



A Rededication Service for

**Serjeant Laurence Connell MM
1st Battalion The Royal Dublin Fusiliers**

**10:15 hours on Wednesday 10 July 2024
CWGC Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by The Reverend Jason Clarke MBE CF
Chaplain to 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment**

Serjeant Laurence Connell MM

Serjeant Laurence Connell MM was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 25 January 1897. He was one of 6 children born to John Connell and his wife Elizabeth. He enlisted into The Royal Dublin Fusiliers and arrived on the Western Front on 20 December 1915. Serjeant Connell was awarded the Military Medal which was published in the London Gazette of 19 February 1919.

By October 1918 the static fighting associated with the Western Front, which had kept the British Army in Belgium within the Ypres Salient since 1914, had lifted, and Allied forces were advancing. The War Diaries of 1st Battalion The Royal Dublin Fusiliers record that on 5 October 1918, the date of Serjeant Connell's death, they moved into the line near Ledegem. The battalion was relieved on 9 October 1918 having lost 5 other ranks killed.

After the war, Serjeant Connell's body was recovered and buried in Dadizeele New British Cemetery as an unknown serjeant of 1st Battalion The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. As he was missing, Serjeant Connell was commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial. However, new research has shown that this is in fact the grave of Serjeant Connell and the headstone has now been changed to reflect this. Today we will remember Serjeant Connell and his grave will be rededicated.

The village of Dadizeele, which lay behind German lines for most of the war, was captured by British forces in late September 1918. It wasn't until after the Armistice that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Dadizeele New British Cemetery was established. The graves, including the previously unidentified body of Serjeant Laurence Connell MM, were brought in from the surrounding burial grounds and battlefields. There are now over 1000 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in this cemetery.

Call to Worship

I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

St John 11 v 25-26

We have come to this place to recognise and commend to God the mortal remains of our brother in arms Serjeant Laurence Connell MM, of 1st Battalion The Royal Dublin Fusiliers, who gave his life in battle near Ledegem on 5 October 1918.

Today we accord Laurence 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.

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 Serjeant Laurence Connell MM, and all whose lives, in World Wars and conflicts, past and present, have been given and taken away.

All **Amen.**

Scripture Reading

Read by an Embassy Representative

Revelation Chapter 7 v 9-10, 15-17 (NRSV)

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.

They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Read by Bonita Fish

Great Niece of Serjeant Connell

John Chapter 15 v 9-15 (ESV)

As the Father has loved me, so have I 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. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Read by Captain Johnathan Cowan
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

Since They Have Died

By May Wedderburn Cannan

Since they have died to give us gentleness,
And hearts kind with contentment and quiet mirth,
Let us who live also give happiness
And love, that's born of pity, to the earth.

For, I have thought, some day they may lie sleeping
Forgetting all the weariness and pain,
And smile to think their world is in our keeping,
And laughter come back to the earth again.

Address**The Act of Dedication**

So let us now bless and dedicate this grave as the final resting place of the mortal remains of Serjeant Laurence Connell MM.

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ was laid in a tomb:
Bless and dedicate, we pray, this grave as the place where the body of your servant Laurence may rest in peace, in the knowledge that he now abides in your glory through the merits of your Son, who is the resurrection and the life; who died and is alive and reigns with you now and for ever.

The Exhortation

Read by Captain Johnathan Cowan
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

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

Played by Lance Corporal Barry Norton
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

Silence

The Reveille

Oft in the Stilly Night

Played by Pipe Major William Mitchell
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Captain Johnathan Cowan
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment

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

Laying of Wreaths

Prayers

Eternal God, in your wisdom and grace you have given us freedom through the lives of your departed servants. We thank you for the life of Serjeant Laurence Connell and his comrades and for those who loved them. We thank you for your goodness and mercy that followed him all the days of his life and his ultimate faithfulness to the tasks to which you had called him.

May God give peace:

All **God give peace.**

We pray for all who have died or suffer as a result of conflict. Those whose lives are disfigured by war or terror. For service men and women, for civilians, for those held captive, each one remembered by and known to God.

May God give peace:

All **God give peace.**

We pray for peace-makers and peace-keepers; those who seek to keep this world secure and free; 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.**

Finally, we pray 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.**

Amen.

A Prayer for the Armed Forces

Almighty God, stretch forth your mighty arm to strengthen and protect the armed forces: grant that meeting danger with courage and all occasions with discipline and loyalty, they may truly serve the cause of justice and peace; to the honour of your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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

All **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

Support us, O Lord,
all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the
busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our
work is done.

Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last;
and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit, be upon you and those whom you love and
remember now and for evermore.

All **Amen.**



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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