



A Funeral Service for

Lieutenant James Grant Allan

9th Battalion, Gordon Highlanders

Lance Corporal Gordon McPherson

7th Battalion, Cameron Highlanders

Two Unknown British Soldiers

Unknown Scottish Regiments

Two Unknown British Soldiers

Cameron Highlanders

One Unknown British Soldier

Black Watch

One Unknown British Soldier

Highland Light Infantry

CWGC Loos British Cemetery Extension, France

Thursday 25 September 2025 at 10:30 hours

Service Conducted by

The Reverend Thomas Wilde CF

Lieutenant James Grant Allan



23 November 1894 – 25 September 1915

James Grant Allan was born in Melrose, Scotland in 1894 to William John Allan and Isabella Catherine Brown. James, known as "Jim" to his family was the second of four children. Moving with the family first to Stockport and then to Ayr, Jim was educated at the Ayr Academy, at Merchiston Castle School, and, probably, at George Watson's in Edinburgh. He was an active games player, and very much the leader among his cousins. Jim could have gone up to Balliol College, Oxford, but his parents preferred Edinburgh, and he entered the university there to study the humanities. He kept a "Commonplace Book" in which he entered poems, which his sister Margaret continued after his death. He was very close to his sisters and wrote regularly to them, and to his parents, when he was away.

He was still a student when the First World War broke out. In 1914, with his brother Nimmo, he enlisted in the 9th Gordon Highlanders, in France called "Pioneers," and after training at Perham Down near Andover, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant. After his leave in June that year, his sister, Jean, wrote in her diary "I have seen my brother's face for the last time on this earth." After his death she dreamed that he said to her "I am as alive as you are."

From France, on August 4th 1915, he wrote vividly of the devastated village in which they had their dugouts. "It really is weird, but every picturesque...typical of the secrecy of this war, everything done under cover of darkness...Don't imagine that I am unhappy, because I am not. It is merely that the uselessness of the whole thing has been impressed on me in the last two days. P.S. Wanted. Some matches."

In the push beyond Loos, on the 25th September 1915, on Hill 70, Jim received two bullets in the chest – a 'scout' laid him on his front, while another soldier found him dead soon after. His body was never identified, and his name was registered on the Loos Memorial. His brother, Nimmo, wrote on 28th September, "Dear Mother, I am quite safe...I suppose you know the awful news that Jim has been killed." A friend and fellow officer wrote that "Jim's men thought the world of him, I know the officers do." Again, "I have gained from his friendship...He may have left this world but only to go to a freer one...I have been strengthened by the thought of him, or his presence."

In August 2021, six sets of remains were recovered from the site of a new hospital being built in Lens, France. There were many artefacts accompanying these casualties from a variety of Scottish regiments. Using DNA testing, one of these casualties was identified as Lieutenant James Grant Allan, meaning that he was found at last.

Lance Corporal Gordon McPherson



3 August 1892 – 25 September 1915

Gordon was born in Portsmouth, Hampshire in 1892 to James McPherson and Mary Ann Rowe. At the time of his birth, his father was serving as a Corporal for the Royal Marines Artillery and they were living at the Eastney Barracks. Gordon was one of nine siblings, six of whom survived to adulthood. When Gordon's father left the Royal Marines, the family moved to Aberdeen, Scotland, where James' father was born. Eventually, the family settled in Newcastle-on-Tyne, where Gordon's father was working as a Storekeeper for the Newcastle Corporation Tramway, and Gordon was working as a Tobacconist.

Gordon joined the Cameron Highlanders in November 1914, alongside his brother, James. Their father joined the 86th Training Reserve Battalion, and despite his young age, their 14 year old brother, Charles, followed them a year later.

