



ARMY

A Burial Service for

An Unknown Soldier of the Northumberland Fusiliers

and

An Unknown Soldier of the Great War

14:00 hours on Tuesday 30 April 2019

Ovillers Military Cemetery, Ovillers-la-Boisselle, France

Service conducted by
The Revd Stuart Richards CF
Chaplain, 1st Battalion, Royal Regiment of Fusiliers

Two casualties were found in a ploughed field on the northern side of the village of La Boisselle in an area that was known as Mash Valley. Artefacts found with one of the casualties confirm that he served with the Northumberland Fusiliers, several battalions of which suffered massive casualties during the first few days of the Battle of the Somme. As a result, it has not been possible to identify him. The second casualty was found about 20m away but with nothing that gave any clue as to his identity or regiment.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Ovillers Military Cemetery was created as a battle 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 two casualties, one of whom served with the Northumberland Fusiliers, were discovered. They can now be laid to rest alongside their comrades.

Introduction

Psalm 91:1-2

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

We have come together, friends, representatives of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, to give thanks for the lives of these 2 unknown soldiers who were killed in action during the Great War. We commend them to God and lay their mortal remains in their final resting place, honoured by us and known unto God; comrades in life, united in death. As we remember their lives, their devotion to service and their sacrifice, we continue to commend all those who died into the everlasting arms of God.

Bidding Prayer

Almighty God,
you judge us with infinite mercy and justice
and love everything that you have made.
In your mercy turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new
life, and the sorrow of parting into the joy of heaven;
through our saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Scripture Reading

John 14; 1 – 6

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going. Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Interment

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the souls of our dear brothers here departed, we therefore commit their bodies 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 shall change the body of our low estate that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself

The Act of Remembrance

Let us remember before God and commend to his sure keeping: those who have died for their country in conflict; those whom we knew, and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived and died in the service of humanity.

The Exhortation

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

The Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

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

Wreath Laying

The Soldier

By Rupert Brooke

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
that is for ever England. There shall be
in that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware:
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam:
A body of England's, breathing English air,
washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
a pulse in the eternal mind, no less
gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
in hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

The Prayers

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 members of the armed forces
who are in danger this day, remembering family, friends
and all who pray for their safe return.

May God give peace.

All: God give peace.

For civilian women, children and men
whose lives are disfigured by war or terror,
calling to mind in penitence the anger and hatred of humanity.

May God give peace.

All: God give peace.

For peacemakers and peacekeepers,
who seek to keep this world secure and free.

May God give peace.

All: God give peace.

For all who bear the burden and privilege of leadership,
political, military and religious;
asking for gifts of wisdom and resolve
in the search for reconciliation and peace.

May God give peace.

All: God give peace.

Almighty God, you make wars to cease in all the world, and
have taught us to look to the day when swords are beaten into
ploughshares; into your hands we commend the souls of those
men whose mortal remains lie here. May they find peace in
your presence, rest from their labours, and rise to eternal life
through your Son Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Collect of the Northumberland Fusiliers

O God, in whose strength we shall treat down the enemy of our souls, grant that wheresoever thy secret will may call the Northumberland Fusiliers, we may ever by faith wax valiant in fight for the captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ, thy son, our Lord.

Amen.

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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

Support us, O Lord,
all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes,
the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over
and our work is done.
Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you his peace this day and always.
Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty; Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you, and those whom you love, for ever and ever.
Amen.



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