



A Burial Service for

**Two Unknown Commonwealth Soldiers
Killed During the Great War**

**11:00 hours on Thursday 2 July 2025
GWGC Crucifix Corner Cemetery,
Villers-Bretonneux, France**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Stephen Cassells CF
Chaplain to 3rd Battalion The Rifles
Déroulement de la cérémonie présidé par
le Révérend Stephen Cassells CF**

The remains of these unknown Commonwealth soldiers were found in July 2021 during construction work on the outskirts of Villers-Bretonneux. No artefacts were found with either man which could assist in their identification. Today, these men will be laid to rest with military honours and their sacrifice will be remembered.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Crucifix Corner Cemetery was begun by the Canadian Corps in August 1918. It was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields between the Somme and the Lure. It is the final resting place of nearly 700 Commonwealth service personnel of the First World War.

Les restes de ces soldats inconnus du Commonwealth ont été découvertes en juillet 2021 lors de travaux de construction à la périphérie de Villers-Bretonneux. Aucun objet susceptible de faciliter leur identification n'a été retrouvé auprès d'eux. Aujourd'hui, ces hommes seront inhumés avec les honneurs militaires et nous nous souviendrons de leur sacrifice.

Call to Worship
Appl & Adoration

We are gathered together in the presence of God, to
remember the lives and the service of those fallen in
battle before us.

These individuals paid the ultimate sacrifice in the
service of King and Commonwealth,
and have lain unidentified for more than a hundred years.

Today we honour their service and commit their remains
to almighty God, in Jesus' name.

All May the Peace of the Lord be always with you,
and also with you.

Bidding Prayer
Prayer

Holy God, we approach you in the name of Jesus Christ,
your son. He who loved us and gave himself for us.

We praise you for his example of self-giving,
in that he willingly gave up his life for our peace,
and bless you for all who have served by his
example, laying down their lives for the sake of others.

We thank you for the life and service of these individuals,
unknown to us, but eternally known by you.

We commit their earthly remains to you now, in Jesus'
name.

All Amen.

Scripture Reading

Lecture des Portes Saintes

Read by a Representative of the British Embassy Paris

Psalm 90 v 1-6 & 10-12 (Gln)

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You return man to dust
and say, "Return, O children of man!"
For a thousand years in your sight
are but as yesterday when it is past,
or as a watch in the night.

You sweep them away as with a flood;
they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger,
and your wrath according to the fear of you?
So teach us to number our days,
that we may get a heart of wisdom.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Reading

Lecture

Read by Lieutenant Freya Blundell

3rd Battalion The Rifles

The Young Dead Soldiers Do Not Speak

By Archibald MacLeish

The young dead soldiers do not speak.

Nevertheless, they are heard in the still houses:
who has not heard them?

They have a silence that speaks for them at night
and when the clock counts.

They say: We were young. We have died.

Remember us.

They say: We have done what we could
but until it is finished it is not done.

They say: We have given our lives but until it is finished
no one can know what our lives gave.

They say: Our deaths are not sure: they are yours,
they will mean what you make them.

They say: Whether our lives and our deaths were for
peace and a new hope or for nothing we cannot say,
it is you who must say this.

We leave you our deaths. Give them their meaning.

We were young, they say. We have died, remember us.

Gospel Reading

Lecture de l'Évangile

Read by Commander Ret'd Steve Brown MBE

OIC the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre

John Chapter 15 v 12-15 (ESV)

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you".

This is the Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Address

Allocution

The Committal

L'Enterelement

Almighty God we submit unto you the souls of those departed. We commit their remains to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be changed, and made like unto his own glorious body; according to the mighty working wherewith he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

All Amen.

The Exhortation

L'Exhortation

Read by Sergeant Jack Coffy

The Rifles

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.

Last Post

Sonnerie aux Morts

Played by Corporal Philip Ingramella

The Band and Bugles of The Rifles

Silence

Ravellie

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épithaphe de Kohima

Read by a Rifleman of the Queen's Party

"When you go home tell them of us and say:

"For your tomorrow, we gave our today."

Laying of Wreaths

Depôts des Gerbes

Prayers

Prayer

Gracious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bow before you, our maker and redeemer. Your son, our saviour taught us that "in this world we will have troubles" yet encouraged us to "take heart"; because Jesus has "overcome the world".

As we lay the remains of these soldiers to rest, we acknowledge the preciousness of their lives, recognising the ultimate sacrifice they gave.

We take heart that there is hope, despite each devastating loss, and pray that their service would inspire us in this generation, to stand for what is right, while striving for peace wherever it can be rightly found.

We ask this in the name of the prince of peace.

All **Amen.**

Prayer for the Armed Forces

Préire pour les Forces Armées

Read by Lieutenant Freya Blenfell

3rd Battalion The Rifles

Almighty God, stretch forth your mighty arm to strengthen and protect the armed forces; grant that meeting danger with courage and all occasions with discipline and loyalty, they may truly serve the cause of justice and peace; to the honour of your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Prière du Seigneur

Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

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

Séparation de Dernière Bénédiction

Now is him who is able to keep you from stumbling
and to present you blameless before the presence of his
glory with great joy, to the only God, our Saviour, through
Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and
authority, before all time and now and forever.

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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