

# Edward D. McCREA



Born: 7 February 1895

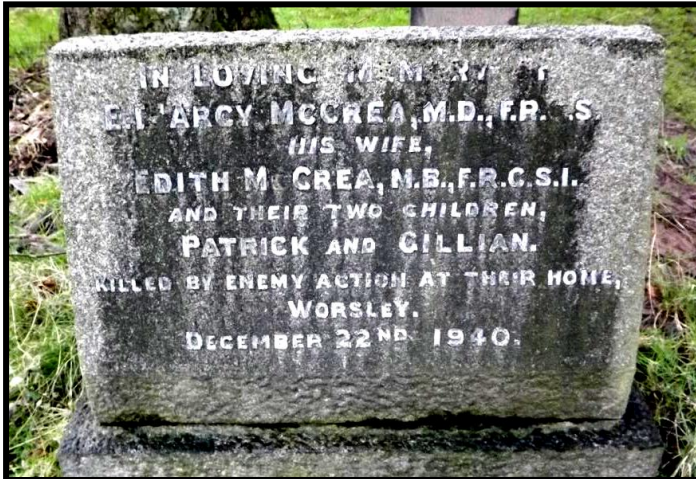
Died: 22 December 1940

*SURGEON  
TENNIS PLAYER*

ALSO: Edith Florence McCrea  
Patrick Philip Willock McCrea  
Marjorie Gillian Willock McCrea



## Edward D'Arcy McCrea



*In Loving Memory of  
E. D'Arcy McCrea, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.  
His wife  
Edith McCrea, M.B., F.R.C.S.I.  
And their two children  
Patrick and Gillian.  
Killed by enemy action at their home,  
Worsley.  
December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1940.*

The story behind the deaths of **Dr. Edward D'Arcy McCrea** and his family has an importance and a significance on a number of levels. Sadly, the whole family was killed as a result of a bomb falling on their house on the evening of 22 December 1940. His wife, **Edith Florence**, aged 44, their son, **Patrick Philip Willock**, aged 12, and their daughter, **Marjorie Gillian Willock**, were killed outright. The McCrea family lived at The Cottage, Barton Road - a large house with an orchard in its substantial grounds. There was a house party taking place at the time of the explosion. Nobody survived. Numerous other people, including their housemaid, were killed. The site of the house remained derelict for several years, and then in the mid-fifties the land was taken over by North West Water. That ground was later redeveloped in the nineties and a retirement home, Elmwood, was built. The grave of the family is in the churchyard of St. Mark's Church, Worsley. One message posted on the internet says: *'My father and grandfather were standing outside their house at 43 Barton Road looking at the searchlights when they were both blown off their feet and up towards the Bridgewater Hotel, they ran round the corner and found that the McCrea house had been totally destroyed and was in flames and belongings were hanging from the branches of the trees.'*

The bomb which destroyed the house is thought to have been a parachute bomb. Air raids over Manchester had begun in August 1940 but the heaviest raids were on the nights of the 22 and 23 December 1940. On these two nights, commonly referred to as the Christmas Blitz, it is reckoned that over 680 people were killed in the Manchester area. Because of its importance as an industrial area, Trafford Park was extensively bombed. The parachute bomb was probably dropped over Trafford Park, but drifted off course. The parachute bomb (or mine) was very effective at causing widespread damage by exploding at rooftop height to maximise its explosive capacity. It had the potential to destroy buildings within a 100 yard radius.

Edward McCrea was born on 7 February 1895 at Altona, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin, the eldest son of John Harris McCrea, a merchant, and Jeannette Seale, his wife. He was educated at Wycliff College, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated in 1917, proceeding to M.D. in 1920 and M.Ch. in 1922. In that year, he also gained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He eventually moved to England to practise medicine in 1922 and came to live in Manchester. He took up a post in the department of urology at Salford Royal Hospital and became a surgeon in 1935. Edward McCrea carried out some anatomical and physiological research and published some of his findings. He was a well-known surgeon, built up a successful practice in Victoria Park, Manchester, and also lectured on physiology at the University of Manchester

D'Arcy McCrea played all three events at the 1924 Paris Olympics, reaching the quarter-finals of the mixed with Hilda Wallis. McCrea never played at Wimbledon, but he won a number of local tournaments in the British Isles in the 1920s. Edward was also a leading tennis player of his

generation, and represented Ireland in the Davis Cup ties in **1923** and **1924** against France and played singles against Jean Borotra and René Lacoste.

His wife (Edith Florence Willock) was also a medical graduate of Dublin and became surgeon at the Manchester Babies Hospital. They had married on 25 September **1925** in Devon. Both children died as a result, though their daughter did not die immediately. She was buried 14 days later.

799 NP	Edward Di'arcy Abc. Crea No. 188	The Cottage Worsley	Dec 31 1940	45 yrs	H. Dillorgan (Rector of Stockport) 1 Revoked
799 NP	Edith Florence Abc. Crea No. 189	The Cottage Worsley	Dec - 31 1940	44 yrs	1 Revoked
799 NP	Patricia Phyllis Willock Abc. Crea No. 190	The Cottage Worsley	Dec 31 1940	12 yrs	1 Revoked

	Margaret Gillian Willock Abc. Crea No. 195	The Cottage Worsley	13 1 May 1941	9 yrs	1 Revoked	799 N.P.
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