



Funeral Service

FOR
AN UNKNOWN WORLD WAR ONE
AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER

15 July 2022

TYNE COT CEMETERY, ZONNEBEKE, BELGIUM

Tyne-Cot Cemetery

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Tyne Cot Cemetery is located in an area which was known as the Ypres Salient where Commonwealth, French, Belgian and German forces fought almost continuously throughout the First World War.

In 1917, British forces launched the Third Battle of Ypres, which raged from July to November. Forces from the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa fought to push the Germans off the low ridges that dominate the area. On 4 October 1917, during the phase known as the Battle of Passchendaele, the 3rd Australian Division captured a group of German Bunkers on the ridge below the village of Passchendaele.

One of these bunkers was unusually large and was used as an advanced dressing station after its capture. From 6 October 1917 to the end of March 1918, 343 graves were made, on two sides of it, by the 50th (Northumbrian) and 33rd Divisions, and by two Canadian units. The cemetery was in German hands again from 13 April to 28 September, when it was finally recaptured, with Passchendaele, by the Belgian Army.



Courtesy of the Australian War Memorial E01236

Historical Background

1 Anzac Corps attacked with the 5th Australian Division on the right. In the 15th Australian Brigade the battalions were to advance successively but bunched up near the first objective and were stopped by pillboxes at the "racecourse" and fire from the 33rd Division area to the south. At 7:30 a.m. the right-hand battalion dug in at the boundary with the 33rd Division and the other two advanced to the second objective by 11:00 a.m. The left brigade assembled in twelve waves on a strip of ground 60 yd (55 m) deep and avoided the German barrage fired at 4:00 a.m. which fell behind them and advanced through the fog 500 yd (460 m) almost unopposed to The Butte. At some pillboxes there was resistance but many German soldiers surrendered when they were rapidly surrounded.

The Butte was rushed and was found to be full of German dugouts. Two battalions passed through at 7:30 a.m. towards the second objective, a 1,000 yd (910 m) stretch of the Flanders I Stellung and some pillboxes, until held up by fire from a German battalion headquarters on the Polygonbeek. A reserve battalion overran the dugouts and more pillboxes nearby, advancing to just beyond the final objective, at the junction with the 4th Australian Division to the north, taking 200 prisoners and 34 machine-guns. An attempted German counter-attack by part of the 17th Division was dispersed by artillery and machine-gun fire.

The 4th Australian Division assembled well forward and avoided the German barrage by squeezing up into an area 150 yd (140 m) deep and attacked at 6:45 a.m. with two brigades. The right brigade attacked through a mist, took the first objective with only short delays to capture pillboxes but then mistakenly advanced into the standing barrage, which had paused for twice as long as usual, to assist the 3rd Division advance through muddier conditions to the north and had to be brought back until the barrage moved forward. The brigade reached the final objective from just short of the Flanders I Stellung on the right and the edge of Zonnebeke on the left and gained touch with the 5th Australian Division further south.

At 1:20 p.m. air reconnaissance reported German troops east of Broodseinde ridge and at 3:25 p.m. as the German force from the 236th Division, massed to counter-attack it was dispersed by artillery fire. The northern brigade advanced to the final objective against minor opposition, moving beyond the objective to join with the 3rd Division to the north, which had pressed on into Zonnebeke. Attempts by the Germans to counter-attack at 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. were stopped.



Preliminary Arrangements

Arrival of the Funeral Hearse At this point the firing party and bearer party move into position.

OC Bearer Party orders the removal of the coffin from the hearse through a series of orders and movements.

OC Bearer Party's orders... 'Bearer Party' ... 'slow march'. Chaplain to precede the coffin.

Music Accompaniment Handel's Dead March from 'Saul' will now be played and continues until the coffin is positioned on the supports over the grave.

Musical recording courtesy of The Australian War Memorial.

Positioning of the Coffin – When the coffin is positioned on the supports over the grave, Chaplain, OC Bearer Party and Insignia Bearer move to their positions.

Music Accompaniment ceases playing.

Chief Mourner, Official Mourner and other mourners move to positions by the grave side.





