



**A Rededication Service for  
Private Frederick William Birks**

**17<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment)**

**15:00 hours Tuesday 3 July 2018  
Perth Cemetery (China Wall), Belgium**

**Service conducted by the Reverend Andrew J Earl CF  
Senior Chaplain HQ NW**

Private Frederick William Birks was born in Nottingham and was the eldest child of Thomas and Elizabeth Birks. He was 36 years old when he was killed on 2 July 1917 whilst serving with 17<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment). The battalion war diaries show that at the time of his death they were holding front line trenches in the Observatory Ridge Sector near Ypres. Private Birks was buried in a small battlefield cemetery until after the Great War when he was moved to Perth Cemetery (China Wall). Commonwealth War Graves Commission records show that by the time his remains were moved, the wooden cross marking his grave had been damaged and his name had been lost. He was buried as an unknown soldier of the 17<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment) who died on 2 July 1917. He is commemorated on the Menin Gate. However, new research has found that this grave of an unknown soldier is in fact that of Private Frederick William Birks and the headstone on the grave has been changed to reflect this. Today we will remember the life of Private Birks and his grave will be rededicated.

This cemetery was begun by French troops in November 1914 and adopted by the 2nd Scottish Rifles for front line burials from June to October 1917. It was called Perth (as the predecessors of the 2nd Scottish Rifles were raised in Perth), China Wall (from the communication trench known as the Great Wall of China), or Halfway House Cemetery. After the Armistice scattered graves from the battlefields around Ypres and those in small cemeteries, including the small one where Private Birks had originally been buried, were brought in to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Perth Cemetery (China Wall). Almost half the 2,791 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery remain unidentified.

## **Call to Worship**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the  
Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
All **and also with you.**

## **Bidding Prayer**

We worship God  
Who is good and true  
He sustains the world;  
And loves us though we have failed him.  
We remember  
All who have given their lives in the struggle for justice  
and peace,  
All who suffer in war and conflict,  
And all who live in terror.  
We ask God's guidance and blessing,  
That we may do his will,  
And that all peoples may acknowledge his kingship and  
reign.  
All **Amen.**

## **Scripture Reading**

Read by a Representative of the British Embassy

### **Romans Chapter 8 v 31-38 (NIV)**

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.

## **Gospel Reading**

Read by Second Lieutenant Tom O'Reilly  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

### **Luke Chapter 15 v 3-10 (NIV)**

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

## **Address**



### **The Collect of The King's (Liverpool Regiment)**

Read by Second Lieutenant Tom O'Reilly

2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

Lord Jesus, wisdom of God, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, look mercifully on thy servants of The King's Regiment, and so strengthen us that in hardships and dangers we may fear no evil for that thou art with us, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest for ever.

All **Amen.**

### **The Exhortation**

Read by Colonel Chris Owen (Ret'd)

Regimental Secretary The Duke of Lancaster's 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**

**Silence**

**Reveille**

### **Kohima Epitaph**

Read by Colonel Chris Owen (Ret'd)  
Regimental Secretary The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment

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

### **Laying of Wreaths**

#### **Prayer**

God of love, whose compassion never fails;  
We bring before you  
The griefs and perils of peoples and nations;  
The necessities of the homeless;  
The helplessness of the aged and weak;  
The sighings of the prisoners;  
The pains of the sick and injured;  
And the sorrows of the bereaved.  
Comfort and relieve them O Merciful Father,  
According to their needs;  
For the sake of your Son,  
Our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

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,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## **The Blessing**

May the road rise to meet you  
May the wind be always at your back  
May the sun shine on each of your faces  
And the rain fall soft upon the fields  
And until we meet again may God hold you and all those  
we remember this day in the palm of his hand;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.  
All    **Amen.**





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