



A Rededication Service for

Stoker Petty Officer Charles McDonald, Royal Navy

Thursday 10 May 2018 at 15.00 hours

Oostende New Communal Cemetery, Belgium

2018

Order of Service

Conducted by

Rev (Professor) Scott J S Shackleton, RN
Deputy Chaplain of the Fleet



Charles McDonald was born in Leith on 17 April 1880. He lived with his mother, Elizabeth, at 14 Trafalgar Street and was a farm labourer until he joined the Royal Navy in 1898 as an 18 year old.

He served on several different ships, including HMS Victory II and HMS Britannia before the outbreak of the First World War.

On 10 May 1918 he was on loan to HMS Vindictive when it took part in the Second Ostend Raid, which was the second failed attempt to block the channels leading to the port. A successful blockade of these bases would force German submarines to operate out of more distant ports, such as Wilhelmshaven, on the German coast. This would expose them for longer to Allied countermeasures and reduce the time they could spend raiding.

In anticipation of a raid, the Germans had removed the navigation buoys and without them the Vindictive had difficulty finding the narrow channel into the harbour in heavy fog. When she did discover the entrance, a mechanical fault prevented her from turning fully broadside to block access; a German shell fired from a gun battery on shore hit the bridge, killing the commander and wounding or killing most of the bridge crew.

Charles McDonald was climbing the stokehold ladder at the time; a shipmate confirmed that the ladder was shot away by the blast and Charles was never seen again.

He was buried as an Unknown British Stoker, who died on 10 May 1918 while serving on HMS Vindictive.

Introduction

We have come together, family, friends, representatives of Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Navy, to give thanks for the life of Stoker Petty Officer Charles McDonald, RN, who was killed when his ship, HMS Vindictive was sunk in combat on 10 May 1918. 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.

Scripture Reading

Psalm 107

Some went out on the sea in ships;
they were merchants on the mighty waters.
They saw the works of the Lord,
his wonderful deeds in the deep.
For he spoke and stirred up a tempest
that lifted high the waves.
They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths;
in their peril their courage melted away.
They reeled and staggered like drunkards;
they were at their wits' end.
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,
and he brought them out of their distress.

He stilled the storm to a whisper;
the waves of the sea were hushed.
They were glad when it grew calm,
and he guided them to their desired haven.
Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

Scripture Reading

John 14

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."

Scripture Reading

Romans 8

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship

or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;

we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

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

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.

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 Naval Prayer

O Eternal Lord God, who alone rulest the raging of the sea;
who has compassed the waters with bounds until day and
night come to an end; be pleased to receive into Thy almighty
and most gracious protection the persons of us Thy servants,
and the Fleet in which we serve.

Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence
of the enemy; that we may be a safeguard unto our most
gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, and her
Dominions, and a security for such as pass upon the seas
upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our
Commonwealth may in peace and quietness serve Thee our
God; and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of
the land, with the fruits of our labours, and with a thankful
remembrance of Thy mercies to praise and glorify Thy Holy
Name. **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. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty; Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you, and those whom you love, for ever and ever.
Amen.



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The Work of the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre

The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), based at Imjin Barracks, Gloucester, is part of the Defence Business Services and provides a compassionate casework service worldwide. The Commemorations Team is responsible for undertaking work to identify and bury the remains of recently discovered Service personnel killed in historic campaigns from World War I (WW1) onwards. They also consider evidence submitted relating to the identity of previously “unknown” buried service personnel.

Identification

When a discovery is made overseas, if the individual is believed to have served with the British Armed Forces it is reported to the nearest British Embassy or Consulate, and the historic remains are handed over to representatives of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) or Defence Attache. The JCCC Commemorations Team then co-ordinates efforts to identify the remains; working with the host nation, CWGC, Service historic branches and regimental contacts, checking personnel records, burial returns, regimental histories and, if required, commissioning, forensic and physical analysis of the remains and artefacts recovered at the site.

Metal identification discs were not widely used in WW1 and many paper records from that time were destroyed in the blitz, so obtaining a positive identification is often difficult. Nevertheless, JCCC and CWGC staff may be able to determine the regiment of an individual from the location of the find, or uniform recovered with the remains, which in turn may provide evidence of an individual's rank. If Service records have survived, these may provide physical details of potential candidates, such as height, build, age and hair colour and that all helps with the identification. However, unless personal items, such as letters, or other artefacts are found with the body, there are normally just too many missing soldiers in a WW1 battle to confirm an identity.

DNA testing is undertaken when remains can be linked to a small group of personnel, and can help confirm an identity.

Tracing Surviving Relatives

Tracing surviving relatives is a delicate task. Initial attempts to trace relatives are through contact addresses and regimental leads, but targeted media appeals also enable the JCCC to reach a wider audience and are often successful.

Today the bodies of those who die whilst serving overseas are repatriated, but during both World Wars and up to the 1960s, the policy was to bury personnel in the country where they died alongside their comrades. So World War re-interments are held in a CWGC cemetery close to where they died.

The JCCC work with the regiment in which the individual served (or their successor) to organise the ceremony, which is held with full military honours and the grave is marked by a headstone bearing the individual's details and a personal inscription chosen by the family.

Unknown Soldiers

If it is not possible to identify a soldier, then the grave will be marked by a headstone bearing any known information such as regimental details and the inscription "Known unto God" and they will be afforded a dignified ceremony.

Rededications

Whilst neither the MOD nor CWGC will allow the exhumation of an existing grave to facilitate identification, if clear and convincing evidence can be submitted to prove an identity, a replacement headstone commemorating the individual by name will be placed over the grave bearing the individual's details and a personal inscription chosen by the family. JCCC will arrange a rededication service held with military honours at the graveside.
