

## 59: William Lewis

### Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: W. Lewis

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 8<sup>th</sup> Bn. Cheshire Regiment

Service Number: 11377

Date of Death: 7 October 1915

Age at Death: ?

Buried / Commemorated at: Green Hill Cemetery, Suvla, Gallipoli. Canakkale, Turkey

Additional information given by CWGC: None

William Lewis was the fourth child (and fourth son) of John (described in census returns as a 'hunter') and Mary Ann Lewis and the younger brother of Thomas Lewis who was killed 22 October 1917, aged 30 [see entry [58: Thomas Lewis](#)]. He was also the cousin of Thomas Lewis, the son of James and Mary Ellen Lewis, who was killed in France on 23 March 1918 [see [57: Thomas Lewis](#)]. The relationships within the Lewis family are shown on the simplified family tree at the end of this entry.

John Lewis married Mary Ann Jane Sudlow of Neston at Our Lady & St Nicholas & St Anne ('The Sailors' Church'), Liverpool Parish Church, in July / September 1886; Mary appears to have been a daughter of Neston fisherman Thomas and Margaret Sudlow (both of whom had been born in Liverpool but who, in 1881, were living on Brook Street) and in the 1881 census Mary was recorded as being a general servant in the household of Parkgate grocer Thomas and Elizabeth Nelson.

In the *Cheshire Observer* report of his death William was said to be 20 (but he would have been 21½) and it was noted that his mother suffered with asthma, but it misnames his father as Richard.

In 1901 the family was living in Little Neston:

[illegible]

## 1901 census (extract) - Town Lane, Little Neston

John Lewis	38	hunter (groom)	born Neston
Mary A.	34		born Neston
Thomas	13		born Neston
Albert	11		born Neston
Joseph	9		born Neston
William	7		born Neston
John	6		born Neston
Martha	4 months		born Neston
Robert	39	brother, single, farm labourer	born Neston

By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved from Little Neston to the Rock Cottages on Bridson's Hill (where the road crosses the Neston Brook), Bridge Street:

# CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedules 54  
 (To be filled up by the Examiner after valuation.)

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.	BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.
<p>of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who</p> <p>(1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or</p> <p>(2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere.</p> <p>No one else must be included.</p> <p>(For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedules.)</p>							
	<p>State whether "Head," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."</p> <p>For Infants under one year State the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc.</p> <p>Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.</p> <p>Complete years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one year."</p> <p>Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)</p> <p>Children born alive write "None" in Column 7.</p> <p>Children who have died.</p> <p>Children who have been living.</p> <p>Children who have died.</p>	<p>State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—</p> <p>Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)</p> <p>Children who have died.</p> <p>Children who have been living.</p> <p>Children who have died.</p>	<p>The reply should show the precise branch of Profession, Trade, Manufacture, &amp;c.</p> <p>If engaged in any Trade or Manufacture, the particular kind of work done, and the Article made or Material worked or dealt in should be clearly indicated.</p> <p>(See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedules.)</p>	<p>Industry or Service with which worker is connected.</p> <p>This question should generally be answered by stating the business carried on by the employer. If this is clearly shown in Col. 10 the question need not be answered here.</p> <p>No entry needed for Domestic Service in private employment, or employed by a public body (Government, Municipal, &amp;c.)</p> <p>(See Instructions 9 and Examples on back of Schedule.)</p>	<p>Whether Employee, Worker, or Working on Own Account.</p> <p>Write opposite the name of each person engaged in any Trade or Manufacture (1) "Employee," (2) "Employer," (3) "Self-employed," (4) "Partner," (5) "Owner," (6) "Manager," (7) "Director," (8) "Proprietor," (9) "Partner," (10) "Owner," (11) "Manager," (12) "Director," (13) "Proprietor," (14) "Partner," (15) "Owner," (16) "Manager," (17) "Director," (18) "Proprietor," (19) "Partner," (20) "Owner," (21) "Manager," (22) "Director," (23) "Proprietor," (24) "Partner," (25) "Owner," (26) "Manager," (27) "Director," (28) "Proprietor," (29) "Partner," (30) "Owner," (31) "Manager," (32) "Director," (33) "Proprietor," (34) "Partner," (35) "Owner," (36) "Manager," (37) "Director," (38) "Proprietor," (39) "Partner," (40) "Owner," (41) "Manager," (42) "Director," (43) "Proprietor," (44) "Partner," (45) "Owner," (46) "Manager," (47) "Director," (48) "Proprietor," (49) "Partner," (50) "Owner," (51) "Manager," (52) "Director," (53) "Proprietor," (54) "Partner," (55) "Owner," (56) "Manager," (57) "Director," (58) "Proprietor," (59) "Partner," (60) "Owner," (61) "Manager," (62) "Director," (63) "Proprietor," (64) "Partner," (65) "Owner," (66) "Manager," (67) "Director," (68) "Proprietor," (69) "Partner," (70) "Owner," (71) "Manager," (72) "Director," (73) "Proprietor," (74) "Partner," (75) "Owner," (76) "Manager," (77) "Director," (78) "Proprietor," (79) "Partner," (80) "Owner," (81) "Manager," (82) "Director," (83) "Proprietor," (84) "Partner," (85) "Owner," (86) "Manager," (87) "Director," (88) "Proprietor," (89) "Partner," (90) "Owner," (91) "Manager," (92) "Director," (93) "Proprietor," (94) "Partner," (95) "Owner," (96) "Manager," (97) "Director," (98) 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(213) "Proprietor," (214) "Partner," (215) "Owner," (216) "Manager," (217) "Director," (218) "Proprietor," (219) "Partner," (220) "Owner," (221) "Manager," (222) "Director," (223) "Proprietor," (224) "Partner," (225) "Owner," (226) "Manager," (227) "Director," (228) "Proprietor," (229) "Partner," (230) "Owner," (231) "Manager," (232) "Director," (233) "Proprietor," (234) "Partner," (235) "Owner," (236) "Manager," (237) "Director," (238) "Proprietor," (239) "Partner," (240) "Owner," (241) "Manager," (242) "Director," (243) "Proprietor," (244) "Partner," (245) "Owner," (246) "Manager," (247) "Director," (248) "Proprietor," (249) "Partner," (250) "Owner," (251) "Manager," (252) "Director," (253) "Proprietor," (254) "Partner," (255) "Owner," (256) "Manager," (257) "Director," (258) "Proprietor," (259) "Partner," (260) "Owner," (261) "Manager," (262) "Director," (263) "Proprietor," (264) "Partner," (265) "Owner," (266) "Manager," (267) "Director," (268) "Proprietor," (269) "Partner," (270) 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(328) "Proprietor," (329) "Partner," (330) "Owner," (331) "Manager," (332) "Director," (333) "Proprietor," (334) "Partner," (335) "Owner," (336) "Manager," (337) "Director," (338) "Proprietor," (339) "Partner," (340) "Owner," (341) "Manager," (342) "Director," (343) "Proprietor," (344) "Partner," (345) "Owner," (346) "Manager," (347) "Director," (348) "Proprietor," (349) "Partner," (350) "Owner," (351) "Manager," (352) "Director," (353) "Proprietor," (354) "Partner," (355) "Owner," (356) "Manager," (357) "Director," (358) "Proprietor," (359) "Partner," (360) "Owner," (361) "Manager," (36</p>		

