



Cecil George Lawrence was born at Newbold Pacey near Warwick in 1893. His parents were Samuel Lawrence, a Farmer, and Elizabeth Tedbury both born in Devon. Samuel was from Devon farming stock growing up on his own father's 250 acre farm employing 8 men and boys. There he assisted in its management until he married and managed his own Devon farm of 240 acres. In due course Cecil's parents moved to Flint Hall Farm at Newbold Pacey where Cecil was born and shortly thereafter baptised by the Rev Thomas Southey on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1893.

Cecil was one of ten children including two brothers Frederick and Albert. Like their father, these three sons and brothers themselves became farmers, and in 1911 all three were to be found jointly managing the Lavendon Grange Farm. Frederick, Albert and Cecil were then all single, aged 23, 21 and 17 respectively, with an elderly widow, Harriet Scriven, acting as their housekeeper. Meanwhile their parents had retired from farming at a comparatively early age and

had moved to Fletton House in Fletton Avenue, Peterborough.

At some early point in the War Cecil enlisted at Bedford. It appears his engagement was initially with the Lancers of the Line with the regimental number of 6983. It may be no coincidence that Cecil's neighbour at The Grange was Major Harold Hatton Hulse of the 5th Lancers. Cecil was likely to have been a practical horseman on the farm and so he would doubtless have been comfortable with a cavalry regiment. However, for whatever reason Cecil was evidently transferred or posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers.

At the outbreak of war the 1<sup>st</sup> Munsters were in Rangoon, Burma, but returned to the UK in January 1915. Meanwhile in November 1914 Turkey had joined with the enemy forces and there was a need for the Allied forces to open up the Dardanelles Strait allowing convoys to reach Russia. On 25 April 1915 the Munsters arrived in Gallipoli. The landings were disastrous for the Munsters and they lost 70% of their men. With further fighting the Battalion was down to 372 men by 11 May. New drafts were received by the Battalion in June and July 1915 following vicious fighting which had left the Battalion tired, hungry and exhausted.



It is during this period that Cecil Lawrence is likely to have joined the Battalion at war: his medal record card shows that his 'Qualifying Date' was 11 July 1915 with the 'Theatre of War' being the Balkans. On 21 August the Battalion was in action again at the Battle of Scimitar Hill which cost the lives of another 79 men and 3 officers on that day. Following extremely poor weather conditions the

Battalion was eventually evacuated to Alexandria in January 1916 before arriving in France on 22<sup>nd</sup> March bound for the Western Front in a much depleted state.

By 23 April 1916 the Munsters were back on the front line again at the Somme; they had also been reinforced back up to strength with men from its 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The Battalion was moved to the south of the Somme battlefield facing towards the strategic town of Ginchy on 5<sup>th</sup> September, suffering many casualties on the way following gas shelling. There it took part in the successful capture of the town but at a high cost once again, such that the Munsters were reduced to 5 officers and 305 men.

Campaign: <b>1914-15.</b>				(A) Where decoration was earned.	
				(B) Present situation.	
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	MEDALS which included (if any) PAGE	
(A) <b>LAWRENCE</b>	<b>R. Mun. Fus.</b>	<b>Pte</b>	<b>5690</b>	VICTORY	<b>A/10385 808</b>
(B) <b>Cecil</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>---</b>	BRITISH	<b>---</b>
Action taken				<b>15 STAR A/1130 181.</b>	
THEATRE OF WAR.				<b>2 (D) Bethune</b>	
QUALIFYING DATE.				<b>11.7.15.</b>	
(6 34 46) W234-HP5590 500,000 4/19 HWV(P240) K608 [OVER.					

Evidently Cecil Lawrence was a casualty of this latest assault and died on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1916 from wounds received. Cecil is buried at the Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension at the Somme in France. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star and also the British and Victory medals for his service.



**Above:** Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension at the Somme in France

*"The majority of the graves in the extension are of officers and men who died of wounds in the 1916 Battle of the Somme." – CWGC*



13  
WILL.

In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my mother Elizabeth Lawrence of Elton House, Elton Avenue, Peterborough, England.

Signed P. C. Lawrence  
No 3690 P. M. P.

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INFORMAL WILL.

W.O. No.: E/249606/1. DOMICILE: English  
203  
Record No.: 346241 16 74

The enclosed document dated Aug 5<sup>th</sup> 1915 and signed

Name Cecil Lawrence C. Lawrence

Regtl. No. 5690 Private appears to have been written and Rank

1<sup>st</sup> Bn Royal Munster Fusiliers named in the margin while he was "in actual military service" within the meaning of the Wills Act, 1837, and has been recognised by the War Department as constituting a valid will.

Date of Death 11. 9. 16. War Department as constituting a valid will.

WAR OFFICE.

Date 1<sup>st</sup> January 1917. *P. C. Lawrence*  
for the Assistant Financial Secretary

E. 381005