1-825f4210ae43> and ‘Eisenhower’s military-industrial warning rings truer than ever,’ by John Naughton, *Guardian*, 23 March 2014: <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/mar/23/eisenhowers-military-industrial-warning-snowden-nsa>

What we are talking about here is, potentially, nothing less than the re-invention of the peace movement for the twenty-first century, drawing upon the lessons of Occupy and other recent mobilisations for change, certainly; but also capitalising on a opportunities afforded by the digital and information age for redressing unfavourable 'economies of scale' stacked against ordinary people in political life.

### ***7. Where does the issue of 'Re-imagining Remembrance' fit into this picture?***

Principally in recognising that the way we commemorate war is deeply bound up with the root assumptions about violence and conflict which enable 'war as an instrument of policy' to continue to dominate the thinking and emotion of both the political classes and majority popular perception, in these islands and in many other parts of the world.

It is in examining existing symbols, language, ideas and behavior towards conflict prosecution, and at the same time in creating *alternative* ways of representing, speaking, thinking about and acting towards *conflict transformation*, that new possibilities emerge in the realms of politics and belief – the processes whereby, and institutions in which, we form and frame our outlook on ourselves, our neighbours and our planet.

### ***8. What have been the significant trends in Remembrance in 2015?***

When Ekklesia first began to raise its own questions about the symbolism of the red poppy and the distinct symbolism of white peace poppies, over eight years ago, the debates around Remembrance that have grown in scale and media attention in recent years were not as prominent as they have subsequently become.

In 2015 we have seen continuing differences of perspective between those who believe that we need a different, refreshed form of remembering war, and those who wish to strengthen current patterns – with accusations on one side of coercion ("poppy fascism") and on the other of disrespect (most bizarrely in the tabloid-fuelled 'debate' about whether Jeremy Corbyn, the new leader of the Labour opposition at Westminster, bowed deeply enough at the Cenotaph).<sup>7</sup> In one sense this is nothing new, but of late it seems to have become more entrenched.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Jeremy Corbyn DID Bow At The Cenotaph During Remembrance Sunday Service', by Chris York, *Huffington Post*, 8 November 2015: [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/11/08/jeremy-corbyn-did-bow-at-the-cenotaph\\_n\\_8503330.html?1446982037](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/11/08/jeremy-corbyn-did-bow-at-the-cenotaph_n_8503330.html?1446982037)

There have also been more articles questioning the nature of current Remembrance symbolism, exploring the scope of 'dissent', raising questions about the Royal British Legion and its links to the arms trade and other features of overt militarism, and commending the reasons for wearing a white poppy alongside or instead of a red one. The "White Feather Diaries", curated for the Quakers by Ekklesia associate Symon Hill, have made an important reappearance.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps most significant of all has been the growing prominence and activity of Veterans for Peace in the UK (*see below*) – ex-service personnel who have been robust in questioning the assumptions behind current forms and symbols of Remembrance which they feel reinforce the militarism they now question.

### ***9. How have issues around poppies been picked up in the media this time?***

This year there were the usual stories about those who (by accident or design) did not wear red poppies on public occasions where they have become virtually mandatory. Mr Corbyn, who for most of his political career has chosen to wear a white poppy, was persuaded to swap this for a red one. Even the idea of wearing white and red poppies together was regarded as too "inflammatory" by his political advisers. That said, news monitoring suggests that there was less debate about, and hostility towards, white poppies this year than has been the case in the recent past.

However, huge ire was directed from some quarters towards footballer James McLean, now of West Bromwich Albion, for his continued refusal to wear a jersey with a red poppy pre-sewn in. He explained his own convictions, based on his Irish upbringing and experience, in a way that provided a different slant on the question of 'respect'.<sup>9</sup>

*"For people from the North of Ireland such as myself, and specifically those in Derry, scene of the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre, the poppy has come to mean something very different... [When] you come from Creggan like myself or the Bogside, Brandywell or the majority of places in Derry, every person still lives in the shadow of one of the darkest days in Ireland's history – even if like me you were born nearly 20 years after the event. It is just a part of who we are, ingrained into us from birth.*

*[For] me to wear a poppy would be as much a gesture of disrespect for the innocent people who lost their lives in the Troubles – and Bloody Sunday especially – as I have in the past been accused of disrespecting the victims of World War one and World War Two."*

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<sup>8</sup> 'The White Feather Diaries', Quakers in Britain, 2014-15: <http://www.whitefeatherdiaries.org.uk>