1911 census (condensed) - Rock Cottages, Bridge Street, Neston

John Lewis	48	huntsman 'Thomas' has been crossed through (crossed through & 'general labourer' overwritten)	born Neston
Mary Ann J.	46		born Neston
Thomas	24	labourer (contractor) <b>[Killed: 22 October 1917, aged 30]</b>	born Neston
Joseph	20	labourer (contractor)	born Neston
William	16	labourer (contractor) <b>[Killed: 7 October 1915, aged 21]</b>	born Neston
John	14		born Neston
Martha	10		born Neston
Bertha	7		born Neston
Percy	2		born Neston
Robert Lewis	35	lodger, single, labourer builder	

John and Mary had been married for 26 years and all eight of their children had survived. The only child not present in the household at the time of the 1911 census was Alfred; he would have been 21 but has not been traced in the census.

The known dates of birth and baptism of William's siblings were:

Thomas	- baptised 8 July 1887	
Albert	- born 3 April 1889	baptised 14 June 1889
Joseph	- born 16 October 1891	baptised 30 October 1891
John	- born 10 May 1897	baptised 18 June 1897
Martha	- baptised 14 December 1900	
Bertha	- born 19 July 1904	
Percy	- born 26 March 1909	



William Lewis enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion Cheshire Regiment in Birkenhead on 21 August 1914 (the same day as Robert Metcalfe [Medcalfe]) when he was aged 20 years 154 days. He gave his occupation as labourer and was described as being of fresh complexion with brown eyes, sandy hair and having a 36-inch expanded chest. His height was 5ft 6ins and he weighed 131lb

(9 stone 4lb / 59.5kg). The following day he went to Chester to join his battalion - this had been formed at Chester a week earlier as part of Kitchener's First New Army and which was under the orders of the 40<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 13<sup>th</sup> (Western) Division.

The battalion moved to Tidworth Garrison on the Wiltshire/Hampshire border but by October 1914 was at Chiseldon army camp in Wiltshire. In February 1915 the battalion moved to Pirbright, near Guildford (Surrey) and on 26 June 1915 they embarked, as part of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (MEF), under the command of the Hon. Heathcote Drummond Willoughby for Egypt and thence to Gallipoli.

