



A Rededication Service for

**Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM
43rd Machine Gun Company**

**10:00 hours on Wednesday 26 March 2025
CWGC Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium**

**Service conducted by The Reverend Paul Robinson CF
Chaplain to
4th Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment**

Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM



Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM was born in 1888 in Mevagissey, Cornwall. He was one of four children born to Jonathan Baron and his wife Margaret. James was a keen footballer, and an active member of his local community being part of the Bugle Working Men's Institute and a member of the West of England Bandman's Festival Committee. The 1911 Census records that he worked as a cooper.

On the outbreak of the First World War, James enlisted into The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. He arrived on the Western Front on 21 May 1915 with 1/6th Battalion. James later transferred to the Machine Gun Corps and was posted to 43rd Machine Gun Company. James proved to be a brave and effective soldier. He was awarded the Military Medal which was published in the London Gazette of 14 November 1916, for his bravery on the Somme, when he single-handedly held a position after all his comrades had been put out of action. He went on to also be awarded the French Croix de Guerre which appeared in the London Gazette of 1 May 1917.

Having taken part in the Battle of Arras in the spring of 1917, 43rd Machine Gun Company moved northwards to the Ypres Salient. The War Diaries of 43rd Machine Gun Company record that on 20 August 1917 they moved into trenches east of Hooge. On 22 August they supported an infantry attack on Inverness Copse. The attack was made by 6th Battalion The Somerset Light Infantry on the right, 6th Battalion The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in the centre and 5th Battalion The King's Shropshire Light Infantry on the left. Following the attack the guns of 43rd Machine Gun Company then took up positions around Inverness Copse where they remained in action until 24 August.

At dawn on 24 August, the date of Lance Corporal Baron's death, the enemy advanced and the left gun was surrounded and bombed. The infantry retreated back to their original line. A counterattack regained the western edge of Inverness Copse.

The defensive guns had suffered severe casualties from shell fire and were reinforced by two guns from 249th Machine Gun Company. In total fifteen other ranks of 43rd Machine Gun Company were killed, with another four missing over their period in the line. Lance Corporal Baron was amongst these casualties. He was 29 years old.

A report of Lance Corporal Baron's death appeared in the Cornish Guardian on 7 September 1917. The article reports that a letter written by his Commanding Officer stated that he was 'always a man of great spirit and example, and undoubtedly one of the bravest and coolest men of the company'. The letter goes on to state that 'it was whilst advancing with his gun to a difficult position, for which work he bravely volunteered, that he was hit by a piece of shrapnel, death being instantaneous.'

After the war the remains of Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM were recovered and buried in Tyne Cot Cemetery as an unknown soldier of The Machine Gun Corps. It was noted that the casualty had received both the Military Medal and the Croix de Guerre. As he was missing, Lance Corporal Baron was commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial. However, new research has shown that this is in fact his grave and the headstone over the grave has now been changed. Today we will remember Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM and his grave will be rededicated.

Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the world, is now the resting place of more than 11,900 servicemen from the First World War. The Cross of Sacrifice stands on a German pillbox captured by the 3rd Australian Division on 4 October 1917. After the Armistice, graves were brought in from small burial grounds and the battlefields of Passchendaele and Langemarck, including the previously unidentified grave of Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM.

Call to Worship

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All May the Peace of the Lord be always with you,
And also with you.

Bidding Prayer

We have come here today to remember before God our brother in arms Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM; to commend him to God our merciful redeemer and to rededicate his grave.

God of mercy, Lord of life, you have made us in your image to reflect your truth and light: We give you thanks for James, for the grace and mercy he received from you, for all that was good in his life, for the memories we treasure today.

You promised eternal life to those who believe. Remember for good this your servant James as we also remember him. Bring all who rest in Christ into the fullness of your kingdom where sins have been forgiven and death is no more.

All **Amen.**

Scripture Reading

Read by Group Captain John Dickson
Defence Attaché to Belgium and Luxembourg

2 Corinthians Chapter 1 v 3-4 & 20-22 (ESV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Read by Sergeant Liam Cruise-Taylor
1st Battalion The Royal Yorkshire Regiment

John Chapter 14 v 1-6 (NRSV)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may also be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Read by Richard Murphy
The Machine Gun Corps Association

Not Just a Name

By Rev Gaenor Berkin

For years you have lain in Flander's green fields
Just marked with a pure white stone
Your kinfolk at home, how they mourned your loss
All the more for you were "unknown".

How often they prayed that you would be found!
How they yearned to visit your stone!
And now here you lie- named at last-
No longer just an "unknown".

The loved ones who knew you are all lost to time
And to us the torch is now thrown.
So we will remember the man who was lost
And not just a name on a stone.

Address

The Act of Dedication

So let us now bless and dedicate this grave as the final resting place of the mortal remains of Lance Corporal James Ball Baron 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 James 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 Andrew Adams

4th Battalion 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

Played by Lance Corporal April Farthing

The Band of The Royal Yorkshire Regiment

Silence

The Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Captain Andrew Adams

4th Battalion 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

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all those whom we love but see no longer. As we remember Lance Corporal James Ball Baron MM in this place, hold before us our beginning and our ending, the dust from which we come and the death to which we move, with a firm hope in your eternal purposes for us, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Prayer for the Armed Forces

Read by Sergeant Liam Cruise-Taylor

1st Battalion The Royal Yorkshire Regiment

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.

All **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

Christ the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep, draw you and all who hear his voice, to be one flock within one fold, and the blessing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you, now and always.

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.

© Crown Copyright/JCCC – 2025