

Private Albert Barton[©]

Regimental number: 201476

1st/4th (Hallamshire) Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment

born: about 1896 – died: 14 August 1917

Private Albert Barton was born in about 1896 in Sheffield, Yorkshire, the son of George Herbert and Clara Barton.¹ Both his parents were also born in Sheffield—his father, the son of George Barton, in about 1868 and his mother, the former Clara Morton, daughter of Joel Morton, two years later.² His parents were married on 21 August 1893 in the Cathedral Church of St Peter and St Paul in Sheffield.³ At the time, his father was living at 38 London Street in Sheffield and his mother at 3 Aberdeen Street, also in Sheffield. Alfred was born three years later and then his two sisters followed—Nellie in 1898⁴ and Beatrice in 1902.⁵

Albert's father was a table knife cutler. In 1901, the family was living at 3 Court, 2 House, Edmund Street, in Ecclesall Bierlow⁶ and, ten years later, they had moved to 10 Court 5 House, Moore Street in Sheffield. Albert was now working as an errand boy in the shop of a cabinet case maker.⁷

Albert enlisted as a private in the army in Sheffield and served in the 1st/4th (Hallamshire) Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment. In August 1917, the battalion was stationed at Zuydcoote, France, just 10 kilometres along the coast from Dunkirk.⁸ The battalion had taken over the coastal defences. Most days the battalion was engaged in training aimed at “getting the men fit as quickly as possible.”⁹ This included parades in the morning and late afternoon and “close order drill, Manual, Specialist training, Bayonet fighting, Recreational Training and Bathing.”¹⁰

The battalion's war diaries record casualties every day between 12 and 22 August, except 14 August. These casualties were “almost entirely due to the mustard gas which remained in the tunnels [*sic*] for a long period after shelling had ceased.”¹¹ Yet, it was on 14 August that Albert was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with gas poisoning and gunshot wounds to his right hip.¹² He died the same day and was buried in Adinkerke Military Cemetery (Grave Reference: A. 36).¹³ He was 21 years old.

Adinkerke Military Cemetery is 20 kilometres east of Dunkirk, in the community of De Panne, just across the border into Belgium. There are 168 Commonwealth soldiers from the Great War buried in the cemetery.¹⁴

His parents received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.¹⁵ Albert was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹⁶

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¹ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 May 2016), entry for Albert Barton, Registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Sub-registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, ED, institution, or vessel: 16, Piece: 4350, Folio: 38, Page number: 22, Household schedule number: 170

² “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 May 2016), entry for Albert Barton, Registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Sub-registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 16, Piece: 4350, Folio: 38, Page number: 22, Household schedule number: 170

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- ³ "Yorkshire Marriages," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 25 May 2016), entry for George Herbert Barton, County: Yorkshire (West Riding), Archive: Sheffield Archives & Local Studies, Archive reference: PR-138-3-128, Page: 16
- ⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 June 2016), entry for Nellie Barton, Registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Inferred county: Yorkshire West Riding, Volume: 9c, Page: 426
- ⁵ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 June 2016), entry for Beatrice Barton, Registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Inferred county: Yorkshire West Riding, Volume: 9c, Page: 511
- ⁶ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk), entry for Albert Barton
- ⁷ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 May 2016), entry for Albert Barton, Registration district: Ecclesall Bierlow, Registration district number: 509, Sub-registration district: Broomhall, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 27837
- ⁸ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk)
Regiment or Unit: York and Lancaster Regiment, Sub-unit: 1/4th (Hallamshire) (T.F.) Battalion, 1/5th (T.F.) Battalion, Division: 49th Division, Diary dates: 1915 Apr–1919 Feb, 1914 Aug–1919 May, Piece description: Piece 2805: 148 Infantry brigade (1914–1919), Piece number: 2805
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 – 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 and 2016), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 346
- ¹³ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 19 May 2016), entry for Barton, A., Service No: 201476
- ¹⁴ "Adinkerke Military Cemetery," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 30 April 2016)
- ¹⁵ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 May 2016), entry for Albert Barton
- ¹⁶ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 June 2016), entry for Albert Barton