



A Rededication Service for

**Corporal Gilbert Willcocks  
Army Service Corps**

Wednesday 19 October 2022 at 2.30pm  
CWGC Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Belgium

Service conducted by  
Reverend Andy Nicolls CF



Gilbert 'Bert' John Tucker Willcocks was born in Taunton, Somerset in 1891. He was one of nine children born to Elias Willcocks, a miller, originally from Crediton, Devon, and Avis Jane Willcocks, née Tucker, originally from Cannington, Somerset. In 1901 the Willcocks family were living in Swansea. After leaving school Bert worked as a clerk for the Swansea Education Office before becoming a commercial traveller for Messrs Rank and Co. Bert's father died in 1910 leaving Bert the oldest of the children living at home. By 1911 the family had moved to 1 Claude Place, Roath and Bert was working as a grocer's assistant. He attended Crwys Hall Methodist chapel, Monthermer Road, Cathays and played football in the Cardiff Football League. He joined the army at the outbreak of war and went to France in May 1915 as a member of the Army Service Corps. He was killed in action on 28 Nov 1915, aged 24, when manning a canteen just behind the front line trenches which was hit by a German shell. He had no known grave but is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) memorial in Belgium. Corporal Bert Willcocks was a well-respected man as sometime after he died the Crwys Hall chapel received a letter from the front saying that the officers and men of

105 Company A.S.C. wished that a brass tablet in his name be erected at the church and had a collection among the soldiers to fund the making of it. When the work was commissioned, the maker in Birmingham refused to take any money for it. In the end the £6 15s was donated to Bert's widowed mother. The memorial was unveiled on 2 April 1916 in a packed church with over 1000 present including the Lord Mayor Dr Smith and the band of the 3rd Welsh. It was the first memorial to a First World War soldier in any of Cardiff's places of worship. The name of Corporal Willcocks also appeared on the collective WWI memorial at Crwys Hall church. Crwys Hall Methodist closed in the 1980/90s. The building fell into disrepair for a time but has since been renovated and is now Highfields Church. The memorials were removed before or during the renovation process and ended up with a private collector in Europe. They have subsequently been bought back and rehung in the renovated Highfields Church, Monthermer Rd, Cardiff so that Gilbert's sacrifice will not be forgotten.



## Introduction

We have come together, family, friends, representatives of His Majesty the King and the Royal Logistics Corps, to give thanks for the life of Corporal Gilbert Willcocks who was killed in action on 28 November 1915. As we remember his life, devotion to service and sacrifice, we continue to commend all those who died into the everlasting arms of God.

## Bidding Prayer

Almighty God,  
you judge us with infinite mercy and justice  
and love everything that you have made.  
In your mercy turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new life,  
and the sorrow of parting into the joy of heaven;  
through our saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**War** by Ellis Humphrey Evans (better known as Welsh poet Hedd Wyn)  
*Read by Colonel (Retired) Nigel Gilbert – Chair; RASC/RCT Association*

Bitter to live in times like these.  
While God declines beyond the seas;  
Instead, man, king or peasantry,  
Raises his gross authority.

When he thinks God has gone away  
Man takes up his sword to slay  
His brother; we can hear death's roar.  
It shadows the hovels of the poor.

Like the old songs they left behind,  
We hung our harps in the willows again.  
Ballads of boys blow on the wind,  
Their blood is mingled with the rain.

## John 14; 1 – 6

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. You know the way to the place where I am going.

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

### **The Soldier's Prayer in the Field of Battle** written by "E.P"

God of my fathers! guide my way  
amidst the Battle's fierce alarms;  
Grant me to see, this dreadful day,  
the triumph of my Country's arms.

Yet not my will, but thine be done,  
if thy high wisdom doom my fall,  
tho' short the race of life I've run,  
I die content at Duty's call.

Then, if thy grace my prayer accord,  
the expression of my parting breath,  
grateful, I'll bless thy goodness, Lord!  
and smile amidst the pangs of Death.

May my transgressions of thy will  
find mercy thro' my Saviour's name!  
May my lov'd Country, freed from ill,  
long flourish in unbounded fame!"

## John 21

I saw a new heaven and a new earth,  
for the first heaven and the first earth had vanished,  
and there was no longer any sea.

I saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem,  
coming down out of heaven from God,  
made ready like a bride for her husband.

I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the throne;  
"Now God has his dwelling with mankind!  
He will dwell among them and they shall be his people,  
and God himself will be with them."

He will wipe every tear from their eyes.  
There shall be an end to death,  
and to mourning and crying and pain,  
for the old order has passed away.

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be there,  
and his servants shall worship him;  
they shall see him face to face and bear his name on their  
foreheads.

There shall be no more night,  
nor will they need the light of lamp or sun,  
for the Lord God will give them light;  
and they shall reign for ever.

**Address:** Reverend Andy Nicolls CF

You have done all you can on a physical level, and now must enter sacred waiting. The hardest most integral step is turning all over to the grace of life and the coming transformative powers born from the steps you have already taken.

Written by Sarah Blondin

Father in heaven, we praise your name  
for all who have finished this life loving and trusting you,  
for the example of their lives,  
the life and grace you gave them  
and the peace in which they rest.  
We praise you today for your servant,  
Gilbert John Tucker Willcocks  
and for all that you did through him.  
Meet us in our sadness as we remember him now  
and fill our hearts with praise and thanksgiving,  
for the sake of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **The Act of Remembrance**

Let us remember before God and commend to his sure keeping:  
those who have died for their country in conflict; those whom we  
knew, and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived  
and died in the service of humanity.

### **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**

### **The Silence**

### **The Reveille**

## **Kohima Epitaph**

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

## **Wreath Laying**

### **The Prayers**

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict,  
and ask that God may give us peace:  
for the service men and women  
who have died in the violence of war,  
each one remembered by and known to God;  
may God give peace.

**All: God give peace.**

For those who love them in death as in life,  
offering the distress of our grief  
and the sadness of our loss; may God give peace.

**All: God give peace.**

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.**

For civilian women, children and men  
whose lives are disfigured by war or terror,  
calling to mind in penitence the anger and hatred of humanity;  
may God give peace.

**All: God give peace.**



For peacemakers and peacekeepers,  
who seek to keep this world secure and free;  
may God give peace.

**All: God give peace.**

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.**

### **The Collect of the (Royal) Army Service Corps**

Almighty God, who didst carry thy people all the days of old, and  
who dost supply all our need, uphold us who serve in the (Royal)  
Army Service Corps in all our works according to thy will, that by  
well doing as good and faithful servants, we may enter into thy  
joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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 Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you his peace this day and always. And the blessing of God Almighty; Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you, and those whom you love, for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**About the Service**

The service has been organised by the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre and will be attended by regimental representatives and local dignitaries. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission will be providing the headstone.

**About the Cemetery**

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Ypres Reservoir Cemetery was begun in October 1915 and used by fighting units and field ambulances until after the Armistice. The cemetery was later enlarged when graves, including that of Corporal Willcocks, were brought in from the battlefields of the Ypres salient.



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