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József Parádi: Destroyed gendarme memorials (Elpusztult emlékhelyek) - About the cover (showing the two main memorials, below)

In the Carpathian Basin, there were relatively few memorial places dedicated to the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie. The most significant of these were the memorial high relief placed in the building of the Military Museum located in the Buda Castle, and the statue placed in the courtyard of the Gendarme Garrison of Böszörményi út, in Budapest, in 1901.

The statue of gendarme martyrs (front cover) is the work of sculptor János Pásztor, who won the competition for its creation. It was ceremonially unveiled on May 10, 1928, and afterward the Gendarmerie had a wreath-laying ceremony each “gendarme day” (February 14). The statue is of a gendarme, holding a fainted female figure representing Hungary. The five-foot bronze statue stands on a three-foot tall stone base, with the names of the martyred gendarmes engraved on it.

The high relief of gendarme heroes (back cover) was also ceremonially unveiled, with the participation of Admiral Horthy on February 14, 1934, and it was also wreathed every year afterward. The seven-by-five-foot carrara white marble high relief was the work of sculptor Lajos Berán. It depicted a fallen gendarme under an oak tree, with his broken rifle at his side, and his fellow gendarme kneeling in prayer beside him. The inscription beneath it read, “To those fallen in peace and war. The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie.”

Both works of arts miraculously survived the war, but soon after they disappeared through unknown circumstances at the hands of the following regime. Both buildings that housed these artworks still stand, and their places still stand empty. Yet, to this day, no efforts have been made to restore them. How can the Hungarian state sink so low that a quarter of century after the change of regime, it has still not restored the monuments of her best national law enforcement organization, the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie?