

Grave of Shrewsbury soldier identified in Belgium

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The grave of Captain (Capt) John Russell Pound who was attached to 2nd Battalion The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, has been identified in Belgium more than 110 years after his death during the Second Battle of Ypres. A rededication service took place yesterday (18 March 2025) at CWGC Tyne Cot Cemetery.

The service was attended by Sir Robert Pound, the great great nephew of Capt Pound, and his family.

Sir Robert Pound, his family, and the military party stand at the graveside (Crown Copyright)

Sir Robert Pound said:

Our family is deeply honoured to attend the rededication service at Tyne Cot today for Captain John Russell Pound. He was not only a soldier, but a son and a brother whose loss was deeply felt by those who loved him. After generations of uncertainty about his final resting place, it means so much to finally honour him at his grave, alongside all those who gave their lives in the Great War.

Capt Pound, a school master at Shrewsbury School, took a keen interest in the school's Officer Training Corps in which he was a captain. Upon the outbreak of the First World War he applied for a Commission and in August 1914 was made a captain in 3rd Battalion The King's Shropshire Light Infantry and was attached to 2nd Battalion for active service on the Western Front.

On 25 April 1915, 2nd Battalion The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, was sent to retake a trench near Zonnebeke which had been lost by 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment the day before. They made two attempts to retake the trench, but were unsuccessful. Following the attacks they took over the trenches adjoining the lost trench and it was in that location on 27 April 1915 that Capt Pound was shot through the head by a sniper and died without regaining consciousness. He was 27 years old. Later that day another unsuccessful attempt to retake the trench was made by the battalion.

After the war, the remains of Capt Pound were recovered and buried in Tyne Cot Cemetery as an unknown captain of The King's Shropshire Light Infantry. As he was missing, Capt Pound was commemorated on the Menin Gate. His grave was identified after a researcher submitted evidence to CWGC suggesting that Capt Pound was buried there. After further research by CWGC, the National Army Museum and JCCC, their findings were confirmed.

The rededication service was organised by JCCC and was conducted by Father Terkura Igbe CF, Chaplain to 1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment. It was attended by serving personnel of 4th Battalion The Mercian and The Rifles.

Father Terkura Igbe CF conducts the service of rededication (Crown Copyright)

Rosie Barron, JCCC Caseworker, said:

It has been a privilege to have organised the rededication service for Capt Pound today and to have shared this experience with his family. Capt Pound is still remembered with pride by his family and at Shrewsbury School where he was clearly a big part of the community. His story has now been concluded, and a 110-year mystery has been solved.

Father Terkura Igbe CF (Chaplain to the Forces) said:

Among other factors in human reality, life and death are common phenomena. We live, but close to life is the reality of death. The death of a person brings a lot of pain to families, friends and loved ones. Capt Pound lies among others at Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in the world. The sight of the headstones can be overwhelming, but the message of selfless commitment endures! I am humbled by the war sacrifices made by these men, especially Capt Pound who we remember today.

Director of the Commemorations at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Richard Hills said:

We are honoured to rededicate one of our previously unknown graves at Tyne Cot cemetery in Belgium. Thanks to extensive and meticulous research we are now able to mark the grave as that of Captain John Russell Pound who lost his life as forces fought almost continuously across the Ypres Salient, throughout the First World War. His newly engraved named headstone ensures he is appropriately commemorated, now and for generations to come. We reaffirm our commitment to care for Captain Pound's grave in perpetuity.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/grave-of-shrewsbury-soldier-identified-in-belgium>