Burial Service

Welcomes and introduction

Master of Ceremonies

Major Cameron Clarke – Unrecovered War Casualties – Army

Welcomes

The Australian Ambassador to Belgium – Her Excellency Caroline Millar

Senior ADF Representative – MAJGEN Matthew Hall

Senior Representative of the Belgian Government - TBA

Representative of local region - TBA

Opening Prayer

Led by Chaplain Major Frank Langford – Australian Army

Almighty God, we confess that we are slow to accept death as an inevitable part of life.

We confess that we struggle to let go of our family and friends into your eternal care.

You know and understand the depth of our sorrow, may your Holy Spirit come to us as the Comforter you promised.

Grant us the peace and love we need as we reach out to comfort one another.

And as we remember this Unknown Soldier, this nameless man.

May we hold his memory dear to us as a father, brother, son, uncle and friend.

He is someone who was loved and missed and today we honour him and thank you for his sacrifice.

Even though the pain of loss may have diminished, once again we are reminded that death stole him from those whom he loved.

But he is not alone in this hallowed ground, and we will always remember him, the Unknown Soldier.

We pray for him, and others who sacrificed their lives, and all men, women, and children, who suffered due to cruel days of war. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer

Bible Readings:

Psalm 27:1-3

Ecc 3:1-8

Addresses

The Australian Ambassador to Belgium –

Her Excellency Caroline Millar

Senior Representative of the Belgian Government - TBA

Senior ADF Representative – MAJGEN Matthew Hall

Official Wreath Laying

Wreaths will be laid by:

Senior Representative of the Belgian Government - TBA
(representing the Belgium Government)

The Australian Ambassador to Belgium - Her Excellency Caroline
Millar (representing the Australian Government)

Senior Belgium Military Representative –TBA
(representing the Belgium Military)

Senior ADF Representative – MAJGEN Matthew Hall
(representing the Australian Defence Force)

Representative of local region - TBA
(Representing the people of region)





Prayers

For the Bereaved - Led by Chaplain Major Frank Langford – Australian Army

Loving God, comfort us in our sorrow and renew our spirit through faith.

We ask that you hear and answer our prayers and the prayers of our hearts.

As we cast our cares on you may we know the consolation of your love;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Lord's Prayer - Led by Chaplain Major Frank Langford – Australian Army

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallow be thy Name,

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth,

As it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive them that 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

Bearer Party: At the completion of the Lord's Prayer, the Bearer Party will move into position to undress the coffins in the following order; wreath, headdress, bayonet. The Australian National Flag will then be folded and presented to the ADF Senior Mourner.

The Committal - Chaplain Major Frank Langford – Australian Army

Committal Prayer (said as the coffins are lowered)

To everything there is a season, and a purpose for life on earth.

There is a time to be born and a time to die.

So here in this last act, in sadness yet without fear; in love and appreciation,

We commit this Unknown Soldier to his natural resting place.

We commit this body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

All: Amen.

Bearer Party – When indicated by Chaplain Langford, the coffin will be lowered into the ground by OC Bearer Party through a series of orders.

Note: Chaplain Langford will commit the human remains to God's care as the coffin is lowered.

(Coffin is lowered)

Once the coffin is lowered the Bearer Party marches off on the orders of the OC Bearer Party

Firing Party

The OC Firing Party through a series of orders fires three Volleys





Ode

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

Pause:

All: Lest we forget

The Last Post

Silence – 1 minute

Rouse

National Anthems

Master of Ceremonies - The Belgian and Australian national anthem will now be played.

Seated guests are requested to stand and remove headdress.

Closing Prayer

Chaplain Frank Major Langford – Australian Army

Almighty God, as we depart this solemn place of remembrance, we give thanks for this man who gave his life and all those who sacrificed themselves in the service of others.

May we go as a people who know life and hope and peace?

Holding fast to that which is good, giving respect and honour to all.

May God bless the bonds of friendship, reverence, and understanding that have grown amongst nations once pitted against each other in this poignant place?

And help us to keep these bonds unbroken through the generations ahead.

And may we know the blessing of God almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

For-now and for-ever – Amen

Farewells

Throwing of Soil – symbolising returning the soldier to the earth.

Master of Ceremonies – Will now invite those present to throw soil.

Poppies – Laying of poppies

Master of Ceremonies - Will now invite those present to lay poppies.

Acknowledgements

Master of Ceremonies – Will acknowledge the care of cemeteries provided by CWGC staff and thank all who attended the service.

Service concludes

