

Cedric Guy Deakin

Born 12th May 1893- died 20th May 1916

Cedric Guy Deakin was born on 12th May 1893 at Blawith in Grange-over-Sands. His parents were George William Deakin who was born in Ashton on Mersey, Cheshire and Maude Mary Dickenson who was born in Urmston, Lancashire. They were married in Ulverston in July 1881 where George was a Student in Law living at the time with his cousin Joseph Deakin a barrister. Cedric was the youngest of 4 children, Dorothy Jean, Vida Maude and George Vivian all born in Grange. The previous generations of the Deakin family were wine and spirit merchants and had owned a brewery which became Manchester Brewery Co Ltd in 1888 and which was based in Ardwick, Manchester.

From 1880's the family lived at Blawith House Grange and were a wealthy family – in the 1891 census Cedric's father was living on his own means and had 6 servants, a cook, nurse, waitress, housemaid, under nurse, and kitchen maid. In 1893 Cedric's father had a new house built on the site of Blawith House by the architects Willink and Thicknesse who were also responsible for designing the Cunard Building in Liverpool. The oak panelling in many of the rooms was possibly by Gillows. This later became the Netherwood Hotel in about 1934 and there is a Deakin suite at the hotel. Cedric's father died in 1897 aged 42 years just 4 years after building the house when Cedric was 4 years old. His mother remained in Grange at Blawith with the family and she continued to live in Grange until at least 1924. On her death in 1946 she was living in Breinton, Herefordshire probably with her daughter Vida.

Cedric attended Cheltenham College from Sept 1907 to Dec 1911 and then went to the Royal College Sandhurst where he received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 14th Kings Hussars. In 1913 he joined his regiment at Mhow in India and then served in Mesopotamia(now Iraq). British and Indian Troops were sent there in Nov 1914 to protect British oil interest and under the leadership of General Townshend at first made good progress towards Baghdad against weak Turkish resistance. However at the end of Nov 1915 the tide turned and the Turkish troops defeated Townshend's attacking forces with

over half the British /Indian troops of 8,500 killed or wounded and the survivors retreated to Kut-al-Amara. Cedric joined the forces to help in the relief of Kut-al-Amara but the town was besieged by over 30,000 Turkish troops and relief attempts failed. The siege lasted for 147 days during which conditions were appalling. It was bitterly cold, little medical treatment and many soldiers didn't survive the winter. The garrison finally surrendered on 29th April 1916. Of 11,800 men who left Kut-al-Amara with their captors on 6th May over 4,000 died on their way to captivity or in the camps. Cedric is reported to have died in action on 20th May 1916 so possibly he died after being captured on his way to prisoner of war camp. He is remembered with honour on the Basra Memorial and on Grange War Memorial.



Basra War Memorial, Iraq

In 1997 the Basra War Memorial was moved out of Basra to a safer place on the orders of Saddam Hussein.

On July 3rd 1919 in London probate of Cedric Guy Deakin was granted to Rev George Vicars Gaskell clerk. Effects £76,670 6s 2d.- However in the Lancashire Daily Post of July 1919 Cedric's mother contested his will which left £30,000 to 2 sisters in India. A further probate was granted in 1920 to Cedric's mother so presumably she won the court case

None of Cedric's siblings stayed in Grange. Cedric's brother George Vivian Deakin moved down to Herefordshire and died in 1935. His sister Dorothy Joan Deakin married Charles Douglas Parry-Crooke in 1906. They had 1 daughter and Dorothy died in Suffolk in 1946. Vida Maude Deakin married Charles

Mytton Thornycroft in 1909. They had 5 children and Vida died in Herefordshire in 1980.

Cedric Guy Deakin

Obituary Westmorland Gazette

10th June 1916

THE WESTMORLAND GAZETTE. JUNE



Lieut. Deakin, Grange, killed in action.

Roll of Honour.

LIEUT. C. G. DEAKIN.

Lieut. C. G. Deakin, who, as reported in last week's Westmorland Gazette, was killed in action on the 20th May, was the second son of the late G. W. Deakin, of Blawith, Grange-over-Sands. He was educated at Cheltenham College, and passed into the Royal College, Sandhurst, in 1911. He received his commission in the 14th King's Hussars in 1913, and joined his regiment at Mhow in India. He took a keen interest in his work, and was regarded as a very capable and promising young officer. The regiment was moved from Meerut to join the force under General Aylmer which was despatched to the relief of Kut, and saw some hard service under very trying conditions. Lieut. Deakin was a general favourite, and his early death in the service of his country at the age of 23 is much regretted by a wide circle of friends.

The Legal Wrangles to Cedric Deakin's Will

DEAKIN Cedric Guy of Blawith Grange-over-Sands **Lancashire** lieutenant 14th King's Hussars died 20 or 21 May 1916 in Mesopotamia Administration **London** 3 July to the reverend George Vicars Gaskell clerk. Effects £76670 6s. 2d.

£30,000 IN DISPUTE.

Will of Soldier Killed in Mesopotamia.

BEQUESTS TO TWO SISTERS CHALLENGED.

