In memory of

Captain Leo Creagh

1st Battalion, Manchester Regiment





Leo Creagh (pronounced KRAY) was born on 20th October 1878 in Bombay, India (now called Mumbai) and christened in Peshawar. He was the eldest of eleven children and his parents were Surgical Major William Creagh and Bertha Rose Creagh (nee Aspinall).



Leo's father William was a doctor serving in the Army Medical Department and assigned to a unit of the Royal Artillery in India.² He married Bertha Aspinall in Bombay in 1876.³ He also served in the Afghan War and in China.

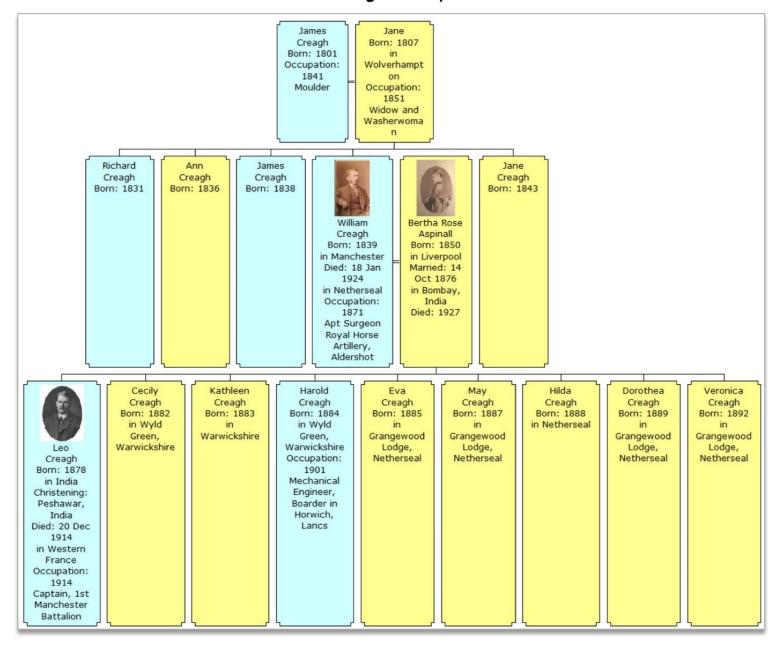


¹ Stoneywell College War Memorials and Memoirs

² www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk

³ www.ancestry.co.uk Leo Creagh b1878 d1914 Public Member Photos Pat_Slay

The Creagh Family Tree



By 1881, the family had moved back to the UK and were living in Sutton Coldfield (Leo was two years old).
William was by then a Doctor (Royal College of Surgeons).

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⁴ 1881 Census www.ancestry.co.uk

By 1891, Leo's parents and siblings were living at Grangewood Lodge, Netherseal where five of Leo's sisters were born. William Creagh was a General Practitioner for Netherseal and Lullington.

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⁵ 1891 Census www.ancestry.co.uk



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The 1891 Census shows that Leo, aged 12, was a pupil at St Augustine's College, boarding school in Ramsgate.

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 $^{^{6}\} http://members.madasafish.com/^cj_whitehound/family/St_Augustines.htm$

⁷ 1891 Census www.ancestry.co.uk

By 1892, Leo was attending Stonyhurst College, Clitheroe, Lancashire. ⁸ Stonyhurst was a leading Catholic boarding school for children aged thirteen onwards.

9



There was a strong military tradition at Stonyhurst, and also amongst Leo's family. His father's relatives, James, Michael, Jasper and Charles Osborne Creagh all served in the Army during the mid-nineteenth century. Leo followed this tradition and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment Militia on 28th July 1897. ¹⁰ He was promoted to Lieutenant on 14th December 1898.

The Militia consisted of men who trained as soldiers for a short period each year, and lived as civilians for the rest of the time. Serving in the Militia was a common way for officers to join the regular army. This is what Leo did on 4^{th} January 1899. After training, he was assigned to the 1^{st} Battalion of the Manchester Regiment and joined them in Gibraltar on 15^{th} March 1899. He and the Battalion remained there until 23^{rd} August, when they transferred to Africa.

Leo's Record of Services shows that he was 5ft 11. He could also speak French.

⁸ www.worldwar1schoolarchives.org/stonyhurst-college

⁹ www.worldwar1schoolarchives.org/stonyhurst-college

¹⁰ www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk

Military Record of Services

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 $^{^{11}\} www.search.findmypast.co.uk/recordF013311$

South Africa and the Boer War

The Boer Wars in South Africa resulted from over a century of conflict between the British Empire and the Boers (farmers). Finding gold and diamonds in South Africa in 1867 fuelled the conflict.

The war began on October 11 1899, following a Boer ultimatum that the British should cease building up their forces in the region. It ended on 31 May 1902.

British military service records show high losses, with more than half caused by illness (especially typhoid fever) rather than enemy action. 22,000 British soldiers were killed, of which only 35% died in battle, and the remaining 65% from disease. It became apparent that there were serious problems with public health in Britain: up to 40% of recruits in Britain were unfit for military service, suffering from medical problems such as rickets and other poverty-related illnesses. 80% of men presenting for service in the Boer War were found by the Army Medical Corps to be physically unfit to fight.

78 Victoria Cross war medals were awarded to British and colonial soldiers for action during the Second Boer War.

In August 1899, Leo and the 1st Battalion were sent to South Africa in case war broke out between British and Boer settlers.

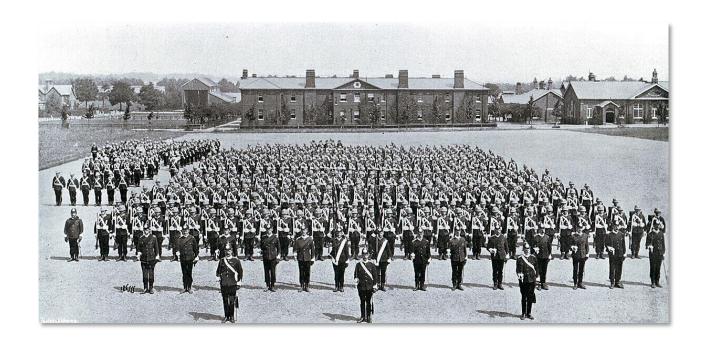
Leo was promoted to Lieutenant in September that year, aged 19.

They sailed to Durban and were stationed in the small town of Ladysmith in Natal, when war was declared on 11th October 1899. Leo had been assigned to a newly formed Mounted Infantry Company shortly after he arrived in South Africa. ¹² He took a Mounted Infantry course during that year.

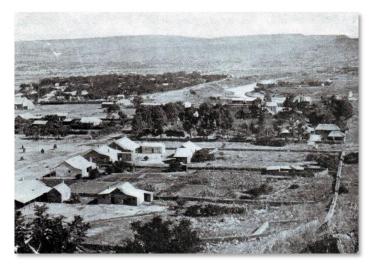


¹² www.themenbehindthemedals.or.uk

Rather than fight on horseback in the traditional manner of cavalry, the Mounted Infantry used horses primarily to move swiftly about the battlefield, where they would then dismount and fight on foot. ¹³



1st Manchester Regiment on parade in Britain before leaving for South Africa. 1st Manchesters formed part of Colonel Ian Hamilton's brigade at the Battle of Ladysmith on 30th October 1899 in the Boer War¹⁴



The siege of Ladysmith

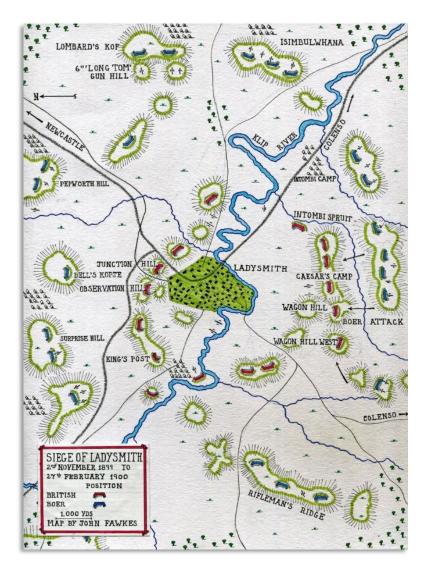
Leo was involved in the Battle of Lombards Kop, and then the Battle and the Siege of Ladysmith.

¹³ https://www.crcpress.com/The-British-Army-Regular-Mounted-Infantry-18801913/Winrow/p/book/9781138330047

¹⁴ https://www.britishbattles.com/great-boer-war/battle-of-ladysmith/

The 1st Battalion were based at Caesar's Camp, just outside the town, and played an important role in repelling Boer attacks.

Constant shelling meant that the British Army could not move openly during the day and had to camp in insanitary dugouts rather than in the open, which accelerated the spread of disease.



On 30th October 1899, as the Boers surrounded Ladysmith, the entire British force stationed there launched a sortie to capture the Boer artillery. The result was the disastrous Battle of Ladysmith, in which the British were driven back into the town having lost 1,200 men killed, wounded, or captured.

While the garrison waited for the British Relief force, conditions grew worse. General White had initially believed they could still fight their way out and did not treat the situation as a siege, despite the lack of food. It was not until Buller was defeated at Spion Kop in January that White agreed to reduce rations, give horses' meal to the men and slaughter the horses for food. ¹⁵

The 1st Battalion were beseiged for 18 days - from 2^{nd} November 1899 to 27^{th} February 1900. ¹⁶

¹⁵ https://www.britishbattles.com/great-boer-war/siege-of-ladysmith/

¹⁶ www.themenbehindthemedals.or.uk

Peace was declared on 31st May 1902. The 1st Battalion had suffered the highest casualties, reflecting their involvement in the fighting at Ladysmith. 4 Officers and 75 NCO's and men were killed, one officer and 93 men died of disease and 145 were wounded. ¹⁷

A total of 3,200 men died in the defence and rescue of the town. 18



Leo received a medal for his involvement at the Defence of Ladysmith. He was only 20 years old.

Back in the UK

Leo left the $1^{\rm st}$ Battalion Manchester Regiment and South Africa soon after peace was declared. He was assigned to the Manchester Regiment Depot in Ashton-under-Lyne on $21^{\rm st}$ March 1900. He stayed in the UK until $7^{\rm th}$ February 1903. ¹⁹

During his time in the UK, Leo was promoted to Captain on $23^{\rm rd}$ November 1901, aged $23.^{\rm 20}$

The Census records of 1901 shows Leo, aged 22, living as a Boarder at 7 Burlington Road, Paddington, London. His occupation is listed as 'Army - Lieutenant'.

During 1902, according to Leo's Record of Service, he undertook a Musketry course in Hythe, Kent.

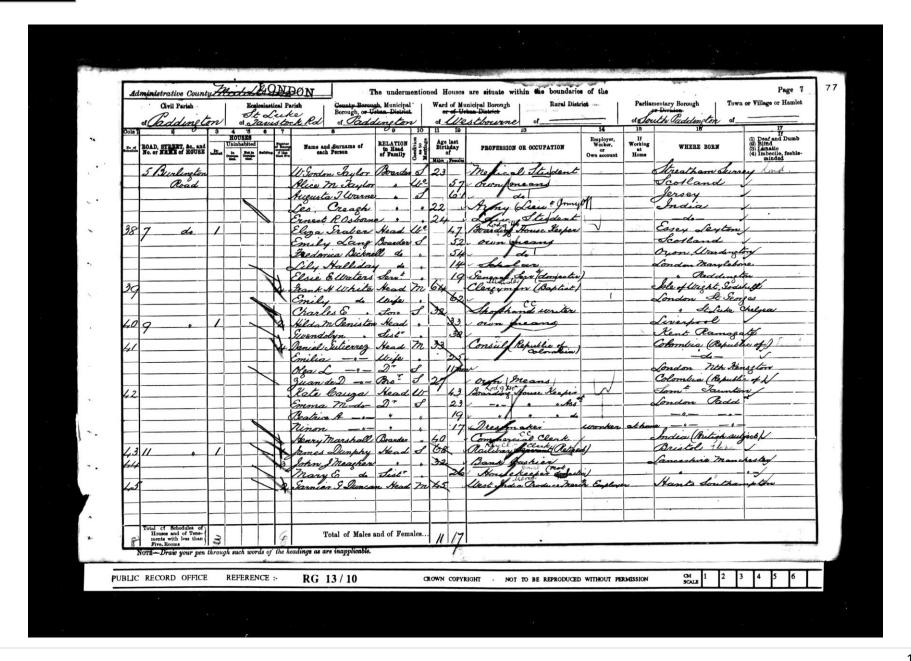
¹⁷ www.tameside.gov.uk/archives/manchesterregiment/boerwar

¹⁸ https://www.britannica.com/place/Ladysmith

¹⁹ www.themenbehindthemedals.or.uk

²⁰ www.ancestry.co.uk Harts Annual Army List 1908;

The 1901 Census





Originally established in the mid-19th Century, the School of Musketry at Hythe played a major role in WW1. The skills in firearms and marksmanship taught to officers at the school were cascaded throughout the British Army and meant that soldiers on the Western Front were able to offset the early superior machine-gun power of the German Army. The school's success coined the phrase 'the mad minute' - the ability of soldiers to fire their rifles 15-20 times in 60 seconds.²¹

Singapore and India

On 8^{th} February 1903, Leo left the UK for Singapore. He was stationed there with the 1^{st} Battalion until 19^{th} December 1904, at which time they were transferred to India.

The 1st Battalion moved to India in 1904 and stayed for 10 years, during which time they travelled to many areas of the country as part of their commitment to supporting the protection of a colony of the British Empire.²²

In 1904, the Battalion travelled by train to their first destination - Secunderbad. Records show that Leo was stationed here.²³

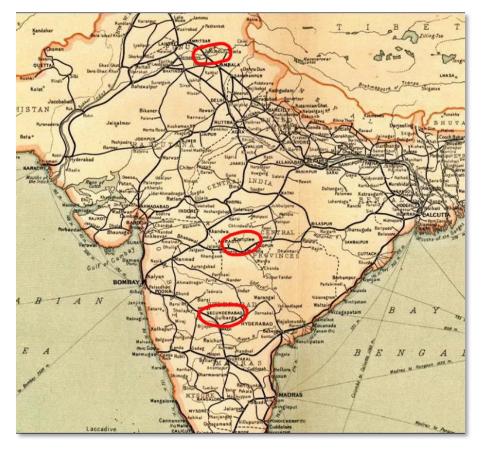
A photograph available in the Manchester Regiment Image Archive dated 1908 shows Leo with the 1^{st} Battalion at Trimulgherry Fort, Segunderabad.

²¹ www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01wsb1y;

²² www.awayfromthewesternfront.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/The-Jullundur-Brigade-Book-.pdf

²³ www.search.findmypast.co.uk/recordF013311

After five years at Secunderabad, the Battalion then travelled to Kamptee in October 1908.



Secunderabad, Kamptee and Jullundur in India

In March 1910, the Battalion moved from Kamptee back to Trimulgerry Fort at Secunderabad, and then on to Jullundur towards the end of 1911.

Around 1911, in Jullundur, India, three battalions (with different cultures, and different beliefs) came together. These were the 1st Manchesters, the 47th Sikhs and the 59th Scinde Rifles. They became known as the **Jullundur Brigade**.

In the years before WW1, they played football and cricket together, giving them the chance to form friendships and camaraderie, which would see them through what was to come. ²⁴ Photographs of the football and hockey teams are available to view and purchase on The Manchester Regiment Image Archive (www.manchester-regiment.org.uk).

²⁴ https://awayfromthewesternfront.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/The-Jullundur-Brigade-Book-.pdf



Leo Creagh: Photograph of Leo in
Tameside Local Studies and Archives Shton-under
Centre, Reference: MRP/3B/025 was promoted to

The 1st Battalion trained alongside the 47th Sikhs and the 59th Scinde Rifles. They learned to speak their language and understand aspects of local culture so that they could communicate more effectively.

The 1st Manchester's were the British battalion of the 8th (Jullundur) Brigade of the 3rd (Lahore) Division.²⁵

On 2nd April 1911, a Census was taken of all those people living in the UK. A record was also made of all Army members, their wives and their children who were passing the night of 2nd April in India.

Leo is listed as a Captain of the 1st Battalion, aged 32.²⁶

Return of all Con	nmissioned Officers, Warr	ant Office	rs, Non-Commis	ssioned Officers, '	Frumpeters, Drun	nmers and Rank
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9 Erskine, John David Berevidge	Caption	36	habried			Briguall Yorks
10 Eddowes, William Black	Caplain	33	Single			Ohera Dun Suden

²⁵ www.jullundurassociation.org/manchester-reg/

²⁶ www.ancestry.co.uk/1911Census Census Enumeration District of India, Pg 334

The Delhi Durbar

Whilst the 1^{st} Battalion was in India, King George V came to the throne in Britain, in June 1911. They visited India in December that year.

Whilst they were in India, a massive celebration called the Delhi Durbar took place - held to commemorate the coronation in Britain of King George V and Queen Mary. It was a very grand affair, at which their Majesties were proclaimed Emperor and Empress of India.

Official ceremonies lasted from 7th to 16th December. The central event, the Durbar and proclamation, took place on 12th December.²⁷

The 1st Battalion took part in the Durbar itself on 12th and the spectacular military parade on 14th. It also provided many guards of honour for dignitaries.²⁸



26,800 Delhi Durbar medals made of silver were awarded to the men and officers of the British and Indian armies who participated in the event. 29 A total of 100 Delhi Durbar Medals were allocated to the $1^{\rm st}$ Battalion. Leo did not receive one. 30

After the Durbar was over, Leo and the $1^{\rm st}$ Battalion moved to Jullundur in the modern Indian Punjab.

In early March 1913, Leo attended an Intelligence Course held in Amballa.

He went on leave to England in mid-1914, and was still there when the First War broke out that August.³¹

²⁷ www.rgjmuseum.co.uk/photo-archive-item/delhi-durbar-1911/

²⁸ www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk

²⁹ www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delhi_Durbar

³⁰ Images from Wikipedia

³¹ www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk

After the outbreak of war, Army units stationed in India were quickly sent to France to help those units already there. The 1^{st} Battalion set sail set sail on 29^{th} August and arrived in France on 26^{th} September.

An excerpt from the 1^{st} Battalion War Diary that day shows details of when and where the Battalion left India. It is assumed that Leo was one of five 'on leave in England'.

The Battalion sailed from KT.	RACHI. about
I pm on the by a august egit.	
Distribution on Battalion Can	una India.
Office	ers other ranks
Trockeding on Dervice. 17	8 110
Tumaining in India. Depot.	3 110
on leave in England	5 5
To join at Ford of disembarkation	2
on leave in Endand Jo join at Fort of disembarkation Josal. &	b 1029 00 6

32

From Karachi, they sailed on the ship Edevana to Suez, then proceeded by train to Cairo. On 18th September, the Battalion left Cairo and, again by train, headed to Alexandria to re-embark on the Edevana for Marseilles (a total of 18 Officers and 885 Other Ranks).³³

Having disembarked at Marseilles on 26th September, the Battalion then travelled to Orleans. Somehow, Leo was able to find his way back from leave in England to join No3 Company.³⁴

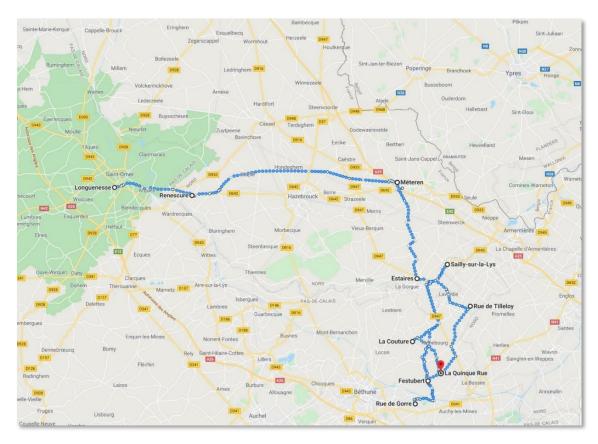
France - October/November 1914

The 1st Battalion moved around a great deal during October and November of 1914. The War Diaries show details of orders and of locations - and how far they marched each time. The map (although not from WW1) shows the places they were sent and where they fought. Longuenesse is about 27 miles southwest of Calais. Pecantin is near Rue di Tilleloy.

³² www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 6/758

³³ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 7/758

³⁴ www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk



Excerpts from the war diary show 1st Battalion marched over 50 miles in the space of 6 days: $^{\rm 35}$

21 Oct	Left Longuenesse marched 8.5 miles to Renescure 12.15pm - 4.30pm.
22 Oct	Left Renescure marched 16 miles to Meteren. Started 7.15am arrived 3pm.
23 Oct	Left Meteren 5.15am. Arrived Estaire 9.30am, 10.25 miles. Left Estaire 1.20pm to south of Estaire but rerouted to Pecantin arrived 4.40pm.
24 Oct	6am March one mile west of Le Touret 14 miles arrived 2.30pm.
25 Oct	March $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of Festubert - 'this march was made in pelting rain'.
26 Oct	Marched 5.45am to Gorre. 5.15pm marched $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of Festubert.

³⁵ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 9/758. www.ancestry.co.uk/interactive/60779/43849_3927_0-00000?backurl=&ssrc=&backlabel=Return# The war diary being used covers BEF, 3 Lahore Division, 8 Jullundur Brigade and 1st Battalion Manchesters from Aug 1914 - Dec 1915.

By 26^{th} October 1^{st} Battalion were in trenches east of Festubert. The diaries give details about enemy action – they were being shelled at regular intervals (3 killed, 5 wounded, 1 wounded missing on 27^{th} October, 4 killed and 7 wounded on 28^{th}).

During the early part of November the trenches were more heavily shelled, particularly on the right and centre of the line occupied by No 1 and 3 Coys (Leo was in 3 Coy). Snipers were very active in the area and on 8^{th} November a Captain Dunlop was shot through the head and killed by a sniper.

By 15th November, the Jullundur Brigade was relieved and they returned to Estaire where they entered billets. They rested there until 21st November.

On 22nd November they went back into the trenches and took over part of the line near the crossroads at La Quinque Rue. The war diaries tell of how close the enemy trenches were - at some points 500-600ft away, but opposite 3 Coy (Leo's company) only 35-40ft away.

36

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.
Jovenbergy	at 9 am orders received that 25th Rockish Rosgade wou
	Nelieve Sullunder Boigade, we faraved at 4 30 married ESTAIRE 6. 30pm where we entered billets. No 20 from the treuches arrived ESTAIRE 12:30 am (16th) having been relieved by the Royal Soich Ripes.
	ESTAIRE 6. 3 ofen where we ensered outers. No ofte
	from the treuches arrived a Social Release
	been relieved by the regard to be to be to
Movember 1914	Orders received at 2 am Borgaise would march to
	LACOUTURE at 9.45 am, Corwed LACOUTUR
	3. 30 pm. Distance 5 miles where we went into bille of 5. 30 pm we were informed that the Division Thousand be prepared for a few the move during the night. This was
	af 5. 3 open we were informed that the Division thousand be
	prepared for afwether move away we might. The
4	Cancelled.
November 1914	Rested in billets
the same of the sa	Rested in billets
the the state of t	Resped in bellets
the	Rested in boiles
d ·	Reched in billets
	HR. If the Prince of Wales inspected one company from ear batalion in the Brigade near ZELOBES
	went back into the treuches and look over part of the line occupie
ind " "	by the GAR HIWAL Brigade of the 1th Division with our rigin
	on the cross roads at LA QUINQUE RUE Entending on a
	Northerly desection and pront of about 1300 yds. No II + I Coys
	the winding was a wind / will /

³⁶ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 11/758

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.
	look over from the Leicestershire Regiment, No II from the Leaforth Mighlanders & No II from 2/3 Gentha Rifles. Relief was completed at 9.30pm. The distance of the enemy's trenches from no varied very considerably along our front. On the L. they were 500° 16 600 distant gradually getting closer towards our night where at one froint seposite no II Coy their advance trenches were only 35° 10 40 from our line. One Equadron 15th Lancers under Captain Nowell was attached to the battalion and acted as local Reg th reserve.
3 rd November 194.	Nothing occurred during the night. At about 10 am. Level Davidson was wounded in the head by a enifer. He died the following da at 12 30 am. At 5 fm we were informed that the centre of the BAREILLY Brigade on our R had been driven back and that the L. R. Sections might follow, also that a counter attack was to take place at 4.30 pm. At 9 pm this day the JULLUNDUR Brigade look over the lies of the GARHINAL Brigade
th November 1914	Casualties - dient PIN Davidson wounded and died of wounds. Phe Coshall + Whitehead wounded. a quet day It was reported in the morning that the Bareilly Bole had relation the treuches they had lost the frevious day but the opicial intimation was sent to us. No casualties today the tombolical which we had taken over from the devesters and which had been doing good work from no the Coy buset.
3th November 1914	The ormand was Killed +1 man was wounded by sniflers.
26 the November 1914	a plan was made for attacking the commy's sup heave. This sop had a double hear to it and in one place has encreached to about 25th pomows trenches opposite No 3 Coy. The plan was for the 3 to

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³⁷ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 12/758

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.
	clear their trenches except to a few volunteers who were to remain behind & keep up the fire to cause the enemy to think the trench was occupied. The artillery were meanwhile to bombard the stap heads and advanced trenches for about & how pour 11. 30pm to 12 mm. Immediately this bombardment was over the I were to sever out parties to investigate the cap heads & break up any boring tradrum the that might be found. At 5 30pm the R.A. Laid they wished to range on sap head before bombardment to the same acheme was arranged for the following night. Surving the morning to I Coy Can in for a heavy shelling at 11 am. This was followed by a maching your opening on their trenches, one man being killed & five wound
the November 1914.	during the bombardwent. Checit Norman rejouved for duty boday. On the Condusion of the artillity bombardment at 11. 30pm Captar. Creagh stent out two parties of ten men each from No III Coy to Reconnoitre the evening's enigling ditter to his R. front about 60° distanted become were fried on from the enemy's trenches but they advanced from about 60° of trench unheld. They were then bombed + C of briles + 2 men were wounded. These parties returned Carrying their wound that no more casualties. Captain Island (R. Centre Company) tent out two parties of about hen men each one to each sap hear! I chemy were at work of parties on these parties doing no harm. I was estimated that the transfer putted in the party under It connell were caught by maxim fire the and five of his men were rilled were caught by maxim fire the and five of his men were rilled three wounded. The other party under C.S. Heywood got back
the November 1914	The every did a lot of sniping during the day. No Casualties.
the Movember 1914.	about Ipun every's bomb que active. No casualties, otherwise quie No II Coy on the L. reported that the every has started to sap up but were 450" distant. No casualties

³⁸ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 14/758

On 8^{th} December, Leo Creagh went on leave to England. According to newspaper articles in the Burton Chronicle on 24^{th} and 31^{st} December 1914, he had been granted a week's furlough (leave).

'He came straight from the trenches near Lille, in North-West France, and spent the recess at Grangewood Lodge. Among the relics which he secured, and left with his father before returning to the front, were a blood-stained German bayonet enclosed in a soiled scabbard and a French water bottle of two-pints capacity. This was covered with dark blue cloth and had a strap attached. Both former owners were killed in action and the trophies were obtained after their burial.'³⁹

The Battle of Givenchy

Most Care and Care an

The Battle of Givenchy was fought from 18th to 22nd December 1914. British forces were trying to provide relief to the French, who were receiving heavy fire from the Germans at Arras. British forces attacked the Germans at Givenchy, which would prevent German reinforcements from getting to Arras. General John Denton Pinkstone French was in charge of coordinated six small

³⁹ Magic Attic – Burton Chronicle 24/12/14 and 31/12/14.

