

Sapper Gilbert Barber

Regimental number: 94493

1st Divisional Signal Company, Royal Engineers

born: 1878 - died: 9 September 1918

Sapper Gilbert Barber was born in 1878¹ in Wooburn, Buckinghamshire, the son of Richard and Emily Barber.² Richard and Emily (the former Emily Elizabeth Nayler) were married on 30 July 1870 in Wooburn.³ Richard was born in Bourne End Hedsor, Buckinghamshire, in about 1848,⁴ the son of David Barber.⁵ Emily was born in 1844 in Vauxhall Bridge Road, Middlesex,⁶ the daughter of James Nayler. They had seven children, six of who survived to 1911.⁷ Those who have been identified include: Arthur (born in 1870),⁸ Frank (born in 1873),⁹ Harry (born in 1875),¹⁰ Helena (born in 1876),¹¹ Gilbert, and Margaret (born in 1879).¹²

In 1871, Richard, Emily and their first son were living in Wooburn, where Richard was a millboard maker and Emily a former dressmaker.¹³ Richard's mother, Eliza, was also living with them. In 1881, the family, including Gilbert, was living at Bourne End, Wooburn where Richard was a rate collector and Emily was once again a dressmaker.¹⁴ Richard continued in his occupation as a rate and tax collector until at least 1911, when he was 63.¹⁵ In 1911, he was working for the Board of Guardians.

Gilbert had left home before 1901 when he was a boarder in the home of Edith Clements at 20 Bread Lane in Easthampstead, Berkshire.¹⁶ He was working as a post office clerk. Six years later, Gilbert married Mary Eleanor Maud Tranter near Reading, in Berkshire.¹⁷ Mary Eleanor Maud was born in Chertsey, Surrey in 1883,¹⁸ the daughter of Henry and Mary A. Tranter.¹⁹ Henry was a private tutor. In 1901, Maud (as she was known then) was working as a governess for the Bettridge family in Milton, Berkshire.²⁰ In 1911, now married, she and Gilbert were living on High Street, in Bracknell in Berkshire.²¹ He was still a post office clerk.

Gilbert enlisted in the Royal Engineers in Wokingham, Berkshire.²² At the time, he was living in Bracknell, Berkshire. He joined the British Expeditionary Force in France on 4 August 1915 and survived for over three years. However, on 9 September 1918, he was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to both legs and a compound fracture.²³ He died the same day and was buried the following day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row H, Grave 46) with the chaplain W. F. O'N. Fisher presiding. He was a member of the Church of England.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²⁴ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²⁵ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September.

His wife, who was then living at 30 Eastern Avenue in Reading, was notified of his death²⁶ and received the monies owing to him from the army after his death.²⁷

Gilbert was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914-15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).²⁸

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- ¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Inferred County: Buckinghamshire, Volume: 3a, Page: 528
- ² "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, ED, institution, or vessel: 12, Piece: 1465, Folio: 82, Page Number: 5
- ³ "England Marriages 1538-1973," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Richard Barber, County: Buckinghamshire
- ⁴ "1881 England Census," entry for Gilbert Barber
- ⁵ "England Marriages 1538-1973," entry for Richard Barber, County: Buckinghamshire
- ⁶ "1881 England Census," entry for Gilbert Barber
- ⁷ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Richard Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Registration District Number: 145, Sub-registration district: Marlow, ED, institution, or vessel: 3, Household schedule number: 309, Piece: 7894
- ⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Arthur William Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Inferred County: Buckinghamshire, Volume: 3a, Page: 452
- ⁹ "1881 England Census," entry for Gilbert Barber
- ¹⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Harry Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Inferred County: Buckinghamshire, Volume: 3a, Page: 503
- ¹¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Helene Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Inferred County: Buckinghamshire, Volume: 3a, Page: 524
- ¹² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Margaret Barber, Registration district: Wycombe, Inferred County: Buckinghamshire, Volume: 3a, Page: 536
- ¹³ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Richard Barbes, Registration district: Wycombe, Sub-registration district: High Wycombe, ED, institution, or vessel: 11, Household schedule number: 147, Piece: 1404, Folio: 121, Page Number: 30
- ¹⁴ "1881 England Census," entry for Gilbert Barber
- ¹⁵ "1911 England Census," entry for Richard Barber
- ¹⁶ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber, Registration district: Easthampstead, Sub-registration district: Bracknell, ED, institution, or vessel: 11, Piece: 1163, Folio: 74, Page Number: 26, Household schedule number: 36
- ¹⁷ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber, Registration district: Reading, Inferred County: Berkshire, Volume: 2c, Page: 746
- ¹⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 19 October 2015), entry for Mary Eleanor Tranter, Registration district: Chertsey, Inferred County: Surrey, Volume: 2a, Page: 41
- ¹⁹ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 19 October 2015), entry for Mary E. M. Tranter, Registration district: Abingdon, Sub-registration district: Sutton Courtenay ED, institution, or vessel: 4, Piece: 1134, Folio: 39, Page Number: 10, Household schedule number: 75
- ²⁰ "1901 census," "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 19 October 2015), entry for Maud Tranter, Registration district: Easthampstead, Sub-registration district: Bracknell, ED, institution, or vessel: 11, Piece: 1163, Folio: 74, Page Number: 26, Household schedule number: 36
- ²¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber, Registration district: Easthampstead, Registration District Number: 124, Sub-registration district: Bracknell, ED, institution, or vessel: 5, Household schedule number: 292, Piece: 6671
- ²² "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2015), entry for G. Barber

²³ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 646

²⁴ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)

²⁵ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber

²⁸ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 13 October 2015), entry for Gilbert Barber