



A Rededication Service for

Company Quartermaster Serjeant Charles John Niven

6th Gordon Highlanders

Killed in Action 13 March 1915

CWGC Pont du Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, France, at
0930 hrs on 23 March 2022

Conducted by the Reverend Andrew Grant (CF)

Charles Niven was born in Strathdon, Aberdeenshire, in 1889. He was the only son of Charles Niven and Mary Ann Beattie. He was Mentioned in Despatches by Field Marshall Sir John French in the early summer of 1915, for gallant and distinguished service in the field.

Away from the army he was a distinguished athlete, excelling in the high jump and considered a first class vaulter.

During the few years that he competed, he attended many of the principal games in Scotland and the general opinion of his rivals in the games' arena, was that "they could not have wished for a finer sportsman or a more manly fellow than C J Niven".



This photo is the last march of the Lonach Highlanders, Strathdon Company of the Gordon Highlanders, Colour Sergeant Niven is on the left hand side, carrying the Colours.

A brief history of the 6th Gordon Highlanders

The sheer scale of the conflict in the Great War, and the enormous demand for men, transformed The Gordon Highlanders. Some 50,000 Gordons served in its regular,

territorial and service battalions. Between 1914 and 1918, the Regiment kept 9 Battalions on the Western Front. By the end of the war they had been awarded 65 new Battle Honours and suffered over 29,000 casualties, 9,000 of whom died. Almost every community and family in the North East, and many elsewhere, were affected.

The Cemetery

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Pont-Du-Hem Military Cemetery was begun in an apple-orchard in July 1915 and used until April 1918 by fighting units and Field Ambulances. The cemetery formerly had German and Portuguese burials, these graves were moved to other cemeteries post-war. After the Armistice further Commonwealth graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefield and from smaller burial grounds, including that of Company Quartermaster Serjeant Charles John Niven.

Welcome and Opening

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." *John 11:25 & 26*

We have come together to rededicate the final resting place of Company Quartermaster Serjeant Charles John Niven and to honour him this day.

As Christians, we believe that those who die in Christ share eternal life with him. Therefore, in faith and hope we offer our prayers of trust and thanksgiving to God. Facing the certainty of our own death and judgement we yet proclaim that Christ is indeed risen, and that all who believe in him will rise in him.

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 Readings

To Comfort all Who Mourn

The reading is from Isaiah 61: 1 – 3.

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes; the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

The reading is from Revelations 21; 1 – 7.

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth", for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away". He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new"! Then he said "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true". He said to me "It is done, I am the Alpha and the Omega; the Beginning and the

End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children*.

The Act of Remembrance

We remember with thanksgiving at God's throne of grace all those who have died during operational service. We remember this day especially Sjt Charles John Niven.

Merciful God, you have made us all and given your Son for our redemption. We once again commend our brother to your perfect mercy and wisdom and rededicate his final resting place into your care. For in you alone we put our trust.
Amen.

For the Fallen.....Laurence Binyon

'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

The Kohima Epitaph

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

The Padre shall lead in prayer

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you that in all things God works for the good of those who love him and who have been called according to his purpose.

We thank you for the hope of eternal life that you offer to all those who trust in you through the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you that nothing can separate you from your children – neither in life nor in death. Hear our prayers as we thank you for those who sacrificed their all so that we might enjoy the freedoms for which they died. And we thank you especially for the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life so that those who trust in him might enjoy the freedoms of eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Wreath Laying

The Prayers

For those facing armed conflict today

God of infinite mercy, we trust in your good purposes of peace for all your children. We pray for those who at this time face danger in the defence of justice. Watch over those in peril; support those who are anxious for loved ones; gather into your eternal purpose those who will pay the ultimate sacrifice. Remove from the hearts of all people the passions that keep

alive the spirit of war, and in your goodness restore peace among us; for the sake of the Prince of peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord in your mercy;
Hear our prayer

For faith by which to live

How generous is your goodness, O God, how great is your salvation, how faithful is your love? Help us to trust in you in trial, to praise you in deliverance and to rejoice before you with overflowing hearts. Lord in your mercy;
Hear our prayer

The Collect of the Gordon Highlanders

O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst bid thy disciples watch and pray, give thy sufficient grace to the Gordon Highlanders, that we may ever be watchful for the honour of our fathers, and may ever pray that our faith fail not, but that we watch in all things and endure afflictions for thy sake, who art with the father and the holy ghost, one God, world without end.
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

Closing 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.**



ARMY

The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) researches, approves and organises commemorative funeral and rededication services for casualties in cemeteries (including nominated CWGC cemeteries) within the country of the casualty's death.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) honours the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in the first and second world wars and ensures they will never be forgotten.

© JCCC 2022