<sup>9</sup> 'Why West Bromwich Albion's James McClean refuses to wear a remembrance poppy', by Evan Bartlett, Independent, 8 November 2015: <http://i100.independent.co.uk/article/why-west-bromich-albions-james-mcclean-refuses-to-wear-a-remembrance-poppy--ejiyaFn8Px>

Meanwhile, journalist Stephanie Boland, writing in the *New Statesman*, and identifying herself firmly as a “non-pacifist”, raised her concerns in a different way. “*Why aren’t we allowed to feel ambiguous about Remembrance Day poppies?*”, she asked – introducing grey alongside the red and the white.<sup>10</sup>

She wrote: “*Is it just me, or has the poppy thing got a bit . . . weird, this year? First it was the poppy photoshopped onto a photo of David Cameron, lest someone see an image of our Prime Minister this November without one, then Sienna Miller getting a public telling-off for appearing on a chat show without one on her dress. At Waterloo Station, huge ones have sprung up out of the concourse floor, and Jeremy Corbyn was on the Sun’s front page for not bowing low enough while laying his wreath at the Cenotaph.*”

The issues of what and who we are ‘disrespecting’ by *commission* (not just omission) on the one hand, and of *ambiguity* and *ambivalence* on the other, appear to be, for many, fresh questions that have not been felt – or at least identified – so strongly in public before.

## ***10. How are different views about Remembrance appearing in public life?***

In Scotland *The National* newspaper, which supports Scottish independence and is published by the Herald group, became the first paper in Britain to feature a white and red poppy together on its masthead, as well as carrying several articles that questioned the militaristic Remembrance status quo in a strong but dignified way.

There was also an initiative in the Scottish Parliament, reported in *Common Space*, in which five MSPs have backed the wearing of white poppies “*ahead of Armistice Day remembrance for the millions who died in the first world war.*”

“*Alison Johnstone (Scottish Greens), John Wilson (Independent), John Finnie (Independent), Patrick Harvie (Scottish Greens) and Jean Urquhart (Independent) gathered to support the campaign, which involved sending white poppies to all Scottish MPs and MSPs.*”

“*The white poppies - which place an extra emphasis on modern attempts to create a peaceful world - were distributed by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre and the Scottish Quakers.*”

“*Brian Larkin from the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre said: ‘The white poppy symbolises a commitment to do all we can to end wars.’*”

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Why aren’t we allowed to feel ambiguous about Remembrance Day poppies?’ by Stephanie Boland, *New Statesman*, 10 November 2015: <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2015/11/why-aren-t-we-allowed-feel-ambiguous-about-remembrance-day-poppies>

*“Armistice Day marks the day the guns fell silent in the First World War, after a revolution of German soldiers and workers brought about the end of the conflict.*

*“Following the deaths of millions of mostly poor soldiers, communities destroyed by the conflict came together to say 'Never Again' to war.”<sup>11</sup>*

Interestingly, the growing campaign against the renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons system, based on the Clyde, which brought SNP, Labour Green and Independent MSPs together in a show of unity alongside churches and other civic groups, has not been overly connected to debates around Remembrance.

## ***11. What is the importance and role of Veterans for Peace?***

Veterans For Peace UK is a voluntary ex-services organisation of men and women who have served in every war that Britain has fought since the Second World War. The focus of its work is to: Educate young people on the true nature of military service and war; resist war and militarism through non-violent action; and stand in solidarity with people resisting militarism and war.

*“We hope to convince people that war is not the answer to the problems of the 21st century,”* declares VfPUK.<sup>12</sup>

The organisation, which includes people of different religious beliefs and none, is not new. It has been active for the past three years, but has come to achieve greater profile in 2015.

Joe Glenton, explains:<sup>13</sup>

*“On Sunday 8 November, Veterans For Peace UK marched to the Cenotaph for the third year in a row. The sole opposing military voice to the clamour of jingoism that has overtaken what was once, rightly, a solemn occasion. This year we were led by women veterans from the US and UK – a fact of which we are all particularly proud. They bore our group's colours, which are emblazoned with a call for peace, and lay a wreath of white and red poppies to remember all the war dead, rather than just one section of the slain.*

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Green and independent MSPs support Quaker white poppy campaign’, by Michael Gray, *Common Space*, 10 November 2015: <https://www.commonspace.scot/articles/2878/green-and-independent-msps-support-quaker-white-popy-campaign> (Actually white poppies are promoted primarily by the Peace Pledge Union, a non-religious organisation).