⁴⁰ www.eurocyclopedia.wordpress.com/2016/04/14/battle-of-givenchy

scale attacks, in which the Indian Corps would do the fighting. They set out to Givenchy-lès-la-Bassée exhausted and worn down from heavy losses at La Bassee and the Belgian Frontier just a few weeks prior.

In the freezing rain on December 19th at 3:10am, the Lahore Division succeeded in taking tow of Crown Prince Rupprecht German lines, only to be pushed back out. The Indian corps then retreated back to Givenchy. In the morning, the German Army launched a counter attack in which they exploded multiple mines in the British trenches and bombarded them with artillery. Meanwhile the German infantry was headed toward Givenchy to surround them. The German infantry had far more ammunition, grenades and artillery than the British. The British forces suffered 4,000 casualties, with 2,000 for the German Army. There was no gain for the British and Germany was still able to get their troops through to Arras.



On 20^{th} December, the 1^{st} Battalion received orders to march to Gorre in order to take part in an attack on the nearby village of Givenchy.

A transcript of the war diary pages follows:

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⁴¹ http:/www.russiansinthecef.ca/mitson/images

20th December 1914 - At 11.15am we received orders to march at once to GORRE and report to G.O.C Sirkind Brigade, Battalion, marched off at 12 noon. On the way orders changed and we were told to proceed to PONT FIXE where we would be met by the Brigade Major, Jullundur Brigade. Our route led along the BETHUNE-LA-BASEE Canal. On arrival at PONT FIXE orders were received to deliver a counter attack, started at 3.10pm, the village being unexpectedly found to be held by the enemy and this delayed the attack on the trenches till the following morning, as by the time the communicating trenches on the far side of the village had been reached after the village had been cleared of the enemy, it was too dark to distinguish the country and locate the direction of the enemy's trenches. Twelve prisoners were taken while the village was being cleared of the enemy.⁴²

21st December 1914 - The attack was timed for 6.30am and was met by a heavy maxim rifle fire. Two burning haystacks showed up our men and after an hours fighting, it was found impossible to reach the enemy's trenches. The previous night the line had advanced to try and locate the enemy's trenches and had met a very heavy fire and sustained severe casualties. At about 11am the village and trenches were shelled severely by heavy guns and shrapnel for 45 minutes. Then a heavy attack was made by the enemy. All was going well till the French retired on our L leaving our flank there in a dangerous position. The enemy worked round and the L was forced to retire through the village and on to the road with the enemy attacking strongly on the R and centre. It was considered advisable to retire the L and part of the support and take up a position in rear to cover the retirement of the centre and right. These held on so tenaciously that on receipt of a message to this effect another advance was made and the original line was re-occupied, driving back the enemy on the L. This was accomplished about 2pm. At 3.20pm a sharp attack was delivered by the enemy and a considerable number of the enemy appeared on the R. flank and rear. There was no position from which to deal with this and as a maxim appeared and accurate shrapnel opened from the R dispositions were again made to retire. The centre and right held on for some time while a second position was taken up and a hand to hand fight took place there and on the road in rear of them before they retired. Half way back to PONT FIXE a party of Scots Guards were met holding a small trench N of the road. We went into reserve on arrival at PONT FIXE. The casualties were:

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⁴² www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 18/758

Killed: 2 Officers, 63 Other Rank

Wounded: 3 Officers, 123 Other Rank

Wounded Missing: 47 Other Rank

Missing: 46 Other Rank

Total: 5 Officers 280 Other Rank

Leo is believed to have been killed some time between 20th and 21st December 1914. The information below is taken from the Stonyhurst College Magazine 1915.⁴³

Capt. LEO CREAGH, 1st Bn. The Manchester Regt.

Capt. Creagh fell in the heavy fighting on December 20th and 21st, 1914, near Givenchy. His battalion had only left the trenches on the 17th when they were ordered out again on the 20th, at 11 a.m. They had to attack a village and some trenches in the afternoon, during which operations Capt. Creagh was reported to have done good work.

"On the morning of December 21st, 1914, just as the attack was being renewed at daybreak, Capt. Creagh was shot down in front of the enemy's trenches.

"A Sergeant, who was with him at the time, said that he was leading his men with conspicuous gallantry."

The above details are taken from the account of his death sent to his mother by his Colonel, who expressed deep regret in the loss of so gallant and capable an officer.

A brother officer and close friend, who had had a conversation with Capt. Creagh just before the second attack, during which he fell, spoke of the heavy personal loss to himself of a loyal friend, and to the regiment of a popular and trusted leader.

The Major, second in command of the regiment, on hearing that Capt. Creagh was hit, hurried across the zone of fire to help him, but was struck on the way and carried off to the dressing station.

But his gallant attempt at rescue was probably already too late, as eye-witnesses declared that Capt. Creagh was killed instantaneously. The Divisional Commander said subsequently that the battalion had saved the whole British line.

The following detailed account of the fighting during the defence of Givenchy, 1914, in which Capt. Creagh met his death, is taken from the Manchester Guardian for January 15th, 1915:—

"Late at night an order was received that a further attempt would be made to recapture the fire trenches still held by the enemy, and after a consultation between Major Hitchins and Captains Creagh and Rose, and Lieut. Mair, the attack was fixed for 6.30, at which time it was hoped that the light of the burning haystacks would be less effective in the dawn.

"Shortly after six on Monday morning, Companies 2 and 3 moved to the attack. This attack never developed, as No. 1 Company was so hard pressed that they could not advance, and Companies 2 and 3 re-established themselves in the old support trenches. Capt. Creagh was killed in this attack, and soon afterwards Major Hitchins and Capt. Rose were wounded."

