



A Burial Service for

**Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm
140th Field Ambulance
Royal Army Medical Corps**

**14:30 hours 10 May 2023
CWGC Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Andrew Grant CF
Chaplain to 5th Regiment Royal Artillery**

Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm

Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm was born in Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham, in 1894. He was one of twelve children born to James Malcolm and his wife Mary Jane. His father moved to Stockton-on-Tees from Leith in Scotland as a teenager and worked in the ship building industry. Robert followed his father into the industry and worked as a rivet heater, before enlisting into the Royal Army Medical Corps.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Private Malcolm was serving with 10th Field Ambulance which departed for the Western Front from Southampton on 22 August 1914, arriving in France the following day. 140th Field Ambulance arrived on the Western Front on 6 May 1916, and it appears that at some stage after this, Private Malcolm transferred to that unit.

In 2019 the remains of a soldier were recovered outside a German blockhouse in Fusilier Wood, near Klein-Zillebeke. He was found wearing insignia of the Royal Army Medical Corps and had a cloth Medical Orderly patch in his pocket, indicating that he may have been a stretcher bearer. Extensive research was carried out by JCCC to establish if any missing stretcher bearers of the Royal Army Medical Corps could be placed in the location at the time they went missing.

Fusilier Wood had been captured by German forces in 1914. The area was recaptured by British Forces during the Battle of Messines in June 1917. When the Third Battle of Ypres commenced on 31 July 1917, Fusilier Wood sat within the 41st Division sector. 124th Infantry Brigade held the frontline east of Fusilier Wood. On 5 August 1917, 32nd Battalion The Royal Fusiliers fought off enemy raids on Jehovah and Imperfect Trenches and Fusilier Wood was heavily shelled that night. Fusilier Wood was heavily shelled again on the afternoon and evening of 6 August 1917.

Although 139th Field Ambulance were operating in the line in the 41st Division sector during this period, owing to the high casualty rate, stretcher bearers of 138th and 140th Field Ambulances had been attached in support. An Advanced Aid Post had been established in repurposed German blockhouses in Fusilier Wood. The War Diaries of 139th Field Ambulance record that at around 16:00 hours on 6 August 1917, Private Joseph Wilson and Private Alfred Leslie Barton of 140th Field Ambulance were killed at 'the Fusilier Aid Post'. Private John Henry Johnson was wounded. Both Privates Wilson and Barton are still missing and are commemorated on the Menin Gate.

Although not mentioned in the War Diaries, Private Malcolm, then aged 23, was later reported as missing, believed killed in action the same day. On 23 January 1918, his death was confirmed. It appears that Private Malcolm was killed during the shelling in Fusilier Wood on 6 August 1917, but unlike his comrades, his death was not immediately noted. He was also commemorated on the Menin Gate.

DNA testing was carried out in order to establish the identity of this soldier. This confirmed his identity as Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm. Today we will remember Private Malcolm and he will be buried in the presence of his family.

CWGC Bedford House Cemetery is situated in the grounds of Chateau Rosendal, a former country house that was used by field ambulances and brigade headquarters during the war. It was gradually destroyed by shelling and the grounds became covered by small cemeteries or enclosures. The largest of which, Enclosure No. 4, was initially used between June 1916 and February 1918 but was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields of the Ypres Salient. It is here that Private Malcolm is now being laid to rest.

Call to Worship

We have come to this place to inter the mortal remains of Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm of 140th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps, who gave his life during the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917.

Today we accord Private Malcolm the dignity and respect that he is due and commend him to the mercy and grace of God our redeemer and judge, and in the hope and life given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us.

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

Bidding Prayer

We meet in the presence of God.

To commit ourselves to work in penitence and faith
for reconciliation between the nations,
that all people may, together, live in freedom,
justice and peace.

We come to pray for all who in bereavement, disability
and pain continue to suffer the consequences of fighting
and terror.

We come to remember with thanksgiving and sorrow
Private Robert Kenneth Malcolm, and all whose lives,
in World Wars and conflicts past and present,
have been given and taken away.

