



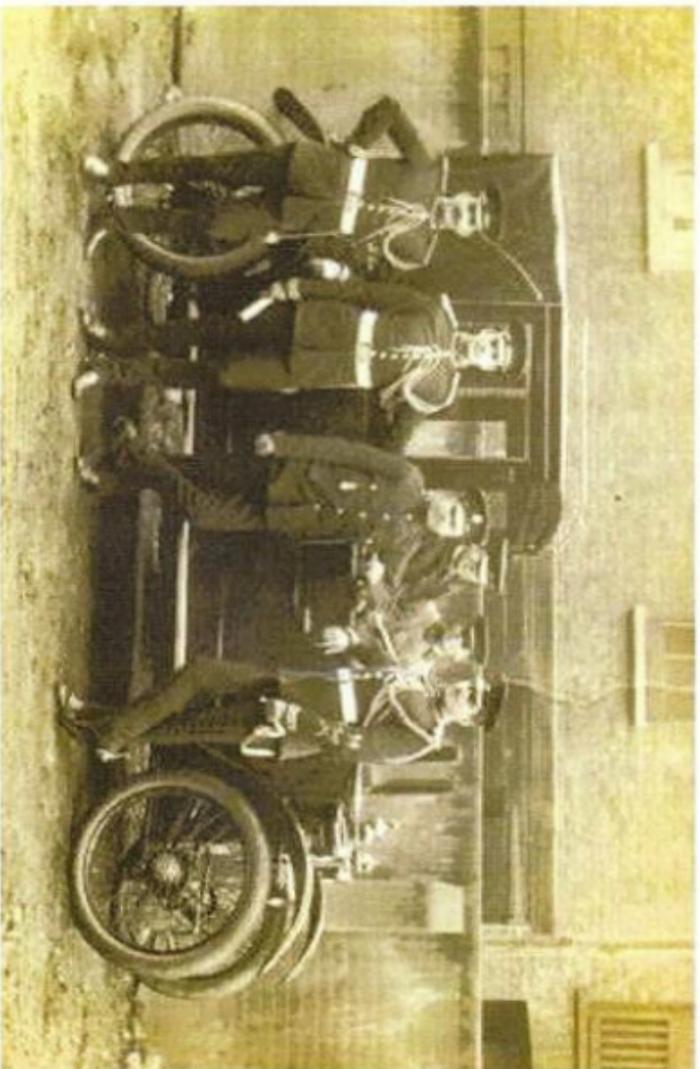
A Rededication Service for

Corporal of Horse Charles Edward Dean

2nd Life Guards

11.00 hours Tuesday 18 March 2025
CWGC Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium

Service conducted by Reverend Thomas Sander CF
Chaplain to The Household Cavalry



Charles Dean (thought to be at 2nd left) with colleagues c. 1910

Corporal of Horse Charles Edward Dean

1877 – 13 May 1915

Charles Edward Dean was born in 1877 to James Albert Dean and his wife Fanny, in Wiltshire. James was a boiler maker, and Charles grew up with 6 siblings – four older and two younger.

On 9 March 1900 Charles joined the Household Cavalry, signing up for 12 years long service with the Life Guards. He had previously been a railway porter. At the time he enlisted he was a little over 5'11" tall with brown eyes and black hair. By the time of the 1901 census he was a Trooper residing at the Regent's Park Barracks. He was promoted to the rank of Corporal on 4 December 1906.

He married Ada Josephine Taylor in Rotherhithe on 25 April 1908. Shortly after the wedding Charles and Ada moved to Fulham where they had two children together – Edward born in 1909, and Ada in 1910. In 1912 he re-enlisted for another term of engagement, and his second daughter Elsie was born that same year. In 1913 he received an appraisal from the army which described him as a good clerk, accustomed to effective office routine and bookkeeping. He was 'honest, sober and intelligent'.