Capt. Creagh, born in 1880, son of the late Brigade-Surgeon William Creagh, M.D., and Mrs. Creagh, of Grangewood Lodge, Lullington, Burton-on-Trent, came to Stonyhurst in 1892. He entered the Army in 1899, and had served through the South African War, including the defence of Ladysmith, during which his battalion took a leading part in the Battle of Wagon Hill.

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⁴³ Creagh Leo Stonyhurst War Record pg 60;

WAR DIARY

or

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Re
20 th December 1914	Of 11. 15 am we received orders to march at once to GORRE trefort to G. OE Sirkind Brigade. Battalion marched off at 12 mon on the way orders changed two were told to proceed to PONT On the way orders changed two were told to proceed to PONT FIXE where we would be met by the Brigade Mapir, Sullundur FIXE where we would be met by the BETHUNE-LA-BASSEE Canal Brigade. Our route led along the BETHUNE-LA-BASSEE Canal Con arrival at PONT FIXE orders were received to deliver a Counter attack on the enemy's treuches E. of GIYENCHY. This counter attack on the enemy the village being unenfectedly counter attack started at 3.10 pm the village being unenfectedly found to be held by the enemy this delayed the attack on the Creuches till the following morning as by the time the	
21 st December 1914	Communicating trenches on the far side of the village had been reached after the village had been cleared of the enemy it was book dark to distinguish the country and locate the disches of the enemy's trenches. Ivelve presoners were taken while the village was being cleared of the enemy. The attack was timed for 6.30 am rwas met by a heavy manifer fire. Iwo burning haystocks chowed up our men rafter as	
	trenches. The previous night the line had advanced to try and locale the enemy's trenches and had met a very heavy fire and sustained severe casualties. At about it am the village of trenches were shelled severely by heavy guns and shrafarel for 45 minutes. Then a heavy altack was made by the enemy,	4
Gulab Sinch & Sons. Calcutta—No.	the L. was forced to retire through the village and on to the road the L. was forced to retire through on the R + centre et was considered with the enemy attacking strongly on the R + centre et was considered with the enemy attacking strongly on the R + centre et was considered advisable to retire the L. + part of the supports + take up a position	

⁴⁴ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 18/758

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Rogs., Part II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required.)		
Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendic
23 and December 19,4 23 and December 19,14 31 to December 19,14	ci Near to Cover the retriement of the centre and right. These held on so tenacionisty that on receipt of a message 16 this effect another advance was made and the original line was he occupied driving back the enemy on the L. This was accomplished about 2pm. At 3.20pm a sharp affect was delivered by the enemy re a Considerable number of the enemy appeared on the R. flank treat. There was no fosition from which to deal with this ras a maxim appeared resourable after chrapael opened from the R. disjonitions were again made to retire. The centre and right hid on for some trine while a second position was taken up and a hand to have fight took please three ron the was in hear and a hand to have fight took please three ron the was in hear of feets quards were met holding a small treuch N of the wood, of Jeots quards were met holding a small treuch N of the wood, of Jeots quards were met holding a small treuch N of the wood, of Jeots quards were met holding a small treuch N of the wood, of Jeots quards were not revised at PONT FIXE. The case alters were be went at Reserve on arrival at PONT FIXE. The case alters were officed in the work of the work of the work of the same alters were fact to BETHUNE Hook over a fortion of our old billets. Paraded at 9.45 am marched in Brigade to ALLOUAGENE	

⁴⁵ www.ancestry.com. 1st Battalion War Diaries Aug 1914 – Dec 1915 Pg 19/758

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CAPTAIN LEO CREAGH, IST BATTN. THE MANCHESTER REGIMENT, who was killed in

who was killed in action on the 20th— 21st December, 1914, was the eldest son of Brigade-Surgeon W, Creagh (retired) and of Mrs. Creagh, of Grangewood Lodge, Lulling to a near Burton-on Trent. He was born on the 20th October, 1878.



and was educated at Stonyhurst College, Blackburn. He joined the Manchester Regiment from the Militia in January, 1800, becoming Lieutenant in

September of the same year, and Captain in November, 1901. He served in the South African War, being present at operations in Natal, including the action at Lombard's Kop in 1809, and taking part in the defence of Ladysmith, including the sorties of the 7th and 10th December, 1899. He received the Queen's medal with clasp.

The following account of the circumstances attending his death is taken from the "Stony-hurst Magazine," of February, 1915:—
"Captain Creagh fell in the heavy fighting

"Captain Creagh fell in the heavy fighting that took place near Givenchy on the 20th and 21st December. His battalion had only left the trenches on the 17th when they were ordered out again on the 20th. They attacked a village and some trenches in the afternoon, during which action Captain Creagh was reported to have done good work. On the morning of the 21st the attack was renewed at daybreak, and Captain Creagh was shot down in front of the enemy's trenches. A sergeant, who was with him at the time, said he was leading his men with conspicuous gallantry. The above details were received from his Colonel, who, writing to Captain Creagh's mother, expressed his deep regret at the loss of so gallant and capable an officer."

Captain Creagh had been at home on short leave a few days before his death.



Leo's medals were donated to the Museum of the Manchester Regiment in February 1989.

Information from the Imperial War Museum



After the war, Leo's body could not be found, so he is one of 13,394 men commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Richebourg,

Pas-de-Calais

⁴⁶ www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205292871;

⁴⁷ www.themenbehindthemedals.org.uk;

Lullington

Manchesters 1st KIA 20/12/1914

BC 31/12/1914 Pg.4 Col. 2 Pos. B CAPTAIN CREAGH, OF LULLINGTON.

KILLED WHILE LEADING THE ATTACK.