In the Probate Division, to-day, Mr. Justice Shearman heard a case in which Mrs. Maud Mary Dickenson Deakin, of Blawith, Grange-over-Sands, and the Rev. Geo. Vickers-Gaskell, the Vicarage, Grange-over-Sands, claimed probate of the will of the former plaintiff's son, Lieut. Cedric Guy Deakin, King's Hussars, killed in Mesopotamia on May 21st, 1916. The will was dated November 13th, 1914. There was a subsequent will dated November 4th, 1915, and a codicil, dated January 1st, 1916.

Defendants were Eliza Garvie and Lily Skipwith, sisters, daughters of Colonel Garvie, whose acquaintance he made in India and who benefited respectively to the extent of £20,000 and £10,000. The third defendant was testator's brother George Deakin.

Testator had inserted a bequest in the second will to a lady whose name was not mentioned, but this was revoked in the codicil.

For the plaintiffs it was claimed that the codicil revived the 1914 will which, it was contended must take effect from the date of the 1916 codicil. The question was whether reference to a will existing and believed by the person executing the codicil to be in existence revived such will, and revoked the 1915 will. It was pointed out that in the event of the 1915 will being upheld the testator's provisions for his mother would be nullified.

Judgment reserved.

Lancashire Daily Post Thursday July 17th 1919

The Background to Cedric Deakin's Military Career in Mesopotamia

In October 1914 Turkey entered the War. The British government then opened a new military front in the Ottoman province of Mesopotamia (now Iraq).

The campaign in Mesopotamia was one of the most bloody and unsuccessful operations of World War 1.

The allied forces of Britain and India were sent to secure the oil installations at Abadan. After early success against the Turkish forces the British forces underestimated the determination and skill of the Turkish general Yusef Nur-ed-Din. At Ctesiphon in November 1915 the British army was heavily defeated with more than half of the 8500 troops being killed or wounded. The survivors faced a dangerous and sapping retreat to Kut-al-Amara.

Kut was besieged by an overwhelming Turkish force and held out for 147 days before surrendering. All attempts at relieving Kut were foiled.

The British and Indian survivors were brutally treated by the Turks on their way to the prison camp in Anatolia. Of the 11,800 men who left Kut, 4,250 died either on the march or in the camps that they were interned.

Under a new commander and fresh divisions the allies forced their way up the Tigris in 1917. When the War ended in 1918 the British had reached as far north as Mosul.

During the four years of fighting in Mesopotamia the allied forces had lost 31,00 officers and men either killed in action or from disease.

In 1916 Lord Kitchener made a speech in the House of Lords recognising the courage and determination of the troops in the Siege of Kut. The following notes are the those of Lord Kitchener spoken at the time.

H. of Lords : Kut

Original - with 17

4th. May 1916.

Autograph

Correcting

MY LORDS.

TOWNSHEND
PAPERS

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I am glad that the Noble and Gallant Lord has afforded me this opportunity of paying a tribute to General Townshend and his troops, whose dogged determination and splendid courage have earned for them so honourable a record.

It is well known how, after a series of brilliantly fought engagements, General Townshend decided to hold the strategically important position at Kut-el-Amara, and it will not be forgotten that his dispositions for the defences of that place ~~lines~~ were so excellent and so complete that the enemy, notwithstanding large numerical superiority, was wholly unable to penetrate his lines.

Noble Lords will not fail to realize how tense was the strain borne by those troops who for more than twenty weeks held to their posts under conditions of abnormal climatic difficulty, and on rations calculated for protraction to the furthest possible period until, ~~as is proved~~, imminent starvation itself compelled the capitulation of this gallant garrison, which consisted of 3,970 British and some 6,000 Indian troops with ~~followers~~ ^{including} followers.

General Townshend and his troops in their honourable captivity will have the satisfaction of knowing that, in the opinion

opinion of their comrades, which I think I may say this House and the country fully share, they did all that was humanly possible to resist to the last, and that their surrender reflects no discredit on themselves or on the record of the British and Indian armies.

KITCHENER
PAPERS

Every effort was of course made to relieve the beleaguered force, and I am not travelling beyond the actual facts in saying that to the adverse elements alone was due the denial of success; the constant rain and consequent floods not only impeding the advance but compelling - in lieu of ~~turning~~ movements - a direct attack on an almost impossibly narrow front. No praise would seem extravagant for the troops under ~~the~~ ~~leadership~~ of Sir Percy Lake and Sir George Gorringe, and that they did not reap the fruit of their courage and devotion is solely due to the circumstances which fought against them.

The last message sent by General Townshend from Kut was addressed in these terms:-

"We are pleased to know that we have done our duty, and recognise that our situation is one of the fortunes of war. We thank you and General Gorringe and all ranks of the Tigris force for the great efforts you have made to save us."

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I think the House, no less than the country at large, will endorse these words, and I am sure that those who held -- and those who strained every nerve to relieve -- Kut, have alike earned our admiration and our gratitude.

KITCHENER
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In Memory of
Second Lieutenant
Cedric Guy Deakin

14th (King's) Hussars who died on 20 May 1916 Age 22

Son of Maude D. Deakin, of Blawith, Grange-over-Sands, Lancs, and the late G. W. Deakin.

Remembered with Honour
Basra Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Author: Jan Tomlinson

Author