



A Rededication Service for

Second Lieutenant Esmond Lawrence Kellie

1st Battalion The Bedfordshire Regiment

11.00 hours Thursday 23 October 2025

CWGC Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, Belgium

**Service conducted by Reverend Joseph Roberts OFC
Chaplain to 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment**



Second Lieutenant Edmund Lawrence Kellie

27 April 1894 – 19 April 1915

Edmund Kellie was the youngest child of William Francis Lawrence Kellie, a singer and musical composer, and his wife Gertrude. He was born and grew up in London and was educated at Loudoun House School and Westminster School where he joined the Officer Training Corps. He earned a first class degree from the University of London and joined the Artists' Rifles on 3 August 1914, arriving in France with them in the October of that year. He was promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant on 1 January 1915 and transferred to the 1st Bedfordshire Regiment shortly thereafter.

On 19 April 1915 he was injured in the thigh whilst defending a trench his battalion had captured at Hill 60, and was killed by a shell whilst being stretchered away from the area. A letter sent home to his parents by Lieutenant-Colonel Griffith DSO described him as a 'most courageous and useful officer...very popular with all in the regiment'.

Kellie was buried on Hill 60, but his grave was lost in the chaos of war. On or around 5 October 1924 an unknown British Second Lieutenant of the Bedfordshire Regiment was recovered from an unmarked grave at Hill 60 and reburied at Railway Dugouts Burial Ground.

The casualty's partial identification as an officer of the Bedfordshire Regiment was made from the buttons and badges he was wearing.

Research carried out more recently has revealed that this was in fact the body of Esmond Laurence Kellie and so today we can rededicate his grave, returning his name to him once more.

WELCOME

We have come together in this place, in the spirit of solemn thanksgiving, to rededicate this grave as the final rest place of Second Lieutenant Edmond Lawrence Kelle, remembering his life, his service and his ultimate sacrifice in the giving of his life.

In doing so, we accord to Edmond the dignity and respect that he is due; who once was unknown, yet is made complete in the arms of God and now known fully to us. We rightly commend him again to the grace and mercy of Almighty God our maker and our redeemer.

As we do so, conscious of all those who surround us here in this hallowed place, who answered the call of their country, served with honour and ultimately gave their lives in the service of their nation, we offer ourselves to God's service that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, and that His kingdom of justice and peace be established everywhere.

Opening Prayer

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life;
hear our prayers for your servant Edmond
whom we remember this day.
Fulfill in him the purpose of your love
and bring us, with him, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Scripture Reading: Wisdom 3:1-8, 9

*Read by Reverend Richard Clement,
Chaplain of St George's Memorial Church, York*

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.
In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die,
their going looked like a disaster;
their leaving us, like annihilation;
but they are in peace.
If they experienced punishment, as men see it,
their hope was rich with immortality;
slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.
God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace.
They who trust in him will understand the truth,
those who are faithful will live with him in love;
for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

Reading: "Longing" by Matthew Arnold

(This poem was set to music by Second Lieutenant Kelle's father)

*Read by Lt Henry Aspell,
The Royal Anglian Regiment*

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou canst a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to all the rest as me.

Oh, as thou never can'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth;
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say - My love! why sufferest thou?

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Address

The Reverend Joseph Roberts CFI

The Act of Dedication

Let us now bless and dedicate this grave as the final resting place of
the mortal remains of Second Lieutenant Edmond Lawrence Kelle.

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ was laid in a tomb:

Bless and dedicate, we pray,

this grave as the place where the body of your servant Edmond
may rest in peace,

in the knowledge that he now abides in your glory

through the merits of your Son,

who is the resurrection and the life;

who died and is alive and reigns with you now and for ever.

Amen.

The Exhortation

Read by Lt Henry Astill, The Royal Anglian 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.

The Last Post

*Played by Drummer Jacob Smith
The Royal Anglian Regiment*

Silence

Reveille

Katrina Epitaph

Read by a Sgt John Masten, The Royal Anglian 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 Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment

(Read by Lt Henry Aslett, The Royal Anglian Regiment)

O Lord, God of battles, make us worthy of the soldiers who have fought under the Colours of the 18th Foot, and the glorious achievements of our regiment. Create within us a fervent desire for freedom, justice and truth; give us strength, perseverance and loyalty in all our undertakings, so that we may prove truly valiant; in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Amen.

Prayer of Commemoration for the Fallen

God of all, remember your holy promise,
and look with love on all your people, living and departed.
On this day we especially ask that you would hold forever
all who have suffered during war,
those who returned scarred by warfare,
those who waited anxiously at home,
and those who returned wounded, and disillusioned;
those who mourned,
and those communities that were diminished and suffered loss.
Remember too those who acted with kindly compassion,
those who bravely risked their own lives for their comrades,
and those who in the aftermath of war,
worked tirelessly for a more peaceful world.
And as you remember them, remember us, O God;
grant us peace in our time and a longing for the day
when people of every language, race, and nation
will be brought into the unity of your kingdom.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus strengthen us in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill our hearts,
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us 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, reports and memory of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars.

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