



A Burial Service for

**Lance Corporal Robert Cook
2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment**

**14:30 hours 27 October 2021
CWGC New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium**

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

Lance Corporal Robert Cook

Lance Corporal Robert Cook was born in Bishop Wilton, Yorkshire, on 6 June 1876. He was one of seven children born to James Cook and Rebecca Leak. In 1878 his mother Rebecca died. James then emigrated to South Africa with five of his children.

Having travelled to South Africa as a young boy, Robert served with various British Colonial regiments. On 29 December 1895 he took part in the Jameson Raid as a Trooper with A Troop of The Mashonaland Mounted Police. In 1896 he qualified for the British South Africa Company's Medal with 'Rhodesia 1896' reverse, whilst serving with the Matabeleland Relief Force. In 1899 he took part in the Second Boer War. He is listed as serving with The Bethunes Mounted Infantry from 19 October 1899 to 19 November 1900, spending part of this time with The South African Light Horse. He took part in the relief of Ladysmith. On 23 April 1901 he was wounded at Boschmanskop whilst serving with French's Scouts. For this service he was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal 1899-1902 and the King's South Africa Medal.

In November 1914, Robert enlisted into The Essex Regiment. He arrived on the Western Front on 14 March 1915. The War Diaries of 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment show that they moved into the frontline near Ypres on 30 April 1915. At 17:00 hours on 2 May 1915 they were attacked with gas, they were shelled and then attacked by the enemy. By the end of the day casualties had amounted to 23 killed, 72 wounded and 175 missing. Lance Corporal Cook was killed during the course of this action.

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. Irish Farm was in use as a Regimental Aid Post in May 1915. 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. Nineteen of these soldiers were buried in September 2017 with full military honours. A further four soldiers were buried in 2019.

Lance Corporal Robert Cook is the only one of these twenty four soldiers to have been identified. He was found with his medal ribbon bar containing the ribbons of his three South Africa medals. He will now be laid to rest alongside his comrades.

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.

Call to Worship

We have come to this place to inter the mortal remains of Lance Corporal Robert Cook a soldier of 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment, who gave his life during the Second Battle of Ypres on the 2 May 1915.

Today we accord Lance Corporal Cook 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
Lance Corporal Robert Cook, 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 Justin Fowler
Defence Attaché to Belgium and Luxembourg

Romans Chapter 8 vs 18, 28, 31-35, 37-39 (NRSV)

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

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

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Read by Colonel Simon Browne OBE

Deputy Colonel of The Royal Anglian Regiment

John Chapter 15 v 9-17 (ESV)

Jesus said, 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.'

This is the Word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Read by Lieutenant Will Bagnall
1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment

In Flanders Fields

By John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Address

The Collect of The Essex Regiment

Read by Major Ret'd Peter Williamson MBE

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 and redeemer,
by your power Christ conquered death
and entered into glory.

Confident of his victory and claiming his promises,
we entrust our fallen comrade to your mercy
in the name of Jesus our Lord,
who died and is alive and reigns with you,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

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.**

Blessed are the dead who die in the law;
for they rest from their labours.

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

The Blessing

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, The Queen, 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,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be among you all and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Go forth with hope and seek for peace in the service of
God,
In the name of Christ.

All **Amen.**



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