



A Rededication Service for

Lance Corporal Arthur James Dowding
1st Battalion, Monmouthshire Regiment

10.00 hours Tuesday 2 July 2024
CWGC Bellicourt British Cemetery, France

Service conducted by Reverend Richard Mutter
Chaplain to 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh
Déroulement de la Cérémonie présidé par
le Révérend Richard Mutter

The Cemetery

Bellicourt British Cemetery was established after the Battle of the St. Quentin Canal in late 1918 and originally consisted of 73 graves (now plot I). It was later enlarged after the Armistice with the concentration of over 1000 graves from surrounding battlefields and several smaller cemeteries. This included that of Lance Corporal Arthur James Dowding, whose previously unidentified grave is being rededicated today.



Arthur James Dowding
1888 – 1918

Arthur James Dowding was born in Monmouthshire, the seventh of eight children born to William Dowding – a gardener, and his wife Emily. By 1901 Arthur was working as a telegraph messenger boy for the post office, and a few years later he is recorded as a post man in the Abergavenny area.

Arthur joined the army on the day war broke out – 4th August 1914. In June 1915 he received a gunshot wound to the shoulder, though he returned to the battalion soon after. In late 1915 he married Mildred Day. In 1916 he suffered several bouts of trench fever alongside other minor health complaints, and in early 1917 he was awarded a good conduct badge.

Arthur died in action in the Ramicourt area of France in October 1918. Although he was buried at the time of his death, the information about his grave was later lost meaning that he was commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois memorial after the war.

Call to Worship:*Appel à Adoration*

We have come together in the name of Christ
To offer our praise and thanksgiving,
To hear and receive God's holy word,
To remember all of those who have suffered in conflict, war, and terror,
And to rededicate this grave
That, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
We may be worthy of their sacrifice.

Opening Prayer*Prière*

Merciful Father,
Hear our prayers and comfort us;
Renew our trust in your Son,
Whom you raised from the dead;
Strengthen our faith
That Arthur and all who have died in the love of Christ
Will share in his resurrection;
Who lives and reigns with you,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever.

Amen

Scripture Reading: John 14 v1:6

Lecture des Écritures Saintes

Read by a representative of the British Embassy

"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".

Reading – First Time In – by Ivor Gurney

Lecture

Read by Steve Brown MBE, The Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre

After the dread tales and red yarns of the Line
Anything might have come to us; but the divine
Afterglow brought us up to a Welsh colony
Hiding in sandbag ditches, whispering consolatory
Soft foreign things. Then we were taken in
To low huts candle-lit shaded close by slitten
Oilsheets, and there but boys gave us kind welcome;
So that we looked out as from the edge of home.
Sang us Welsh things, and changed all former notions
To human hopeful things. And the next days' guns
Nor any line-pangs ever quite could blot out
That strangely beautiful entry to War's rout,
Candles they gave us precious and shared over-rations —
Ulysses found little more in his wanderings without doubt.
'David of the white rock', the 'Slumber Song' so soft, and that
Beautiful tune to which roguish words by Welsh pit boys
Are sung — but never more beautiful than here under the guns' noise.

Address

Allocution

The Reverend Richard Mutter

Act of Dedication

L'Acte de Dédicace

We rededicate this grave to Lance Corporal Dowding in the name of Christ who died and rose again;

as a symbol of our remembering, as a sign of our thanksgiving, a token of recognition and expression of our love.

We look forward with confidence to our reunion with them and all those whose dwelling is forever with Christ in the everlasting kingdom of the Father.

The Exhortation

L'Éxhortation

Read by Colonel Nicholas Lock, late of The Royal Welsh

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.

We will remember them

The Last Post

Sonnerie aux Morts

Played by Sergeant Andrew Jones,

Regimental Band, 3rd Battalion The Royal Welsh

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épitaphe de Kohima

Read by Colonel Nicholas Lock, late of The Royal Welsh

When you go home tell them of us and say:

'For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'

Laying of Wreaths

Dépôts des Gerbes

The Collect of the Monmouthshire Regiment

Prière

Read by Colonel Nicholas Lock, late of The Royal Welsh

Almighty God, we, the Monmouthshire Regiment, thank You that Thou hast called us to share in the defence of Thy Kingdom and in the extension of the frontiers of righteousness in every place. We pray Thee to grant that we may be so inspired by thy Holy Spirit and encouraged by the example of those who have gone before that we may fulfil Thy purpose here, and, being faithful unto death, may obtain the Crown of Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prayer

Prière

God of mercy, Lord of life
You promised eternal life to those who believe.
Remember for good this your servant Arthur,
Bring him and all who rest in Christ
Into the fullness of your kingdom
Where sins have been forgiven and death is no more.
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,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Blessing

Séparation et Dernière Bénédiction

God grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest; to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all mankind, peace and concord; and to us and all his servants, life everlasting; and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.



The Ministry of Defence, through the Joint Casualty & 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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