



A Burial Service for

**An Unknown British Soldier
Killed During the Great War**

**14:00 hours on Wednesday 15 October 2025
CWGC Vendresse British Cemetery, France**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Mark Nightingale CF
Chaplain to 9 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps
Déroulement de la cérémonie présidé par
le Révérend Mark Nightingale CF**

The remains of this unknown British soldier were found close to the Chemin des Dames, northeast of the destroyed village of Troyon. Based on the location where he was found, this man was most likely killed during the Battle of the Aisne in 1914. Unfortunately, he was not found with any distinguishing artefacts which could assist in his identification. Although his identity is unknown, today we will bury this man with military honours, and we will honour his sacrifice.

Les restes de ce soldat britannique inconnu ont été retrouvés près du Chemin des Dames, au nord-est du village détruit de Troyon. D'après l'endroit où il a été retrouvé, cet homme a très probablement été tué pendant la bataille de l'Aisne en 1914. Malheureusement, aucun objet distinctif susceptible d'aider à l'identifier n'a été retrouvé près de lui. Bien que son identité reste inconnue, nous allons aujourd'hui enterrer cet homme avec les honneurs militaires et nous honorerons son sacrifice.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Vendresse British Cemetery is located within an area that saw heavy fighting in both 1914 and 1918. The cemetery was created after the Armistice by the concentration of graves from several other cemeteries and surrounding battlefields and there are now over 700 First World War casualties buried here. It is in this same area that the unknown soldier, who is being laid to rest today, was found.

Call to Worship

Appel à Adoration

We come here today to recognise the bravery, commitment, and sacrifice given by a British Soldier who, on the day of decision, ventured his all for the liberties we now enjoy.

I pray that as we commend him to God our merciful redeemer and judge and commit his body to be buried and to lay his mortal remains to rest, God will help us to recognise the immeasurable debt we owe him for his sacrifice.

Bidding Prayer

Prière

Almighty God, we come to you in Jesus' name, who loved us and gave himself for us.

We thank you for his example of self-giving, in that he willingly gave up his life for our freedom 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 this soldier who we come to commit to you now, in Jesus' name.

All **Amen.**

Scripture Reading

Lecture des Écritures Saintes

Read by Lieutenant Colonel Elizabeth Sedgwick

Assistant Defence Attaché to France

1 Peter Chapter 3 v 8-18 (NRSV)

Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. For ‘Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.’ Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Lecture

Read by Captain Yolande Rowson
The Royal Regiment of Artillery

Peace - June 24th 1919

By Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley

“The red poppies cover the slopes of Verdun and hide
with their blood-red drapery the graves of the thousands
who died for Peace.”

How Verdun's poppies – fair with June's increase
Rehearse the tale of blood and butchery,
So that we pray their blossom-time pass by
And their green wins may pour for pain's release
The anodyne of Hope that wars shall cease;
Hark from the ground seven million whispers sigh,
Saying, “We died for Peace and Liberty,”
While twenty million wounded plead for Peace.

Peace over restful land and happier sea,
Peace with the song of men who bind the corn,
Peace with the shouts of those whose bread is sure,
Peace of a world rejoicing to be free
From haunting terror, Peace that shall endure,
Peace in whose eyes new light, new love, are born.

Gospel Reading

Lecture de l'Évangile

Read by Colonel Patrick Farrell OBE ADC

Regimental Colonel, The Royal Regiment of Artillery

John Chapter 15 v 12-15 (NIV)

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

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Address

Allocution

Commendation

L'Éloge

Let us commend this soldier to the mercy of God,
our maker and redeemer.

God our creator and redeemer,
by your power Christ conquered death
and entered into glory.
Confident of his victory
and claiming his promises
we entrust this soldier known by name to you,
to your mercy
in the name of Jesus our Lord,
who died and is alive
and reigns with you,
now and forever.

All **Amen.**

The Committal

L' Enterrement

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great goodness.
As a father is tender towards his children,
so is the Lord tender to those that fear him.
For he knows of what we are made;
he remembers that we are but dust.
Our days are like the grass;
we flourish like a flower of the field;
when the wind goes 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 toward those that fear him
and his righteousness upon their children's children.

We have entrusted this soldier to God's mercy,
and we now commit his body to the ground;
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who will transform our frail bodies
that they may be conformed to his glorious body
who died, was buried and rose again for us.
To him be glory forever.

All **Amen.**

The Exhortation

L'Exhortation

Read by Warrant Officer Class 2 Michael Bees
The Royal Regiment of Artillery

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 Gunner Guilherme Ross-Russell Figueiredo
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épitaphe de Kohima

Read by a Gunner of the Bearer Party

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

Laying of Wreaths

Dépôts des Gerbes

Prayers

Prières

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict,
and ask that God may give us peace:
for the Service men and women who have died
in the violence of war,
each one remembered by and known to God;
May God give peace.

All God give peace.

For those who love them in death as in life, offering the
distress of our grief and the sadness of our loss;
May God give peace.

All God give peace.

For all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership,
political, military and religious
and those who seek to keep this world secure and free;
asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve in the search for
reconciliation and peace.
May God give peace.

All God give peace.

O 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 honour the past,
may we put our faith in your future; for you are the
source of life and hope, now and forever.

All Amen.

Prayer for the Armed Forces

Prière pour les Forces Armées

Read by Warrant Officer Class 1 James Lightfoot
Royal Artillery Serjeant Major

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 et Dernière Bénédiction

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage;
hold fast to that which is good; render no-one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the
afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit and the Blessing
of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be among
you and remain with you 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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