Whilst at Pirbright William committed two breaches of conduct:

16 April 1915 - overstaying his pass from midnight until 7.30pm on 20 April (79½ hours) - 5 days confined to barracks and forfeited 4 days' pay.

15 May 1915 - absent from tattoo until 10.30am 16 May - 3 days confined to barracks and forfeited two days' pay.

The journey to Gallipoli, via Alexandria, took around three weeks and the troops were landed at Cape Helles, the rocky headland at the south-western tip of the Gallipoli peninsula where the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion occupied 'V' beach. Little appears to have happened for around four weeks until The Battle of Sari Bair (6 - 10 August 1915); the 40<sup>th</sup> Brigade had been broken up and the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion was now attached to the Light Horse Brigades of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) but the Cheshire's seemed to have little role other than digging and holding trenches. Sari Bair was part of the 'August Offensive', the final attempt by the British and Commonwealth troops to seize control of the Gallipoli peninsula from the Ottoman Empire.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion then became part of the 13<sup>th</sup> Division and moved around 5 miles to Suvla where amphibious landings were intended to support a breakout from the Anzac



Rock Cottages (on the right) on Bridson's Hill, Neston, looking towards Neston. Named after Robert Bridson & Son, the traction engine firm founded in the town in 1898, the road crosses the gully (sometimes termed Bridson's Ravine), formed by the Neston Brook. Beyond the man in the road the road to the right is Station Road. These buildings have all been demolished. Another photo of this site, from the other direction, is in the account [58: Thomas Lewis](#).

sector. Despite facing only light opposition, the landings at Suvla Bay were mismanaged and the same stalemate conditions that prevailed on the Anzac and Helles fronts were reached.

On 15 August, after a week of indecision and inactivity, the elderly and inexperienced British commander at Suvla, Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Stopford was dismissed; it was considered that his performance in command was one of the most incompetent feats of generalship of the First World War.

Fighting climaxed on 21 August with The Battle of Scimitar Hill, the largest battle of the Gallipoli campaign, but when this failed to gain its objectives activity around Suvla subsided into sporadic fighting until it was evacuated by the British in late December 1915. It was, presumably, during this sporadic trench warfare that William Lewis received his injuries from which he died on 7 October 1915.

The actions of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion up to, and immediately following, the death of William Lewis were summarised by Arthur Crookenden:

#### **SARI BAIR. 6th to 10th August, 1915.**

The 8th Battalion won this honour for us. The 8th Battalion left England on 26th June, 1915, under command of the Hon. Heathcote Drummond Willoughby. They landed on V. Beach at Helles and had a quiet month "breaking in." A month's rest at Lemnos was followed by the attack at Anzac, where the 13th Division was to assist the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The 40th Brigade, to which the 8th Battalion belonged, was broken up. During the battle of Sari Bair, the 8th Battalion was attached to Light Horse Brigades of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. They were employed in trench duties during these days, and lost a number of men; 9 officers and 66 men were wounded, and 2 officers and 77 men missing.

#### **SCIMITAR HILL.**

The 4th, 7th and 8th Battalions won this honour, but they did no more than hold trenches on the flank of the gallant but hopeless attack of the splendid 29th Division. Hundreds of men of the five Battalions of the 29th were lost in this unavailing attempt to win a minor success.

The 7th Battalion lost one officer and 26 killed and 14 officers and 249 wounded and missing.

#### **The Evacuation of Suvla.**

From Anzac, the 8th Battalion had come with the 13th Division to Suvla in August. A period of trench warfare came to an end in December, in the great storm, after which this part of the peninsula was evacuated.

The storm was very violent. During it, a relief was taking place. Next morning the plain was covered with dead, dying and half frozen men of the relieving Brigade. Dry nullahs became swift torrents, down which poured through our lines dead Turks and a considerable quantity of Turkish war material. Our casualties were very heavy and provided an opportunity of getting rid of a number of men under peace conditions.



On the map the approximate locations of the actions at Sari Bair (encircled in green) and Scimitar Hill (red asterisk) have been indicated.

Some graphic detail of William's injury was provided in a letter to his mother by William's commanding officer, Second Lieutenant Gordon Miln on 8 October 1915:

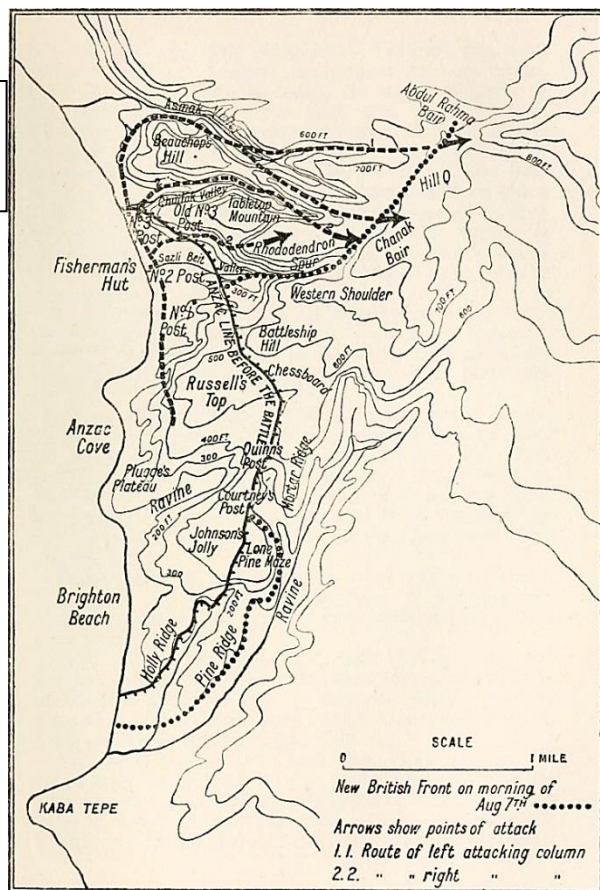
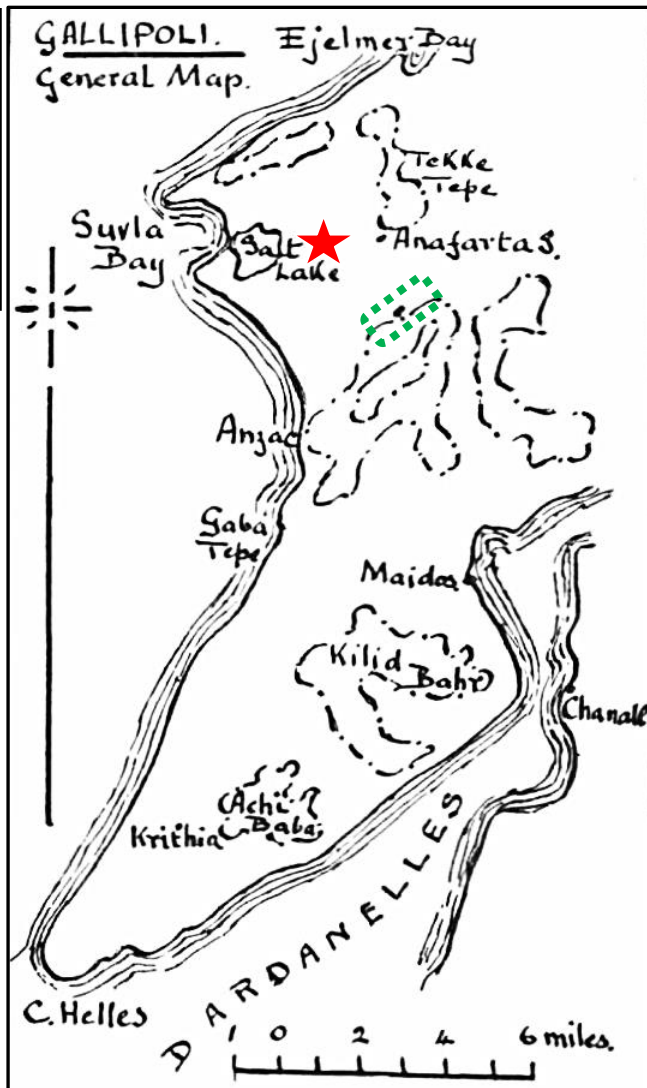
*I am sorry to inform you of the sad news of your son's death, which took place at 7pm yesterday. He was standing up in a dug-out, out of view of the enemy, but a chance bullet came along, entered the back of his head, and passed out through the right eye. We took him to the field hospital, after our own doctor had done what he could for him, but he passed away two hours later. I do not think that he suffered much pain, as he was given a small dose of morphia soon after he got hit.*

I cannot tell you adequately how much we sympathise with you and your family in your loss. In fact your loss is our loss too, and there was not a braver or more cheerful lad in the whole company. I never heard him grumble once at anything he had to do, or any hardships he had to undergo, since we left England, and in fact about five weeks ago he was singled out as the best soldier in his platoon. During the last five weeks he has been acting as my orderly, and a more obliging and willing lad I have never come across. I feel useless, as if he were my own flesh and blood.....

The action at Sari Bair, 6 - 10 August 1915 [Source:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Sari\\_Bair#/media/File:Battle\\_of\\_Sari\\_Bair,\\_first\\_phase.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Sari_Bair#/media/File:Battle_of_Sari_Bair,_first_phase.jpg)



Around 35 000 British troops died in the ill-prepared fighting at Gallipoli. [Source [http://www.anzac.com/battle\\_of\\_gallipoli.html](http://www.anzac.com/battle_of_gallipoli.html)]





The War Diary entry for the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cheshire Regiment indicates that there was little hostile action around the time that William Lewis was killed; both sides appear to be involved in consolidating their positions and no mention of William's death is made:

4 + 5<sup>th</sup> Development and cleaning of trenches proceeded with.  
 5<sup>th</sup> Brig Genl J. H. du B. Travers resumed command of Bde.  
 3 p.m. 6<sup>th</sup> Four officers joined 2 Lt. V. MacSwiney, M. B. Hewell, C. C. Aldridge & R. B. Turner.  
 10.30 p.m. " A draft of 189 N.C.O.s & men under Lt. W. B. H. Parker with 2 Lt. A. H. Townshend & 2 Lt. G. S. Sheard arrived. D. Coy. who had been occupying support trench B59. were earlier in day moved to new support trench 80 yds in rear, and draft were accommodated in trenches thus vacated. Headquarters had also moved to new HQ in continuation on right of new support trench.  
 " 2<sup>nd</sup> Gwyn Williams went out with reconnoitring patrol and reported enemy were digging & increasing their wire entanglement, he also deposited Turkish letter from prisoner of war in conspicuous place in front of enemy's trench, it was observed by him from our trenches at 6.30 a.m. but had disappeared on his return at 9.30 a.m.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Draft posted to Coys. and work continued.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Heavy storm of wind & rain commenced at 8 p.m. & continued through the night, clearing shortly after 3 a.m. on 9<sup>th</sup> inst.  
 8<sup>th</sup> Wiring in front of B58. by B. Coy. was done & covering party, under Lt. MacSwiney reported ~~was~~ TURKISH Patrol of 15 men came within 15 yds & turned off. No action was taken as wiring party were exposed. Patrol under 2 Lt. MILLIN & 2 Lt. TOWNSEND went out, and reported all clear up to 300 to our front.  
 9<sup>th</sup>

CHESHIRE.		Regiment or Corps when Decoration was earned.	
Category (b).		ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Decoration granted under Army Order 20 of 1919.	
No. 394.		B	
To be left blank.	On Date of Disembarkation.	NAME.	REMARKS.
Regtl. No.	Rank.	Date of Disembarkation.	(a) If non-effective:—Cause, etc. (b) If transferred:—Present Regtl. No., Rank and Unit. (c) If forfeited:—Cause.
11375.	Pte.	BURNS. John.	10-1-15(1) K.in A.23-4-15.
11375.	Pte.	HANLEY. Arthur.	26-6-15(2b) D.of W.15-6-17.
11376.	Pte.	COX. Harry.	26-6-15(2b) Demob: 17-5-19.
11377.	Pte.	LEWIS. William.	26-6-15(2b) D.of W.7-10-15.
11382.	Pte.	EDWARDS. Lawrence.	6-3-15 (1) Demob: 14-3-19.
11382.	Pte.	GRIFFITHS. Arthur.	26-6-15(2b) Demob: 9-5-19.

I certify that according to the Official Records the individuals named in this ROLL are entitled to the Decoration as detailed above.

Place SHREWSBURY Date 17 NOV 1919

Signature and rank of Officer certifying.  
 FOR O. L. RECORDS N. 2, SHREWSBURY.

WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920 – 1914-15 Star

On this record of November 1919 William Lewis was shown as having died of wounds.



218275 8/5/1917 Lewis William 8th Bn 7-10-15 Shrewsbury 3 14 = 3 14 = M.O. 3. 16. 12-2-16 7a: John 3 14 =

Cheshire Yeomanry 11/15  
Regt. D<sup>3</sup> of  
Ple Wounds  
11377

WAR GRATUITY.  
1919/20  
Transfer 47606/2 1919  
Regd. Paper 21/10/19  
Serial No. 3160

4 - -

25.9.19 4 No. 9. 4 - 138

A. H. W. 8/10/19  
27 MAY 1919

### Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929 (extract)

In May 1919 John Lewis, William's father, was granted £3 14s by the army, the residue of William's wages. John Lewis, however, had died in late 1917 and it appears that the money – together with a War Gratuity of £4 – was given to William's youngest brother. On this form William was recorded as having died of wounds.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men, or their relatives, who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919.

The total of £7 14s paid to William's family is approximately equivalent to *labour earnings* (wages) of £375 in 2016.



29

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
LEWIS William	Cheshire R.	PLC	11377
	-11-	4	2-

Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	5/2/101/5	1256	D/W. 7/10/15
BRITISH	6-	76	
15 STAB	8/2/1183	394	

Theatre of War first served in 2nd Bn Cheshire

Date of entry therein 24/6/15

K. 1380.

### British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

MILN, G. G. Mention. M.C.  
He organized a piquet line, and commanding outposts during a heavy attack by the enemy. He never spared himself in his duties, and by his brilliant powers of leadership and example of courage inspired the greatest confidence in all his men (Captain Miln was killed in action almost immediately after winning his M.C.)

### Footnote

George Gordon Miln, William's commanding officer, educated at King's School, Chester and Oxford University, was promoted to Captain and was killed in action on 22 April 1918 whilst serving with the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cheshire Regiment on the Somme shortly after being awarded the Military Cross. The son of G P Miln, a Chester JP, he was aged 27 when he died and was married to Doris Miln of Newgate Street, Chester.

# NESTON MAN KILLED.

A KEEN PATRIOT

BEST SOLDIER IN HIS PLATOON.

## OFFICER'S FINE TRIBUTE

Neston has given another brave life in a noble cause, another young lad, full of promise, having been killed at the Front. Sickness and anxiety have fallen rather heavily of late upon the family of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lewis, of Liverpool-road, and heartfelt sympathy has been extended to them by all classes in this greatest blow of all, the loss of their son, William, who was away at the Dardanelles. He was only 20 years of age, and was characterised by a particularly lovable disposition, being loyal and sincere to employer and friend, affectionate in his home, and with an intimate circle of associates. He was an active and ardent supporter of the local depot of the Salvation Army, attending their meetings and giving much instrumental help. Always animated by a determination above the care of

criticism of comrades, he was proud to proclaim the urgency of righteous living, and close contact with a great and invisible King, and this lively faith coloured all his manual work and routine. He was essentially a child of nature, loved the open-air and the fields, and revelled in the harvest and agricultural labour, and when he heard of an innocent country, trodden by a brutal foot, his indignation knew no bounds. He did not hesitate. The covetous finger beckoning towards England roused all his patriotism, and Neston knew him no more. We shall not meet him again in our streets, we shall not hear him pleading the great truths of Christianity, we shall miss, with others, the gentle courtesy of his life, but his memory will remain clean and fresh as ever, fragrant with the purity of an innocent child, and his influence will go on growing and spreading in intensity. This boy faced death, once described as "the most beautiful adventure in life," with calm heroism, and endured many hardships of a campaign with commendable patriotism, and the glory of his passing was felt in the parish church on Sunday, when the Rev. O. Brooke-Gwynne paid a tribute to local heroes, who will not return to the neighbourhood, i.e., Benjamin Griffiths, James Bell, Jas. Anderson, and William Lewis. The sermon and service were impressive, and as the organ pealed forth the National Anthem, and again the Dead March in "Saul," the congregation felt a keen realisation of the deeper meaning of war.

The mother of the boy for some time has been an acute sufferer from asthma, and is known as a particularly hard-working and respectable resident. For long years she has

struggled with the upbringing of a large family, and in giving her lad to the country is much comforted by the general regard in which he was held, at home and abroad, as evidenced in the following fine letter sent by his officer:—"Gallipoli, Friday, 8th Oct., 1915. Dear Mrs. Lewis.—I am sorry to inform you of the sad news of your son's death, which took place at 7 p.m. yesterday. He was standing up in a dug-out, out of view of the enemy, but a chance bullet came along, entered the back of his head, and passed out through the right eye. We took him to the field hospital, after our own doctor had done what he could for him, but he passed away two hours later. I do not think that he suffered much pain, as he was given a small dose of morphia soon after he got hit. I cannot tell you adequately how much we sympathise with you and your family in your loss. In fact your loss is our loss too, and there was not a braver and more cheerful lad in the whole company. I never heard him grumble once at anything he had to do, or any hardships he had to undergo, since we left England, and in fact about five weeks ago he was singled out as the best soldier in his platoon. During the last five weeks he has been acting as my orderly, and a more obliging and willing lad I have never come across. I feel useless, as if he were my own flesh and blood, and I just feel that we could sooner have spared anyone in the company rather than your son. I am afraid that a letter is a poor method of conveying sympathy, but I only wish that I could express to you and your family our deep sorrow and sympathy with you in the loss that you have sustained. I pray that God may comfort you all in your bereavement. It will be some consolation to think that he died a soldier's death, on behalf of his King and country, and to remember that he was well-nigh a perfect soldier, and loved by all who knew him. Again assuring you of our deepest sympathy.—Believe me, yours sincerely, Gordon Miln, Sec. Lieut."

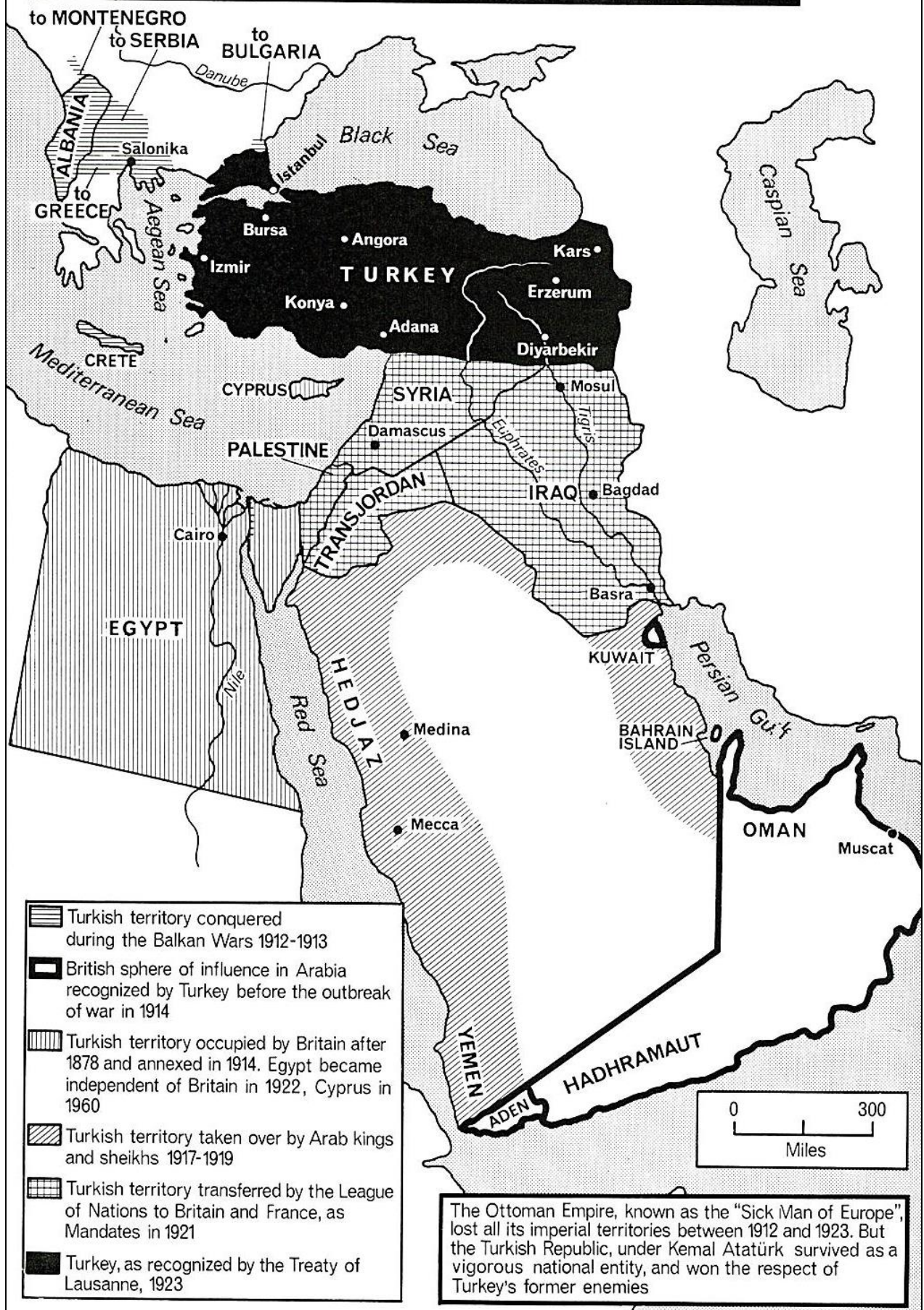


PTE. W. LEWIS, OF NESTON.  
KILLED AT THE FRONT.

Cheshire Observer - Saturday 6 November 1915



## THE COLLAPSE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1912-1923



The Routledge Atlas of the First World War Martin Gilbert (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)  
Routledge (London & New York) 2002



John Lewis, William's father, died in late 1917 aged 54 and Mary Ann Lewis, William's mother, may have died in late 1930 aged 66. In 1921 Mary Ann and her unmarried children were living at 6, Liverpool Road, Neston.

Of William's siblings:

Thomas was killed in Flanders on 22 October 1917.

Albert Lewis married Mabel Bailey (born 14 October 1891) at Neston Parish Church on 30 November 1912:

1912. Marriage solemnized at <u>Neston</u> in the <u>Parish Church</u> of <u>Neston</u> in the County of <u>Chester</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
26	<u>November</u> <u>30<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>Albert Lewis</u>	<u>23.</u>	<u>Bachelor</u>	<u>Labourer</u>	<u>Hanns Hall Cottages.</u> <u>Willaston</u>	<u>John Lewis.</u>	<u>Labourer.</u>
	<u>1912</u>	<u>Mabel Bailey</u>	<u>21.</u>	<u>Spinster</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>Hanns Hall Cottages.</u> <u>Willaston</u>	<u>Henry Bailey</u>	<u>Labourer.</u>

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by William Nicol or after Banns by me, Albert J. Paxton

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Albert Lewis in the Presence of us, Mary Emma Bailey

Albert, a labourer aged 23, and Mabel (21) were both living at Hanns Hall Cottages in Willaston when they married but at the time of the 1939 Register (29 September) they were recorded at 10 Mainwaring Road, Bebington (the road is actually in Bromborough) when Albert was a general labourer.

It is believed that Albert and Mabel had at least six children:

- Ivy - born 18 September 1913. In 1939, living with her parents, she was employed in a laundry. It is believed that she married Abraham Wood at a Civil Marriage at Blackpool Register Office in late 1941. Ivy died in Liverpool in early 1991.
- William D. - was born in early 1918 and he died soon after.
- William - (born 6 March 1919 was also at home in 1939 and recorded as a plumber in the shipbuilding industry.
- Vera - born in mid-1924 Vera married William Johnson at St Barnabas Church, Bromborough, in late-1945. She may have been at home with her parents at the time of the 1939 Register - a line of this record has been redacted.
- Roy - was born on 15 May 1930 and in 1939 was still at school. He may have married Mona Halsall at a Civil Marriage on Wirral in mid-1956.
- Eva - born in early 1933 Eva may have married William Douglas Bailey at St Barnabas Church, Bromborough, in early 1953.



Joseph Lewis (born 16 October 1891) married Lilian Lawley (born 5 June 1894) at Neston Parish Church on 21 December 1918. Joseph, recorded as an engineer, was 28 and Lilian (a daughter of Neston collier Joseph Lawley) was 25 and living on Badger Bait. Martha Lewis, William's sister, was a witness. In the 1939 Register William (a builder's labourer) and family was living at 24 Mayfield Gardens, off Liverpool Road, Neston. It is believed that Joseph and Lilian had at least seven children:

- Joseph - born mid-1919.
- Mary A. - born late 1920.
- Thomas G. - born 26 November 1921 and, living at home in 1939, was recorded as a farm labourer.
- William E. - born early 1923.
- Lilian May - born 5 June 1926, Lilian was at home with her parents in 1939. She married Henry Thelwell at Neston Parish Church in late-1945.
- Stanley - born early 1931, Stanley married Joan Phillips at Neston Parish Church in late-1951.
- Marian - born 23 November 1932 she was at home with her parents in 1939. Marian married James Edward Maddox at Neston Parish Church in mid-1953.

In the 1939 Register John Lewis (born 10 May 1897) was living at 9 Mayfield Gardens, Neston, with his family. John married Eveline Jones (born 6 March 1902) at a Civil Marriage on Wirral in mid-1924 and they had at least four children:

- Mary Doreen - born 25 November 1924 and living with her parents in 1939 (and recorded as being a general domestic servant), Mary married Roland Entwistle at Neston Parish Church on 18 September 1945.
- John B. - born 1 March 1929, John was with his parents in 1939.
- Norman David L. - born 2 February 1931 and at home with his parents in 1939.
- Thomas A. - born 28 February 1937 and at home with his parents in 1939.

John Lewis may have died on Wirral, aged 61 in early 1959.

Nothing is known of Martha although she may have married William Ryan at a Civil Marriage on Wirral in mid-1921.

Bertha (born 19 July 1904) was living with her family at 120 Phoenix Street, Sandycroft, Hawarden, at the time of the 1939 Register. Bertha married William Henry Darlington (born 13 February 1902) at a Civil Marriage on Wirral in early 1927. In 1939 a son, Henry Darlington (apprentice railway wagon repairer) was living with them; six lines of the Register entry have been redacted (as of March 2018) but it is believed that two of their other children, born in Hawarden, were:

- Bernard V. K. - born late 1936.
- Josephine G. - born 13 December 1938.

In 1939 William H Darlington was recorded as a boiler maker, riveter, and it is

believed that he died in Chester in late 1945 aged 52. It is not known where or when Bertha died.

Percy Lewis was born on 26 March 1909 and he married Jane Minshall Jones (born 25 January 1914) at the Central Hall Methodist Church, City Road, Chester in mid-1932. In the 1939 Register they were living at 'Hawkestone', Chester Road, Chester and Percy was recorded as a meat butcher, manager. One line of the 1939 entry has been redacted (as of March 2018) but it is believed that they had a daughter, Alice Doreen Lewis, who was born in late 1936.

The relationships within the Lewis family (simplified) showing the three family members, in red, who died in WW1