Being a regular soldier, Charles was put into action fairly quickly on the outbreak of war in 1914, deploying with the first detachment of the 2nd Life Guards and sailing for Belgium on 6 October 1914 – his wife Ada was living in Windsor by then and was newly pregnant with their fourth child. By May 1915 the Life Guards were in the leper (Ypres) area, digging trenches and receiving instruction on how to use gas masks, following the first use of gas in the area just a few weeks earlier. On the night of 12 -13 May they were tasked with relieving The Buffs from the trenches near Potijze. The Battalion War Diary is scant on information about what happened that night, but in total 35 men of the 2nd Life Guards lost their lives on these two days, Charles being one of them. Half of these men have no known grave to this day. Regimental records suggest Charles was originally buried with a small group of fellow Dragoons near Railway Clump, Potijze, but by the end of the war anything marking the grave had been lost.

In July 1921 a casualty of the war was discovered by the teams looking for field graves. His resting place was near Crump Farm, between Potijze and Verlorenhoek. The team responsible for documenting the discovery of the body and ensuring his reburial could find nothing to identify him by name, so they recorded instead that he was an unknown Serjeant Major of the 2nd Life Guards – a description they derived from his clothing, the crown and chevrons on his uniform, and his numerals. Two other men from the 2nd Life Guards were also recovered from the same spot. All three were buried a few miles from where they were found at Bedford House Cemetery. Only one of the three was identified by name – Lance Corporal WH Butler who was carrying a disc with his name on it. The third man had only a numeral – this meant he could be identified as a member of the 2nd Life Guards, but no rank could be attributed to him.

In 2020 a case was submitted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in which a researcher claimed to have identified the unknown 'Sergeant Major'. They correctly pointed out that this rank does not exist in the Household Cavalry, but that the same insignia can be attributed to the rank of Corporal of Horse. Research showed that only one man of this rank was missing in this area at this time, and as such he could be identified as Charles Edward Dean.

Today we rededicate his grave accordingly, returning his name to him after 110 years.

The Cemetery

CWGC Bedford House Cemetery is situated in the grounds of Chateau Rosendal, a former country house that was used by field ambulances and brigade headquarters during the war. It was gradually destroyed by shelling and the grounds became covered by small cemeteries or enclosures. The largest of which, Enclosure No. 4, was used between June 1916 to February 1918, and later enlarged after the Armistice. Like the previously unidentified grave of Corporal of Horse Charles Edward Dean, almost two thirds of the graves in this enclosure commemorate unknown casualties.

Welcome

We have come here today, to remember before God and in the presence of one another, this our brother Charles. To entrust him again into the arms of God's loving mercy and to remember him.

Opening Prayer

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life: hear our prayers for your servant
Charles whom we remember this day.
Fulfil in him the purpose of your love
and bring us, with him, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reading: The Soldier by Rupert Brook
Chosen by the family of Cpl Charles Dean

Read by Jamie Robertson, Cpl Dean's great-grandson

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth 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 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.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 27

Read by a representative of the British Embassy

The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked advance against me
it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.
Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear;
though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.
One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.
For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
and set me high upon a rock.

Reading: A Soldier's Grave by Francis Lewidge

Read by Captain Charles Carr-Smith, The Household Cavalry

Then in the lull of midnight, gentle arms
Lifted him slowly down the slopes of death
Lest he should hear again the mad alarms
Of battle, dying moans, and painful breath.

And where the earth as soft for flowers we made
A grave for him that he might better rest.
So, Spring shall come and leave it seet arrayed,
And there the lark shall turn her dewy nest.

Address

The Reverend Thomas Sander

The Act of Dedication

We rededicate this grave to Corporal of Horse Charles Edward Dean 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 him and all those whose dwelling is forever with Christ in the everlasting kingdom of the Father.

The Exhortation

Read by Captain Charles Carr-Smith, The Household Cavalry

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

Played by Musician Benjamin Kinch, Band of the Household Cavalry

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Captain Henry Tregear, The Household Cavalry

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

Laying of Wreaths

The Collect of the Life Guards

*Read by Mr. Ted Heath, Formerly of the Life Guards
Curator of the Household Cavalry Museum & Archive*

O ever-living God, King of kings, in whose service we put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation, grant we beseech thee that the Life Guards may be faithful unto death, and receive at last the crown of life from Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

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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