When Gordon first arrived at Southampton, he was not sure whether he would be sent to the Western Front, or the Dardanelles. Gordon eventually arrived in France and became part of the battalion's machine-gun section. He wrote regularly to his mother, worrying about his family saying "I hope Dad is keeping well, and Charlie is still liking his life as a soldier. Tell them not to worry and come out here. Jim and me will do the little bit for our home." After the reality of spending weeks in the trenches, Gordon began to worry more about his father and younger brother. He wrote to his mother, "How is Dad and Charlie getting on? I hope they are well and not on their way out here yet. I suppose they will be very keen to get into France. I begin to wish something would happen to prevent Dad getting away. I know he would be greatly disappointed so you must not tell him I said such a thing, but I know dear Mother you will be wishing the same as me. I hope Jim is alright in the Dardanelles." In one of his last letters home to his mother, written the week before he died, Gordon says "So cheer up Mother dear and when this is over, look what a happy time we will have when your four soldiers come home."

On 25 September 1915, Gordon was killed on the first day of the Battle of Loos. He was with the advanced line and was killed whilst working his machine gun. A fellow soldier of his machine-gun section described him as "the life and soul of the section. His imitations of Charles Chaplin were enjoyed very much by his comrades. His favourite song, 'Trumpeter, what are you sounding now!', grew to be the most popular song in the section...It was Gordon's song. We can't sing it now."

~

The remains of all the men being buried today were recovered during the construction of a new hospital on the outskirts of the city of Lens in Northern France, and were among many British and Canadian casualties recovered from the site. Lieutenant Allan and Lance Corporal McPherson were named using DNA testing, but sadly, the other six men were unable to be identified.

Welcome
Appel à Adoration

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.

We are gathered here today in this place of remembrance to honour our fallen in conflicts past.

Today we remember with thanksgiving these brave men whom, alongside so many others, answered the call of their country, served with honour and gave their lives in the service of their nation.

We will shortly commit their bodies to be buried. In so doing let us commit ourselves anew to remember their courage. For by so doing, we honour their memory and we reflect upon that sacrifice.

Let us offer ourselves also to God's service, that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven and that His kingdom of justice and peace be established everywhere.

Bidding Prayer
Prière

Let us recall the presence of God, the Father of all mankind, maker and sustainer of all that is, whose purposes are good, whose love is never withheld and whose mercy never passes away. We call to mind His faithfulness in times of darkness and despair.

We remember before Him our brothers and sisters whose names are known only to God, and all who have served in the Armed Forces of our nation; who counted service to others greater than service of self, and who gave their lives in battle.

Merciful Father,
hear our prayers and comfort us;
renew our trust in your Son
whom you raised from the dead;
strengthen our faith
that 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 for ever.
Amen

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 3, 1 – 8 (NIV UK)

Lecture des Écritures Saintes

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

The Trumpeter by J. Francis Baron

Lecture

Read by Alistair McPherson,

Great-nephew of Lance Corporal Gordon McPherson.

Trumpeter, what are you sounding now?

(Is it the call I'm seeking?)

"You'll know the call," said the Trumpeter tall,

"When my trumpet goes a speakin'.

I'm rousin' 'em up, I'm wakin' 'em up,

The tents are astir in the valley,

And there's no more sleep, with the sun's first peep,

For I'm soundin' the old 'Reveille.'

Rise up!" said the Trumpeter tall.

Trumpeter, what are you sounding now?

(Is it the call I'm seeking)

"Can't mistake the call," said the Trumpeter tall,

"When my trumpet goes a speakin'.

I'm urging 'em on, they're scamperin' on –

There's a drummin' of hoofs like thunder.

There's a madd'nin' shout as the sabres flash out,

For I'm soundin' the 'Charge,' – no wonder!

And it's *Hell!*" said the Trumpeter tall.

Trumpeter, what are you sounding now?

(Is it the call I'm seeking?)

"Lucky for you if you hear it at all,

For my trumpet's but faintly speakin'.

I'm callin' 'em home – come home! Come home!

Tread light o'er the dead in the valley,

Who are lyin' around face down to the ground,

And they can't hear me sound the 'Rally.'