<sup>12</sup> Veterans for Peace UK – Website: <http://veteransforpeace.org.uk> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/veteransforpeace.org.uk>

<sup>13</sup> ‘Remembrance Day: Why the Cenotaph has become the dark heart of British militarism’, by Joe Glenton, *International Business Times*, 9 November 2015: <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/remembrance-day-why-cenotaph-become-093416852.html#Gqmdri>



*“In the last decade, against the background of failed and illegitimate wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, the meaning and value of the red poppy has become debated furiously in Britain.*

*“In one sense, this is a good thing, because those have now taken ownership of it – arms companies, the gutter press, unbloodied battalions of long-range patriots in parliament – must be challenged.*

*“In Veterans For Peace UK, we have ourselves debated the poppy many times and a multitude views have emerged.*

*“For our older generation of veterans, such as those who saw action on D-Day and in Malaya, men whose fathers were in the trenches of the Great War, the red poppy is still the symbol of insurgent anger and grief that it was at the start. Some of these men combine red and white poppies.*

*“For many of the veterans of the 1980s, 1990s and, like myself, the 9/11 wars, the red poppy has fallen to the enemy – the aforementioned hawks and death-dealers – and is at best a deeply concerning symbol. Many of these veterans wear only the white poppy.*

*“For years, I have worn neither white nor red, though I am increasingly drawn toward the anti-imperialist black poppy, which recalls the war dead of all sides, slaughtered civilian and the endless list of military objectors, rebels and mutineers.*

*“All this aside, and in contrast to many military-oriented organisations at this time of year, Veterans For Peace do not preach about what poppy to wear, or if people should wear one at all. We honour the war dead by trying to limit their numbers, and we do that by putting the view, as women and men who have come to the cause of peace through military conflict, that war is not the answer to the problems of the 21st century.*

*“Veterans For Peace, which is now hundreds strong, has always encapsulated a broad range of opinions and politics, as it should. Increasingly mine is that, while an important argument to have, the fight for the poppy is a row over a symbol. The fight for a future without the scourge of war is also partly the fight against militarism.*

*“By that I mean the promotion of military values, the framing of the military as somehow noble and heroic and the priming and grooming of our population for wars to come, often by rewriting current and past conflicts. And militarism has been increased many-fold in recent years.”*

Veterans for Peace UK has also produced in 2015 an important report, which is being made available through Ekklesia and other supporters, entitled – *My Name is Legion: The British Legion and the Control of Remembrance*.<sup>14</sup> This does not

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<sup>14</sup> My Name is Legion (report), Veterans for Peace UK, 5 November 2015: <http://veteransforpeace.org.uk/2015/my-name-is-legion/>

make comfortable reading, but is perhaps all the more important because of that. It highlights the links between the charitable organisation that raises funds directly from the annual Poppy Appeal and the arms trade, noting, for example, that:

*“Despite the ‘King Herod’ associations, the Legion has maintained and even strengthened its relations with arms traders. This year (2015), for example, the British Legion’s annual ‘Poppy Rocks Ball’ is being sponsored by Lockheed Martin UK, the subsidiary of the world’s largest arms supplier, Lockheed Martin; the slightly grander Poppy Ball is sponsored by Sphinx Systems Limited, who manufacture handguns and pistols.”*

Ekklesia is naturally interested in the theological resonance and significance of the language used to describe these links (the occupation and obeisance to negative forces of control signaled by ‘My Name is Legion’, Mark 5.9) – something we intend to pick up on in the near future.

## ***12. What lessons can we learn from all this about where to take the New Remembrance initiative from here?***

In this paper we have already highlighted some important issues for the future – ones which link the issue of *Re-imagining Remembrance* with a broader canvas of concerns.

*These include:*

- \* The opportunities for public education and advocacy afforded by the 2018 focus on the ending of a war, including the role of civic pressure and creative dissent in that process.
- \* The need to explore in greater depth the significance of *anamnesis* (remembrance) as “understanding that is transmitted from the past and inculcated in us through processes of representation, repetition, recapitulation and re-consecration.”
- \* The desirability of further reflection and research on the ‘military-technological complex’ and the generation of a fresh logic of peacemaking, peacebuilding and conflict transformation in contrast to the ‘militarisation of our public imagination’.
- \* The place of initiatives such as Ekklesia’s concern for ‘peace chaplaincy’ in renewing church and civic engagement with alternatives to armed force.
- \* The theological issues involved in opposing the occupation of public values and institutions by warlike assumptions (as indicated by *My Name is Legion*)
- \* The importance of organisations such as Veterans for Peace in challenging militaristic thinking from the basis of a costly, fist-hand experience of war.
- \* The need for a reconfiguring of movements for peace in the C21st, broadening the base and appeal of ‘making peace practical’.

