



**A Burial Service for**

**An Unknown Soldier of The Essex Regiment**

**And**

**An Unknown Soldier of the Great War**

**14:30 hours Tuesday 5 November 2019**

**New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Paul Whitehead CF  
Chaplain to 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment**

Between 2014 and 2015 twenty four sets of remains were found during construction work, at what is believed to have been the site of Irish Farm Cemetery. It had previously been thought that after the Great War the graves in Irish Farm Cemetery had all been moved to New Irish Farm Cemetery, a short distance away. Twenty one of these soldiers have already been buried with full military honours in this cemetery.

One of the remaining five soldiers was found with shoulder titles of The Essex Regiment. Research showed that this casualty was most likely a member of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Essex Regiment who was killed between May and September 1915. There are still too many soldiers of The Essex Regiment missing from this period to identify this soldier. He will be buried today alongside an unknown soldier of an unknown regiment who was found with him and we will remember their sacrifice.

Close to a location known by the troops as 'Irish Farm', the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's New Irish Farm Cemetery was first used in August 1917 and by the war's end contained 73 burials. After the Armistice, the cemetery was greatly increased in size when more than 4,500 graves were concentrated from several small cemeteries and the surrounding battlefields near Ypres. It is from this area that these two unknown casualties were recovered and can now be laid to rest alongside their comrades.



## **Call to Worship**

We have gathered here today to remember two unknown soldiers who were caught up in the courageous but tragic events of the First World War and who received commendation and award for their courage, loyalty and determination in the face of impossible odds. We remember those who were killed in action, or by disease, the bereaved, the lost, the families which were shattered, the wounded, maimed and injured, those who held in silence unspeakable memories of warfare.

## **Bidding Prayer**

Eternal God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:

Kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## **Scripture Reading**

Read by Group Captain Justin Fowler

Defence Attaché to Belgium and Luxembourg

### **Verses taken from Psalm 91**

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers. Under his wings you will take refuge. His faithfulness is your shield and rampart.

You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day; nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it will not come near you. You will only look with your eyes, and see the recompense of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall overtake you; no plague shall come near your dwelling. For he will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, so that you won't dash your foot against a stone.

You will tread upon the lion and the viper. You will trample the young lion and the serpent underfoot. "Because he has set his love on me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him on high, because he has known my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him, and honour him. I will satisfy him with long life, and show him my salvation."

This is the Word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**



## **Gospel Reading**

Read by Major (Ret'd) Peter Williamson  
The Essex Regiment Museum

### **Luke Chapter 15 v 3-10 (NIV)**

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

This is the Word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## **Reading**

Read by Lieutenant Piers Darby  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment

### **I Went to See the Soldiers**

*By Kenny Martin*

I went to see the soldiers, row on row on row,  
And wondered about each so still, their badges all on  
show.

What brought them here, what life before  
Was like for each of them?  
What made them angry, laugh, or cry,  
These soldiers, boys and men.

Some so young, some older still, a bond more close than  
brothers

These men have earned and shared a love,  
That's not like any other  
They trained as one, they fought as one  
They shared their last together  
That bond endures, that love is true  
And will be, now and ever.

I could not know, how could I guess, what choice each  
had made,  
Of how they came to soldiering, what part each one had  
played?  
But here they are and here they'll stay,  
Each one silent and in place,  
Their headstones line up row on row  
They guard this hallowed place.



## **Address**

### **The Collect of The Essex Regiment**

Read by Major (Ret'd) Peter Williamson  
The Essex Regiment Museum

O Lord, our stony rock and our defence, hear us, we pray thee, thy servants of The Essex Regiment, and ever bear us as on eagles' wings in the faith and truth of him who is our shield and buckler, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## **Prayer**

God our Creator,  
we fail to seek your justice,  
and swerve from the way of righteousness:  
look with compassion upon those facing danger, disaster,  
and devastation  
Guide us all along the path of life, and make us valiant  
for truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## **Commendation and Committal**

## **Volley of Shots**

## **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**

### **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**

Strengthen our hearts, and hands, and minds, O Lord, to  
work together for peace; to see you in one another; and  
to seek your kingdom above all things; that your will may  
be seen to be done and your kingdom come, through  
Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords and King of kings.

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

## **The Blessing**

God grant to the living grace, the departed rest,  
the church, The Queen, governments, rulers  
and all the world peace and concord;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
*All* **Amen.**



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