But they'll hear it again in a grand refrain,

When Gabriel sounds the last 'Rally.'"

The Soldier by Rupert Brooke

Lecture

**Read by Lieutenant Laura Donavan, 4th Battalion,
The Royal Regiment of Scotland.**

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich dust a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Slumber-Song by Siegfried Sassoon

Lecture

Read by Nicholas Allan,

Great-nephew of Lieutenant James Grant Allan.

Sleep; and my song shall build about your bed
A paradise of dimness. You shall feel
The folding of tired wings; and peace will dwell
Throned in your silence: and one hour shall hold
Summer, and midnight, and immensity
Lulled to forgetfulness. For, where you dream,
The stately gloom of foliage shall embower
Your slumbering thought with tapestries of blue.
And there shall be no memory of the sky,
Nor sunlight with its cruelty of swords.
But, to your soul that sinks from deep to deep
Through drowned and glimmering colour, Time shall be
Only slow rhythmic swaying; and your breath;
And roses in the darkness; and my love.

Lament for Cello

Played by Christopher Allan,

Great nephew of Lieutenant James Grant Allan.

Address

Allocution

The Reverend Thomas Wilde CF.

The Committal

L'Enterrement

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.*

Our days are like the grass;
we flourish like a flower of the field
when the wind goes over it; it is gone
and its place will know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures
for ever and ever...

We have entrusted these eight men into the hands of God. We therefore commit their bodies to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust having our whole trust and confidence in the mercy of our heavenly Father, and in the victory of His son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who died, was buried and rose again for us, and is alive and reigns for evermore.

Amen

The Exhortation

L'Éxhortation

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

Silence

Lament

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

L'Épitaphe de Kohima

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

The Laying of the Wreaths

Dépôts des Gerbes

Prayers

Prière

Almighty God, protect all who serve in the Forces of The King; strengthen us in danger and temptation, give us courage and loyalty, that we may remain true to the highest traditions of our profession; and keep us steadfast when faced with the perils of action in war; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Almighty God, who has revealed your only Son as the resurrection and the life; raise us, we pray, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness that, when we depart from this life, we may rest in Him, and at the last may receive the blessing; Well done good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your Lord. Grant this, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, our mediator and redeemer.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Prière du Seigneur

**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

**Regimental Collect of The Queen's Own Cameron
Highlanders**

Récitation du Cameron Highlanders

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, give thy spirit, we pray thee, to the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, that as our fathers have borne themselves as one against divers enemies, so we may ever remain one family in thee, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same spirit, one God world without end. **Amen.**

Regimental Collect of The Gordon Highlanders

Récitation du 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 may 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 Blessing

Séparation de Dernière Bénédiction

Support us, O Lord,
all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen and the evening falls,
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 last;
through Christ our Lord.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and
evermore.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
rest upon you and remain with you
and all those you love and for whom you pray,
this day and always.

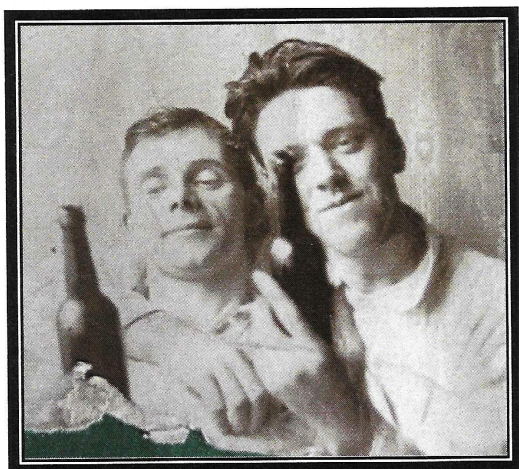
Amen



Above left: Lt Allan with his brother, Nimmo.

Above right: Lt Allan with his school rugby team.

Below left and right: LCpl McPherson pictured with his brother, James.





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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