

Private Horace Lenton[©]
Regimental number: 201611
1st/4th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment

born: 1893–died: 7 May 1918

Private Horace Lenton was the son of George Henry and Annie Maria (nee Moore) Lenton—both born in about 1857.¹ They married in 1877 in Leicester, Leicestershire, at about the age of 20.² Later that year, Annie had the first of 13 children she would have over the next 22 years. Sadly, she lost four of her first seven children:

- Florence was born in 1877, but died very soon after birth;³
- Two years later Ernest William was born on 17 September 1879;⁴
- Florence Gertrude was born late in 1881, but she died at the age of 1, at the beginning of 1883;⁵
- Valentine Arthur was born in the early part of 1883, probably soon after Florence's death, but died a few months later;⁶
- Lillian was born in 1884;⁷
- Archibald Garfield was born on 13 September 1885⁸ and
- Gertrude was born in 1887 but died the following year.⁹

Her next six children survived into childhood, but she lost her son Horace at the age of 25 in the Great War:

- Phyllis was born in 1888;¹⁰
- Oscar was born in 1890;¹¹
- Grace was born on 24 February 1892;¹²
- Horace was born in 1893;¹³
- Emily was born in 1896¹⁴ and
- Constance (Connie), her last child, was born in 1899, when Annie was 42.¹⁵

In 1881, George and Annie were living on Willow Street in Leicester. George was a shoe riveter and, with only one child and her sister, Elizabeth Moore, living with her, Annie was still working as a shoe machinist.¹⁶ By 1891, there were five children living at home and Annie was no longer working outside the home. George was still a shoe riveter and the family was now living at 13 Halstead Street in Evington, on the outskirts of Leicester.¹⁷

In 1901, the family had moved to 40 Halstead Street, where members of the family would live for at least three decades. George was now a shoe finisher for a bootmaker.¹⁸ Ten years later he had perhaps opened a business of his own, as he was a boot maker and dealer. Two of his children, Ernest and Grace, were assisting him in the business and four children, including Horace, who was a shoe finisher, were working in shoe manufacturing.¹⁹

Horace enlisted in the Leicestershire Regiment on 8 October 1915 and the following April he embarked in Southampton for the Western Front.²⁰ Just over a year after he arrived in Rouen and joined his unit, he was injured. He had received gunshot wounds to his leg on 16 June 1917 and was admitted first to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) and then probably admitted to the General Hospital in Etaples. He returned to the field just over two months later. Then he had two weeks' leave in the UK in October of that year.

Less than a month after he returned to the field, he received an accidental injury and on 20 November 1917 was again admitted to No. 1 CCCS. He was discharged to duty on 12 December.

Five months later he was fatally wounded, although it is not clear how because, according to the battalion's war diary, the troops were stationed at Vaudricourt and the day was "devoted to rest, cleaning up and bathing."²¹ On 6 May 1918, Horace was admitted to No. 1 CCCS with gunshot wounds to his right arm, legs and face. His arm was amputated, but he died the following day. He was buried the same day in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 2, Row B, Grave No. 6) with the Canadian chaplain R. K. Lambert presiding.²²

Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance. Horace was one of 52 soldiers admitted on 6 May and one of 115 soldiers to die at the station that month.

Horace's mother was identified at No. 1 CCCS as his next of kin and was sent a letter from the chaplain to notify her of her son's death.²³ Sadly, the records had not been updated with the information that his mother had died on 21 January 1918 of pernicious anaemia.²⁴ These two losses in less than four months must have been difficult for the family.

Horace's father and a friend, Miss Nellie Pratt, were the beneficiaries of the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.²⁵ Nellie was probably a hosiery mender living about five miles away from Horace in 1911.²⁶ If so, she did not marry and was living with her parents on Matlock Street just a few blocks from the Lenton children on Halstead Street in 1939.²⁷

Horace was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²⁸ Horace is remembered on the war memorial at St. Steven's Church in Leicester.²⁹

Two of Horace's older brothers also served in the Great War. Ernest was a private (regimental number: 64100) in the 1st Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry.³⁰ This battalion remained in India throughout the Great War, although soldiers were drawn from the ranks to join the Western Front.³¹ Ernest possibly remained in India during the war, because he was there after the end of the war.³²

Horace's brother Archibald was a private (regimental number: 99127) in the Royal Army Medical Corps.³³ He enlisted on 7 December 1916—over a year after his younger brother. He remained in England until October 1917, when he joined the Western Front. He was there until after the Armistice. When he came home, he was probably admitted to Horton War Hospital in Epsom in Surrey with heart disease. He was discharged on 16 December 1919, as he was no longer physically fit for war service. He was, in fact, deemed to have a 30% degree of disablement because of his illness.