Official information has reached Grangewood Lodge, near Lullington, Burton, the residence of his father, of the death of Capt, Leo Creagh, of the 1st Battalion Lahore Division of the Manchester Regiment. He was leading his men to the attack in an endeavour to retake some captured trenches, He was the eldest son when he was killed. of Dr. William Creagh, and had an interesting career since he joined the Army. When the South African war broke out he was serving as lieutenant with his regiment under Sir George White, the hero of Ladysmith After the relief of the latter, he fought until the end of the Boer War, and came out of the campaign unscathed. In 1903 he was promoted to the rank of captain, and subsequently has been stationed in India and Singapore. During the present war he came over from India with his regiment, and was for some time at Marseilles. He was 36 years old.

Captain Creagh had been in much of the fighting, and was recently granted a week's furlough. He came straight from the trenches near Lille, in North-west France, and spent the recess at Grangewood Lodge. Among the relics which he secured, and left with his father before returning to the front, were a blood-stained German bavonet enclosed in a soiled scabbard and a French water bottle of two-pints capacity. This was covered with dark blue cloth and had a strapattached. Both former owners were killed in action, and the trophies were obtained after their burial. Captain Creagh's father is an old retired officer who has practised in the Netherseal and Lullington district for many years. He held the rank of Brigade Surgeon, R.A.M.C., and in addition to the Afghan War has seen service in India and China. Dr. Creagh has a medal for each

BC 24/12/1914 Pg.5 Col. 4 Pos. M

A LULLINGTON OFFICER.

Captain Leo Creagh, 1st Battalion, Lahore Division Manchester Regiment, who is the younger son of Dr. William Cresgn, of Grange Wood, near Lullington, has had an interesting career since he joined the Army. His fightinstincts are hereditary, and he is of splendid physique. When the South African war broke out he was serving as lieutenant with his regiment under Sir George White, the hero of Ladysmith. After the relief of the latter, he fought until the end of the Boer War, and came out of the campaign unscathed. In. 1903 he was promoted to the rank of captain, and subsequently has been stationed in India and Singapore. During the present war he came over from India with his regiment, and was for some time at Marseilles.

Capt. Creagh has been in much of the fighting, and has recently been granted a. week's furlough. He came straight from the trenches near Lille, in North-west France. At his home he stated that the troops are well provided for through the kindness of the people at home. Apparently he has been in the thickest of the battles, for he secured interesting relics, which he has left with his father. These include a blood-stained German bayonet enclosed in a soiled scabbard and a French water bottle of two-pints capacity. This was covered with dark blue cloth and had a strap attached. Both former owners were killed in action, and the trophies were obtained after their burial. Capt. Creagh, who has a medal for the Boer War, returned to the trenches last week. His father is an old retired officer who has practised in the Netherseal and Lullington district for many years. He held the rank of lieutenant-colonel of the R.A.M.C., and in addition to the Afghan War has seen service in India and China. Dr. Creagh has a medal for each of these. He bears his age remarkably well.

Col. 1 Pos. M BC 31/12/1914 Pg.4

and 2ist, Capt. Leo Creagh. 1st Batt. Manchester Regt., eldest son of Brigade-Surgeon William Creagh, R.A.M.C. and Mrs Creagh, Grangewood Lodge, Lullington, near Burton Trent, age 36. R.I.P.

The record below shows Leo's medals detailed in the WW1 Medal Rolls index. It also shows that his brother Harry applied for the 1914 star on his behalf. 49

Campaign:—B. 22.104, (A) Where decoration was earned. (B) Present situation.					
Campaign: - B. E.Z. 1914,	1100.13				
(B) Present situation.					
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⁴⁹ www.ancestry.co.uk:WW1 Medal Rolls Index;

Captain

CREAGH, LEO

Died 20/12/1914

Aged 36

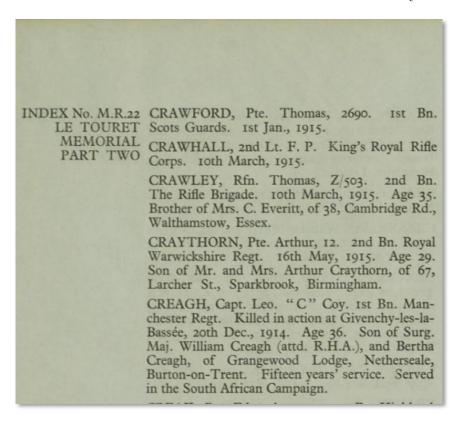
"C" Coy. 1st Bn.

Manchester Regiment

Son of Surg. Maj. William Creagh (attd. R.H.A.), and Bertha Creagh, of Grangewood Lodge, Netherseale, Burton-on-Trent. Fifteen years' service. Served in the South African Campaign.



Information from Le Touret War Cemetery



The Military Record of Officer's Effects shows that funds unpaid to Leo were paid to his brother Harry.

8,579 93791/16 CREAGH Regular 2. William Robot No 1059 16/15 5 5 10 WAR GRATUITY. Trenter 6222 BOTH 10 1-9-19 19/20 BPER 120 1-9-19	80 12 6 CPEC. 5/4. I 80-12-6 to the manager, contacte no balance at agenty space of hundred for societ to 90 of ceeses 6,000. 23. 576/16 to the many lay. 45 - 48.8C. 1/623.10 A. Exc. Stard & Graph Egy. \$ 45 lo 1/8 C costs carry of 45 - 48.8C. 1/600 Was Manda breagling & 45
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In Memory of

Captain

Leo Creagh

"C" Coy. 1st Bn., Manchester Regiment who died on 20 December 1914 Age 36

Son of Surg. Maj. William Creagh (attd. R.H.A.), and Bertha Creagh, of Grangewood Lodge, Netherseale, Burton-on-Trent. Fifteen years' service. Served in the South African Campaign.

Remembered with Honour

Le Touret Memorial





Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission