



ARMY

A Burial Service for

An Unknown Soldier of the Great War

14:00 hours Tuesday 18 June 2024

CWGC Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval

**Service conducted by Reverend Ben Norton CF
Chaplain to 1st Bn, The Royal Anglian Regiment**

Background

In the spring of 2021 human remains were discovered in a freshly ploughed field on the edge of High Wood, Longueval. The remains were recovered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

High Wood was first attacked by the British at dawn on 14 July 1916, but the British were unable to take it that day, and in fact High Wood was the last of the major woods in the Somme offensive to be captured.

Despite a whole series of attacks spanning two months, High Wood remained in German hands until 15 September 1916 when it was finally gained by the British using tanks.

The area was lost again during the Spring Offensive in March 1918, then subsequently regained during the Hundred Days Offensive in August 1918.

Due to the extensive fighting in this area by multiple battalions of multiple regiments across a wide span of time, the list of missing is extensive. Unfortunately, these remains were found with no significant identifying artefacts to help us narrow the potential candidates, though the General Service buttons and ammunition found alongside the remains indicates that they were of Commonwealth origin.

With no way to distinguish this man from the hundreds missing in this area, today we bury him as an unknown soldier, known unto God.

Welcome

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.

We are gathered here today in this place of remembrance to honour the fallen in conflicts past.

Today we honour with thanksgiving this brave man whom, alongside so many others, answered the call of their country, served with honour and gave their lives in the service of their nation.

We will shortly commit his body to be buried. In so doing let us commit ourselves anew to remember his courage. For by so doing we honour his memory and we reflect upon his sacrifice.

Let us honour ourselves also to God's service, that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven and that His kingdom of justice and peace be established everywhere.

Bidding Prayer

Prière

Let us recall the presence of God, the Father of all mankind, maker and sustainer of all that is, whose purposes are good, whose love is never withheld and whose mercy never passes away. We call to mind His faithfulness in times of darkness and despair.

We remember before Him our brothers and sisters whose names are known only to God, and all who have served in the Armed Forces of our nation; who counted service to others greater than service of self, and who gave their lives in battle.

Merciful Father,
hear our prayers and comfort us;
renew our trust in your Son
whom you raised from the dead;
strengthen our faith
that all who have died in the love of Christ
will share in His resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Scripture Reading

Lecture des Écritures Saintes
Psalm 121 – A song of ascents

I lift up my eyes to the mountains –
Where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
The maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot to slip –
He who watches over you will not slumber.
Indeed, he who watched over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord watches over you –
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm –
He will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going,
both now and forevermore.

Address

Allocution

Blessing of the Grave

Bénédiction de la Tombe

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ was laid in a tomb;
bless, we pray, this grave as the place where the body of your
servant may rest in peace, through your Son, who is the
resurrection and the life; who died and is alive and reigns with
you now and for ever.

All Amen.

Commendation

God our creator and redeemer, by your power Christ conquered death and returned to you in glory. Confident of your victory and claiming his promises, we entrust this man into your keeping in the name of Jesus our Lord, who, though he died, is now alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Committal

L'Enterrement

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.**

The Exhortation

L'Éxhortation

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

Sonnerie aux Morts

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épitaphe de Kohima

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

Laying of Wreaths

Dépôts des Gerbes

Collect of The Royal Anglian Regiment

Récitation du Royal Anglian Regiment

O Lord God, who by the brightness of a star didst lead men to the Saviour of mankind; give thy grace to the Royal Anglian Regiment, that trusting in thee as our strong rock and castle, we may in unity with thee and with one another rightly serve our Sovereign and our native land, and at the last be led by thy mercy to thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Prière du Seigneur

Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.**

Prayers

Prières

Almighty God, protect all who serve in the Forces of the King; strengthen us in danger and temptation, give us courage and loyalty, that we may remain true to the highest traditions of our profession; and keep us steadfast when faced with the perils of action in war; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Almighty God, who has revealed your only Son as the resurrection and the life; raise us, we pray, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness that, when we depart from this life, we may rest in Him, and at the last may receive the blessing; Well done good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Lord. Grant this, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, our mediator and redeemer. **Amen.**

The Blessing

Séparation de Dernière Bénédiction

God grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest; to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all humankind, peace and concord; and to us and all his servants, life everlasting; and may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, come down upon you and all those whom you love now and always. **Amen.**

Caterpillar Valley was the name given by the army to the long valley which runs West to East, past "Caterpillar Wood" and to the high ground at Guillemont. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Caterpillar Valley Cemetery was first started in August 1918 and consisted of only 25 graves (now Plot 1). Following the Armistice, the cemetery was greatly increased with the concentration of over 5,500 officers and men from cemeteries and battlefields of the Somme. It is from this same area that the unknown soldier being buried today was recovered.



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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