



A Rededication Service for

Lance Corporal William Voice MM

6th Battalion Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment

10:00 hours Tuesday 28 April 2006

CWGC Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium

Service conducted by Reverend Nikki Day CF

Chaplain to 22 & 28 Royal Engineers

Lance Corporal William Voice MM 1888 – 1 August 1917

William Voice was born in Horsham, Sussex in 1888, and baptised on 27 June that year. He was the only child of William Voice – a carpenter and his wife Mary Ann. William completed his schooling and followed his father into the carpentry trade.

On 1 January 1908 William married Agnes Ethel Greer in Portlade by Sea, and late that year their first child – a son called Ronald was born. Ronald was followed by two daughters – Gladys born in 1910, and Christabel, born in 1913.

William joined the army on 26 June 1916 – although conscription had begun in 1916, as a father over 30 William would not have been amongst the first to be conscripted, and so it is possible that he was a volunteer. Unfortunately his service record has not survived to tell us anything about his army career, but on 19 June 1917 he was awarded the Military Medal.

In late July 1917, the 5th Battalion of the Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment were in trenches in the area of Klein Zillebeke. They were suffering repeated shelling, and taking substantial casualties. Over the three day period from 30 July – 1 August the casualties were:

- Officers – 3 killed, 9 wounded
- Other Ranks – 52 killed, 156 wounded and 105 missing.

William was one of those killed or missing that day, and following the way when his remains could not be identified his name was placed on the Ikerin Gate Memorial to the missing in Ypres.

In the summer of 1921 the remains of an unknown British soldier, the winner of a military medal, and a member of the Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment were recovered at Klein Zillebeke. At the time it was impossible to identify him, and so he was buried at Bedford House Cemetery as an unknown soldier. Recently research has allowed us to connect those remains with the last known movements of William Voice, identifying his final resting place. Today we rededicate his grave accordingly.

Welcomes

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is his faithfulness".
(Lamentations 3.22,23)

Today we remember with thanksgiving Lance Corporal William Voice who, alongside so many others, answered the call of their country, served with honour and gave their lives in the service of their nation.

As we re-dedicate this grave, let us also commit ourselves anew to remember each one here. For by so doing we honour them all and we reflect upon their sacrifice.

In re-dedicating this grave we commit ourselves anew to remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives in world wars and conflicts past and present have been given and taken away.

Opening Prayer

God of all consolation,
your Son Jesus Christ was moved to tears
at the grave of Lazarus his friend.
Look with compassion on your children in their loss;
give to troubled hearts the light of hope
and strengthen in us the gift of faith,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Scripture Reading

Read by Reverend Richard Clement, St George's Memorial Church, Freetown

You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.

You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar;

You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.

Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me,

your right hand will hold me fast.

For you created my inmost being;

you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

your works are wonderful,

I know that full well.

Reading: The Anxious Dead by John McCree

Read by Colonel Mark Rooney, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

O guns, fall silent till the dead men hear
Above their heads the legions pressing on;
(These fought their fight in time of bitter fear,
And died not knowing how the day had gone.)

O flashing muzzles, pause, and let them see
The coming dawn that streaks the sky afar;
Then let your mighty chorus witness be
To them, and Caesar, that we still make war.

Tell them, O guns, that we have heard their call,
That we have sworn, and will not turn aside,
That we will onward till we win or fall,
That we will keep the faith for which they died.

Bid them be patient, and some day, anon,
They shall feel earth enwrap in silence deep;
Shall greet, in wonderment, the quiet dawn,
And in content may turn them to their sleep.

Address

The Reverend Will Day CP

The Act of Dedication

We now rededicate this grave as the final resting place of
Lance Corporal William Voise in the name of Christ,
who died and rose again.

This place stands as a sign of our remembrance,
our thanksgiving, and our love.

Lord, grant that your servant William may rest in peace,
in the sure knowledge that he now abides in your glory,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Exhortation

Read by Colonel Mark Nooney, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them,
We will remember them.

Last Post

Played by Captain Richard Matheson,

The Band of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

Silence

Reveille

Rohmsa Epitaph

Read by Colonel Mark Nooney, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

When you go home tell them of us and say:
"For your tomorrow, we gave our today".

Laying of Wreaths

**The Collect of The Queens Own Royal West Surrey Regiment
Read by Mr Roger Davies, The Queen's Regimental Association
Middlesex Branch, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment**

© Lords of God, in whom we behold the saviour of the world, in whom we triumph even in adversities, keep, we pray thee, thy servants of the Queen's Regiment ever mindful in all duty by sea and by land of thy valour of old unto death, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end.

Amen.

Prayers

Father in heaven, we praise your name
for all who have finished this life loving and trusting you,
for the example of their lives,
the life and grace you gave them,
and the peace in which they rest.
We praise you today for your servant Lance Corporal William Voice
and for all that you did through him.
Meet us in our sadness
and fill our hearts with praise and thanksgiving,
for the sake of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Lord, as we remember with sadness the horrors of war, help us to work
for a better understanding between races and nations.
Open our eyes to see our own part in discord and aggression between
peoples.
Forgive us our pride and division,
And renew in us a search for peace so that trust may replace
suspicions,
Friendship replace fear,
And your spirit of reconciliation be known among us all. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (all)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Blessing

God grant to the living, grace to the departed, rest
to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all mankind,
peace and unity;
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting.

Go out into the world in peace: be brave and strong;
hold fast to what is good; do not repay evil with evil;
encourage the discouraged, support the weak,
help those who suffer, honour everyone,
and love and serve the Lord with joy,
trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always.
Amen.



The Ministry of Defence, through the Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre, is responsible for the research, identification and burial of all British casualties worldwide.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for the graves, memorials, records and memory of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars.

© Crown Copyright/JCOC – 2020