All **Amen.**

Scripture Reading

Read by Group Captain John Dickson
Defence Attaché to Belgium and Luxembourg

Exodus Chapter 15 v 22-27 (NIV)

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they travelled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter (that is why the place is called Marah). So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

Then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink.

There the Lord issued a ruling and instruction for them and put them to the test. He said, "If you listen carefully to the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you."

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Read by Linda Jordan

The Great Great Niece of Private Malcolm

Luke Chapter 5 v 27-32 (NIV)

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Read by Corporal Ella Hitchcock
202 (Midlands) Field Hospital, Royal Army Medical Corps

Packing Out (A Ballad of the Stretcher Bearers)

By Private Frank Walker, Canadian Army Medical Corps

We loaf around the Aid Post, on the sand bags in the sun,
Taking the jeers and sneers of every passing son-of-a-gun.
We are the lousy stretcher-squads, the discards of the Pack,
The idlers of the Army- til the Army's next attack!

And then, some bloody morning, when the sky's a blazing red,
And the batteries are roaring loud enough to wake the dead,
And the little mad machine-guns the infernal racket swell,
With the din of devils riveting the boiler plates of hell.

Oh, then it's "Good Old Stretcher-Bearers: they're the boys for trouble!"
"Gangway for the Stretcher-Bearers coming on the double!"
"Gangway for the Bearers!" goes from trench to trench the cry,
And everybody hops aside to let the "Bearers" by.

Into the red confusion, and through the din we pass,
Stumbling along the trench mats, holding our breath for Gas -
Scrambling over the bald-spots, hearing the bullets whine -
Over the gaps and through the saps and up the Firing Line.

We go where men are falling in the awesome barrage-tract,
We dig them out, and pick them up, and pack them safely back.
Over the wire and through the mire and down the Line we go,
And you can bet your old Tin Hat our pace is far from slow!

Back and back we go, til the battle-field is clear,
(It's good to hear the wounded chaps giving us the Cheer!)
Back and back we go til the bloody job is through, -
Then it's "Good old Stretcher-Bearers!" and "A double Rum for you!"

Address

Given by Reverend Andrew Grant CF

The Committal

We have but a short time to live.
Like a flower we blossom and then wither;
like a shadow we flee and never stay.
In the midst of life we are in death;
to whom can we turn for help,
but to you, Lord, who are justly angered by our sins?
Yet, Lord God most holy, Lord most mighty,
O holy and most merciful Saviour,
deliver us from the bitter pains of eternal death.
Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts;
hear our prayer, O God most mighty;
spare us, most worthy judge eternal;
at our last hour let us not fall from you,
O holy and merciful Saviour.

We have entrusted our fallen comrade to God's mercy
and now we 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 for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Exhortation

Read by Warrant Officer Class 2 Adam Gregory
202 (Midlands) Field Hospital, Royal Army Medical 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

Played by Drummer Adam Grant
4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Silence

Flowers of the Forest

Played by Piper Fearghas Russell
4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Warrant Officer Class 2 Adam Gregory
202 (Midlands) Field Hospital, Royal Army Medical Corps

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

Laying of Wreaths

Prayers

Eternal God, in your wisdom and grace you have given us joy through the lives of your departed servants. We thank you for the life of our fallen comrade and for those who loved him. We thank you for your goodness and mercy that followed him all the days of his life and his ultimate faithfulness to the tasks to which you had called him.

May God give peace:

All **God give peace.**

We pray for all who have died or suffer as a result of conflict. Those whose lives are disfigured by war or terror. For service men and women, for civilians, for those held captive, each one remembered by and known to God.

May God give peace:

All **God give peace.**

We pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers; those who seek to keep this world secure and free; 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.**

Finally, we pray 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.**

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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 Collect of The Royal Army Medical Corps

Read by Major James Johnson

202 (Midlands) Field Hospital, Royal Army Medical Corps

O God, whose blessed son was made perfect through suffering, give thy grace, we beseech thee, to thy servants of the Royal Army Medical Corps, that, by loyalty in hard service after the example of Saint Luke the beloved physician, we may be found faithful in ministering to those that need, for his sake who went about doing good, the same thy son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Blessing

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 you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Amazing Grace

Played by Piper Fearghas Russell
4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland



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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