### 13. What is involved in a 'New Remembrance'?

The six principles set out in the 2009 Ekklesia report and re-iterated in 2014 (*How to Remember War so as to Invest in Peace*) are as follows:

The six core principles are:

\* *A truthful remembrance* – making sure that we tell the whole story and not just the convenient part when it comes to war (atrocities as well as acts of bravery); modifying our language (questioning appellations like “glorious”); acknowledging that some do “die in vain”; taking care in theological language not to equate the “sacrifice” involved in war with religious understandings of sacrificial living.

\* *A peaceful remembrance* - truly to honour those who have died hoping that their war would be the last means to question the presumption of war as a “solution” and to make remembering a prelude to active peacemaking, conflict transformation, nonviolent action against injustice and peacebuilding. Churches should make white as well as red poppies available to commit to combatting war as well as remembering with dignity its victims. A bishop or chaplain for unarmed forces would be a way of showing that peacemakers are central to the Gospel.

\* *An equal remembrance* - remembering all who have died in the wars in which Britain has engaged, not just those in the armed forces. The contributions of conscientious objectors and those who were shot for cowardice or desertion should be included. And since the remembrance formed by World War 1 was never properly developed to incorporate the terrible civilian death toll of World War 2, remembrance should include civilians on all sides. In doing so, it would highlight our collective responsibility and also acknowledge that people who are killed are people like us.

\* *An inclusive remembrance* - The move towards a more diverse remembrance is seen in International Conscientious Objectors' Day on 15th May, which began in 1994. All the consequences of war should be reflected, from its impact on the environment to soldiers, disabled people, children, war resisters, families and animals. It should also be conducted in a way that makes it accessible to all, regardless of background, religion, belief, ethnicity or view of war.

\* *A just remembrance* - if there is no accountability in our remembrance, then our remembrance is cheap. Remembrance should bless the victims of war, not war itself. Truly honouring members of the armed forces means in particular honouring the needs that emerge as a result of what they have been required to do. This includes those who have been hurt or maimed and the relatives who continue to suffer long after their loved ones have gone.

\* *A weapons-free remembrance* - a Remembrance Day Bank Holiday would allow for communities to come together more easily to remember collectively. In many respects this would be an extension of the idea of a one or two minute silence, to incorporate the whole day. It would also mean that those involved in the business of war such as munitions factories and distributors of weapons would stop their activities for a day. The cessation of weapon production would be a powerful demonstration of a national commitment to work towards ending war.

## 14. FURTHER READING

***Re-imagining Remembrance*, by Kate Guthrie (Ekklesia 2009. Revised and republished 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015).**

*Abstract:* Remembrance Day needs to be re-imagined in more hopeful, truthful, meaningful and inclusive ways for future generations, says this report commissioned by Ekklesia. That would include an honest if painful acknowledgement that some do “die in vain”, an end to “selective remembrance”, a positive stress on peacemaking, and making Armistice Day a public holiday. The report, originally published in 2009, followed the death of the 'last Tommy', Harry Patch from World War 1, who sadly described current patterns of Remembrance Day as “just show business”. Remembrance has been ‘cheapened’ by a failure to back up words with action, particularly when it comes to successive governments' inadequate care for war veterans, but also -- vitally -- the lack of serious resources put into peacebuilding. The report traces the development of Britain’s remembrance tradition and makes a series of proposals about how Remembrance Day might be positively developed. It also includes reflection on the meaning and practice of 'memory', not least from a Christian theological standpoint.

***How to remember war so as to invest in peace*, by Simon Barrow (Ekklesia, 2014).**

*Abstract:* In effect the whole of 2014 became a year of remembrance, with the focus on the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. It is important that 2015 is not a year of forgetting, of “war business as usual”. In this paper, Simon Barrow recapitulates some of the key points from Ekklesia's Re-imagining Remembrance report, locating them within the changes that have taken place since that was originally published in 2009, relating them to the commemorations that took place in 2014, looking at the particular challenge to post-Christendom Christianity, and setting out a commitment to continue on the path towards a New Remembrance in both theological and general terms.

## THE AUTHOR

**Simon Barrow** is co-director of Ekklesia. He has a long-term interest in peace, remembrance and theology. He was formerly executive secretary of the Churches' Commission on Mission and assistant general secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

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