



ARMY

**A Burial Service for
An Unknown Soldier of The Royal Irish Rifles and
An Unknown Soldier of an Unknown Regiment
Killed during the Great War**

**11:00 hours Tuesday 19 March 2019
Messines Ridge British Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Nathan King CF
Chaplain 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment**

The remains of this unknown soldier of The Royal Irish Rifles and this unknown soldier of an unknown regiment were discovered on Wulvergemstraat, south west of Wijtschate. Their remains were uncovered during work to widen a drainage ditch. Research suggests these soldiers were killed either in June 1917 during the Battle of Messines or in April 1918 during the Battle of the Lys. However, there are unfortunately still too many soldiers of The Royal Irish Rifles missing in this area from these two battles to identify this Irish soldier. No artefacts were found with the other casualty to suggest which regiment he belonged to. They will therefore be buried today as an unknown soldier of The Royal Irish Rifles and an unknown soldier of an unknown regiment.

Created after the Armistice on the grounds of the "Institution Royale", the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Messines Ridge British Cemetery was formed from the concentration of graves from battlefield cemeteries and isolated graves near Messines, Wytschaete and Warneton. It is from this area these two casualties, one of whom served with the Royal Irish Rifles, were discovered. Sadly, nearly two thirds of the burials within this cemetery, including those being interred today, remain unidentified.

Call to Worship

We come before God today who is our maker and our redeemer. We are made in His sight and are precious to Him. As we remember these unknown soldiers we also know that all of us are known and deeply valued by God. In this act of worship may we be raised with Christ, giving thanks for comrades past who have entered into Glory.

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

Bidding Prayer

Lord, we offer ourselves and others into your presence. May we receive that eternal peace that passes all understanding and give our lives in service to the needs of others.

All **Amen.**

Gospel Reading

Read by a Representative from the British Embassy

John Chapter 14 v 1-3 (NIV)

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.

Scripture Reading

Read by Major General Colin Weir DSO MBE
Colonel of The Royal Irish Regiment

Psalm 23 (KJV)

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my
enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

Scripture Reading

Read by Colonel Des Bergin

Representing the Irish Embassy in Belgium

Romans Chapter 8 v 35-39 (NIV)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Address

The Collect of The Royal Irish Regiment

Read by Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) Andy Hart OBE
Royal Irish Regiment

Almighty God whose love knows no bounds grant that we, The Royal Irish Regiment, may do our duty courageously so that, undaunted by the difficulties which beset us, your will may be done and, united as members one with another may we, mindful of the valour and sacrifice of those who have gone before us, clear the way for those that follow, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All **Amen.**

Committal

Lord God, we commit into your safe keeping these soldiers, whose names are known by you. We give thanks for all that they were and for all that they accomplished and that they now rest in your presence and peace.

The Exhortation

Read by WO2 Gary Wilkins
2nd Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

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

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

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

Laying of Wreaths

Prayer

Lord, help us to use aright the time that we have on this earth, that we may turn to others and be blessed by the presence of your peace. May your light so shine from us that heaven may be seen, with hearts turned to you. Bless this your servant with your heavenly Grace.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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

May God's eternal Blessing, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be upon us and those called back to Him, so that we, with
those who have departed this life, may receive the
Blessings of God both now and forever more.

All **Amen.**



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