



A Rededication Service for

**Lance Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson
13th Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps**

**10:30 hours Thursday 15 September 2022
CWGC Messines Ridge British Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by The Reverend Martin Pritchard CF
Chaplain to 4th Battalion
The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment**

Lance Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson



A war hero living long in the memory of his family.

Lance Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson was born on 29 November 1897 in Shoreditch, London. He was the youngest of three sons born to Charles and Louisa Wilkinson. He enlisted in Stratford, Essex, before the outbreak of hostilities.

When war broke out he was quickly sent to the Western Front, arriving on the 20 September 1914. Initially he served with 2nd Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps before transferring to 13th Battalion. At the end of June 1917, 13th Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps was consolidating the frontline south east of Oosttaverne and patrols were being sent out each night. On 29 June 1917, Lance Corporal Wilkinson was killed aged just 19.

Lance Corporal Wilkinson was buried following his death and a wooden cross was placed over his grave. After the First World War his remains were moved to Messines Ridge British Cemetery, but the cross over his grave had been damaged and his name was lost. He was buried as an unknown soldier of 13th Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps who was killed on 29 June 1917. As he was missing, he was commemorated on the Menin Gate. However, new research has identified Lance Corporal Wilkinson as the soldier buried in this grave. Today we will remember Lance Corporal Wilkinson and his grave will be rededicated.

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, Wytshaete and Warneton. It is from this area that Lance Corporal Wilkinson and other soldiers of The King's Royal Rifle Corps, were concentrated into this cemetery.

Call to Worship

The eternal God is our refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.
Deuteronomy 33:27 (AV)

God so loved the world
that he gave his only Son,
that everyone who has faith in him
may not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16

We are gathered here today in this place of remembrance to honour our fallen in conflicts past. Today we remember with thanksgiving Lance Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson, who alongside so many others, answered the call of his country, served with honour and gave the ultimate sacrifice of his life in the service of his nation.

As we rededicate this grave, as it no longer holds the remains of an unknown soldier, let us also rededicate our lives in the service of God, so that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven and that His kingdom of justice and peace may be established.

Prayer

God, the Lord of life and conqueror of death,
you are our help in every time of trouble.
We thank you for the assurance of the Gospel,
that in your keeping the souls of the faithful
find lasting peace and joy, and that though we see our
loved ones no more they are safe with you.

On this day we give thanks that these remains that were
once known only to you are now known to all of us.
We give thanks that we can now name them as Lance
Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson. As we rededicate
these remains and this headstone we give thanks for the
life, the service and the sacrifice of Frederick Thomas
Wilkinson.

By the glorious resurrection of your Son,
confirm in us the hope of eternal life,
and enable us to put our whole trust
in your goodness and mercy;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Gospel Reading

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

John Chapter 11 v 17-27 (NIV)

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Reading

Read by Second Lieutenant Hayder Al-Azzawi
8th Battalion The Rifles

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.

Scripture Reading

Read by Major Andrew Holsgrove

4th Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

Isaiah Chapter 40 v 28-31 (NIV)

Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Address

The Act of Remembrance

Most gracious God, Father of all mercies,
We offer our thanks for the bounty of your providence
and the renewing liberty of your grace.
We rejoice in our inheritance in holy things,
and in the freedom and peace in which we live.
Especially this day we give thanks for the life of Lance
Corporal Frederick Thomas Wilkinson, for all that he was
and for all that he accomplished and that he now rests in
your eternal presence no longer in an unknown grave.

The Exhortation

Read by Second Lieutenant Hayder Al-Azzawi
8th Battalion The Rifles

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 Lance Corporal Stephen Elliott
8th Battalion The Rifles

The Silence

The Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Second Lieutenant Hayder Al-Azzawi
8th Battalion The Rifles

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

Laying of Wreaths

Prayer

Eternal God,
by your dear Son's rising from the dead
you have destroyed the power of death.
In you the dead find life for ever,
and the faithful
who served you on earth
praise you for all eternity in heaven.
As we return to our tasks,
cheer us by the hope of everlasting life
and support us by the sure love
of your guiding hand.
Bring us at the last,
with all the faithful,
to the full knowledge of your love
and the unclouded vision of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Collect of The King's Royal Rifle Corps
Read by Major Andrew Holsgrove
4th Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

O Eternal God, in whom we live and move, quicken, we pray thee, thy servants of The King's Royal Rifle Corps in thy way, and give us boldness to seek thy grace in every time of need, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

The peace of God, which is beyond all understanding,
guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy
Spirit, be with us all. This day and forever more.

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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