



ARMY

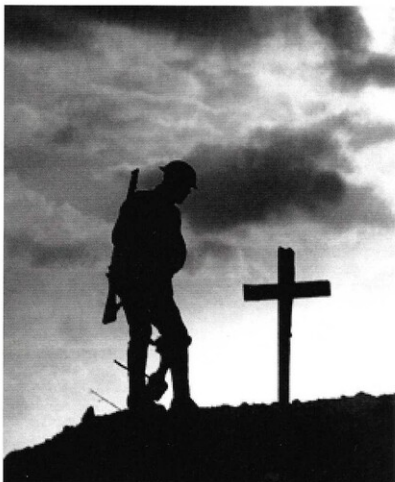
A Burial Service for

Unknown Commonwealth Soldiers of the Great War

14:30 hours Tuesday 29 April 2025

CWGC Ovillers Military Cemetery

**Service conducted by Reverend Joseph Roberts CF
Chaplain to 4 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps**



Background

In May 2022 the digging of a drainage trench near Fricourt uncovered the remains of a casualty of the First World War. Sadly no artefacts were recovered with the remains to indicate the nationality or regimental affiliation of the man, and without this it has been impossible to identify him. Other recoveries from the same location suggest that he was most likely a casualty of the Battle of the Somme.

In April 2024 a further set of remains were discovered by a fieldwalker looking over a freshly ploughed field near Fricourt. Further investigation of the site revealed no distinguishing artefacts which would help to identify the man, nor anything which could even tell us nationality – though general service buttons found near his remains tell us he did serve with one of the Commonwealth nations. Additionally, remains from another two individuals were also found during the investigation. The location at which the remains were found saw action both during the opening days of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, and during the Second Battle of Bapaume in 1918.

Today we give thanks for the sacrifice of these men, and all those who died alongside them.

Cemetery

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Ovillers Military Cemetery was created as a battlefield cemetery behind a dressing station. The cemetery was increased after the Armistice by the concentration of graves from the battlefields of Pozieres, Ovillers, La Boisselle and Contalmaison. It is from this area that these unknown casualties were discovered and can now be laid to rest alongside their comrades.

Welcome

Bienvenue

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.

All **Amen.**

We are gathered here today in this place of remembrance, to honour not just our two comrades here, whose names are known only to God but also all those who have made the supreme sacrifice by the giving of their lives in the service of their country. Let us remember them in joy, sadness, and gratitude, and commend them to God's sure keeping.

We continue to remember and pray for all those who have suffered, and who still suffer, as a consequence of warfare, violence and terror. Also we pray for peace and reconciliation – especially remembering those with the responsibility for the leadership of nations – that conflict may be avoided.

We will shortly commit their bodies to be buried and in so doing we commit ourselves anew to remember their courage. For by doing so we honour their memory as we reflect upon their sacrifice.

Let us pray together:

**Ever-living God,
we remember those whom you have gathered
from the storm of war
into the peace of your presence;
may that same peace calm our fears,
bring justice to all peoples
and establish harmony among the nations,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Psalm 139.1-14

Lecture des Écritures Saintes

Read by a representative of the British Embassy

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.

Before a word is on my tongue
you, LORD, know it completely.

You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.

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.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"

even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

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: I do not know your name

by Kenny Martin

Lecture

Read by Corporal Ranjot Singh, 4 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps

I do not know your name, but I know you died.
I do not know from where you came, but I know you died.

Your uniform, branch of service, it matters not to me
Whether Volunteer or Conscript, or how it came to be.
That politicians' failures, or some power-mad ambition
Brought you too soon to your death, in the name of any nation.

You saw, you felt, you knew full well, as friend and foe were taken
By bloody death, that your life too, was forfeit and forsaken.
Yet on you went and fought and died, in your close and private hell
For Mate or Pal or Regiment and memories never to tell.

It was for each other, through shot and shell, the madness you endured
Side by side, through wound and pain, and comradeship assured.
No family ties, or bloodline link, could match that bond of friend
Who shared the horror and kept on going, at last until the end.

We cannot know, we were not there, it's beyond our comprehension
To know the toll that battle brings, of resolute intention.
To carry on, day by day, for all you loved and hoped for
To live in peace a happy life, away from bloody war.

For far too many, no long life ahead, free of struggle and pain and gun
And we must remember the price that was paid, by each and every
one.

Regardless of views, opinions aside, no matter how each of us sees it
They were there and I cannot forget, even though I did not live it.

I do not know your name, but I know you died.
I do not know from where you came, but I know you died.

Address

Allocution

Blessing of the Grave

Bénédiction de la Tombe

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ was laid in a tomb:
bless, we pray, this grave as the place where the bodies of your
servants may rest in peace, through your Son, who is the resurrection
and the life; who died and is alive and reigns with you now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Commendation

Let us commend our fallen comrades to God's love and mercy.

Into your arms Gracious God,
we commend our fallen brothers,
named and known only by you,
yet they are complete and precious in your sight.
As they travel from our longing to your care,
may Christ receive them on the clear shore of love's embrace,
where there is no more death or sorrow or pain
but only eternal peace with you.

All **Amen.**

The Committal

L'Enterrement

Our days are like the grass.
We flourish like a flower of the field.
When the wind blows over it, it is gone,
and its place will know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures.
For ever and ever.

We have entrusted these two soldiers to God's eternal care,
we now commit their earthly remains to this hallowed ground,
reunited with comrades who also paid the ultimate cost of sacrifice,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust...

As you both rest in eternal belonging,
and have left the shadows of this world behind,
rise on the wings of the morning.
As we let go of you now,
may you rest in peace.

All **Amen.**

The Exhortation

L'Éxhortation

Read by Corporal Ryan O'Neill, 4 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps

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.

All **We will remember them.**

The Last Post

Sonnerie aux Morts

*Played by Rifleman Zane Moied,
The Band and Bugles of The Rifles*

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épitaphe de Kohima

*Read by Lance Corporal Zalford Delpesche,
4 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps*

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

Laying of Wreaths

Dépôts des Gerbes

Prayer of Commemoration for the Fallen

Prière de commémoration pour les morts

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.

All **Amen.**

Prayer for the Armed Forces

Prière

Read by Staff Sergeant Martin Daniels, 4 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps

O Lord God of Hosts, stretch forth, we pray, your almighty arm to
strengthen and protect our service men and women. Support them in
times of conflict, and in their rest and training keep them safe from all
evil; endue them with courage and loyalty; and grant that in all things
they may serve without reproach; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Prière du Seigneur

God of truth and justice, we hold before you those whose memory we cherish, and those whose names we will never know. Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm. As we continue to honour the past, may we put our faith in your future; and thus, united in thought and prayer, we join together saying The Lord's Prayer:

**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

Séparation de Dernière Bénédiction

God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all people,
unity peace and concord;
and to us and all God's servants,
life everlasting;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

All **Amen.**



The Ministry of Defence, through the Joint Casualty and 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.

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