Like their brother, both Ernest and Archibald were awarded the British War and Victory Medals.

Nearly a year after the end of the war, Ernest and Archibald were still in the army—Ernest still with the Durham Light Infantry in India and Archibald in the military hospital in Epsom. Horace's brother Oscar had moved to South Africa and was living on Perkins Street in Port Elizabeth. His father was living at home with four of Horace's sisters (Lillian, Grace, Emily and Connie). His sister Phyllis had married Thomas B. Rawson in 1913³⁴ and was living at 30 Oak Street in Leicester.³⁵

Horace's father probably died in 1928.³⁶ In 1939, Ernest, Archibald and Grace were still living in the family home at 40 Halstead Road.³⁷ Their brother Oscar remained in South Africa—in 1927, he was a shoemaker living in Johannesburg³⁸ and he died there in 1941.³⁹ Phyllis and her husband were now living at 28 Waltham Avenue in Leicester—they had had a son, Horace T. B. Rawson, who was probably named after his uncle.⁴⁰ It is not certain what became of his three other sisters: Lillian, Emily and Connie.

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¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Registration district number: 407, Sub-registration district: North East Leicester, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 27, Piece: 19244

² "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 April 2019), entry for George Henry Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 309

³ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019) entry for Lenton, Florence, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 241; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Florence Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 148

⁴ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Ernest William, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 180

⁵ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Florence Gertrude, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 169; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Florence Gertrude Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 148

⁶ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Valentine Arthur, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 265; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Valentine Arthur Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 119

⁷ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Lillian, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 242

⁸ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Archibald Garfield, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 195

⁹ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Gertrude, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 204; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Gertrude Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 111

¹⁰ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Phyllis, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 185

¹¹ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>; accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Lenton, Oscar, Registration district: Leicester, Volume 07A, Page 217

¹² "1939 Register," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 23 April 2019), entry for Archibald G. Lenton, Ref: RG101/6009G/014/13 Letter code: REJA

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 April 2019), entry for George H. Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 93, Piece: Leicester, Folio: 72, Page: 11

¹⁷ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 April 2019), entry for George H. Lenton, Sub-registration district: Billesdon, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 14, Piece: 2495, Folio: 18

¹⁸ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Sub-registration district: North East Leicester, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 34, Piece: 2999, Folio: 38, Page: 20, Household schedule number: 124

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- ¹⁹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ²⁰ "British Army Service Records 1914–1920," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton. Unless otherwise specified, all information on Harace's military career comes from this source.
- ²¹ War diary quoted in "Leicestershire And Rutland, Soldiers Died 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ²² "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 12 April 2019), entry for Lenton, H.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ "British Army Service Records 1914–1920," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ²⁵ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ²⁶ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 April 2019), entry for Nellie Pratt, Registration district: Leicester, Registration district number: 407, Sub-registration district: North West Leicester, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 25, Piece: 19189
- ²⁷ "1939 Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Nellie Pratt, Schedule number: 241, Sub-schedule number: 3, Enumeration district: REIQ, Registration district: 407-2
- ²⁸ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ²⁹ "Leicestershire And Rutland, Soldiers Died 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ³⁰ "British Army Service Records 1914–1920," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ³¹ "Durham Light Infantry," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Durham_Light_Infantry: accessed 24 April 2019)
- ³² "British Army Service Records 1914–1920," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2019), entry for Horace Lenton
- ³³ "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 December 2019), entry for Archibald Garfield Lenton. Unless otherwise specified, all information on Archibald's military career comes from this source.
- ³⁴ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Phyllis Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 506
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- ³⁶ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 April 2019), entry for George H. Lenton, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 194
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- ³⁸ "South Africa, Voter Indexes, 1719–1996," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Oscar Lenton
- ³⁹ "Transvaal Province, South Africa, Estates Death Notice Index, 1855–1976," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Oscar Lenton, Reference number: 4111/41
- ⁴⁰ "1939 Register," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Phyllis Rawson, Ref: RG101/6030G/002/32 Letter code: REVS; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 April 2019), entry for Horace T. B. Rawson, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred county: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 443