

George Herbert Barratt

Remembered with Honour

Tyne Cot Memorial

In Memory of

Lieutenant

9th Bn., Manchester Regiment who died on 09 October 1917 Age 23

Son of Herbert and Annie Barratt, of 41, Larch Street, Southport, Lancs.

2/9th War Diary, October 1917.

6th October 1917.

The Battalion proceeds by bus to VLAMERTINGE, and there marches to a field near the position of the YPRE – ZONNEBEKE and the YPRES – MENIN Roads where they erected bivouacs. Heavy rain fell during the whole of the day.

8th October.

In the early morning Battle Stores were issued to the Battalion. The Battalion moved off from the bivouacs at 8.30am and marched single file up to the reverse slope of the FREZENBERG RIDGE, where they halted and remained until dusk. The area occupied by the Battalion was heavily shelled at intervals by 15in Howe and about 50 casualties were inflicted. The Battalion in single file, moved off at dusk, at the head of the Brigade Column, led by an officer belonging to the Australian R.E.

Rain fell heavily and the conditions were extremely trying during the whole of this march. The mud was almost impassable to troops carrying the full weight of Battle equipment, and many sank into the mud and had to be dug out again. The march to the Assembly Position consequently occupied a much longer time than was anticipated. The head of the column reached the assembly tape at about 2am but the whole Battalion had not arrived until 4am on the 9th.

9th October.

At 4.45am all Companies had reported Assembly complete, in order for the attack, see Appendix E.

Battalion Headquarters were established about 200 yards in rear of the Assembly Positions. At 5.20am the Barrage opened and at 5.24am the Battalion moved forward behind the Barrage to the first objective.

Of the 12 Pill Boxes scattered over the area of ground to be captured, the first one offered no serious resistance, the enemy evacuating them almost immediately.

Those in AUGUSTUS WOOD however were stubbornly held by Machine Guns and Snipers who inflicted severe casualties on our troops, and eventually the advance was checked on the line, shown on the attached map (Appendix F).



The line in most places conceded with, and in no place was more than 100 yards in rear of our objective. After several attempts to advance beyond it, it was eventually decided to consolidate and hold the line. This consolidation was carried out in depth.

As a result, owing to the number of casualties sustained in our first wave, the line was at first very thinly held. This was however remedied by pushing more troops forward as soon as it was practicable. During the whole of the time enemy Snipers, both in Pill Boxes and in camouflage gave our men great trouble, and made communication by runners between the newly captured line and Battalion Headquarters almost impossible. The casualties sustained by runners being particularly heavy. For the same reason it was also considered unwise to move Battalion Headquarters forward on account of the difficulty of communicating with Brigade.

During the period of our advance, the enemy, after sending up his S.O.S Rockets (which were sent up immediately our barrage opened) dropped a light barrage on our assembly line and also shelled our back areas and communicating tracks. Also barrage moved forward with our troops, with the attempt to follow them as they advanced. After this, apart from his counter-attack barrage which are mentioned later, his shelling of the captured positions was comparatively slight.

During the whole of the remainder of the time, during which the Battalion was in the line, the enemy removed his heaviest shelling for the area immediately in rear of our assembly positions, this area was subjected to repeat shell storms by 4.2 and 5.9 Hows. At frequent intervals, this was due to the considerable amount of movement which took place in this area, which was under direct observation by the enemy on the PASSCHENDAELE RIDGE.

At 5.30pm the enemy dropped several barrages, one behind the other, and soon afterwards counter-attacked our lines, but not in great strength. The platoon right of our line which had hitherto been sent forward towards HEINE HOUSE in an attempt to keep touch with the 197th Infantry Brigade now fell back to the AUGUSTUS WOOD line. At the same time, about 100 men, chiefly of Battalion Headquarters

were moved up to the left of our line, which was thus reinforced and succeeded in driving off the counter-attack without giving up any ground. Our line remained in this form until the Battalion was relieved.



10th October.

Early in the morning, having regard to the number of casualties sustained in the line, three Companies of the 2/10th Battalion, Manchester Regiment were sent forward into line support on our right and our Company on our left.

Up to 4.40pm the remainder of the day passed without incident apart from the shelling of the area immediately in rear as previously mentioned.

At 4.40pm the enemy counter-attacked us on our right, but made no attempt on our line.

At 6.30pm the 42nd Australian Battalion relieved our Battalion and took over our line.

The Battalion then assembled on the severe slope of the ridge and marched back to the surgical bivouac post West of YPRES, where hot tea was served to the troops.

They afterwards marched to Camp 39, about 1 mile South West of VLAMERTINGHE arriving there on the 11th inst.

In total, number of casualties during the Operations were 18 Officers and 322 Other Ranks. Included in these are 2nd Lieut. H.S.MOTTERSHELL and H.J.DOYLE who have both died of wounds received on the 9th inst. whilst carrying out their duties of Divisional Assistant Burial Officer and Liaison Officer respectively. See Appendix G.

Recorded in the 2/9th Battalion War Diary 27th October 1917.

Under authority delegated by His Majesty the King, the Field Marshall, Commanding-in-Chief, made the following awards to Officers, Warrant Officer, N.C.O. and men of this Battalion for gallantry on the 9th October.

The Distinguished Service Medal
Capt. (A/Lt-Col) J.L.HESELTON.

Military Cross.

2nd Lieut. P. DARLINGTON.
2nd Lieut. R.E. WATLING.

The Military Medal
Sgt. 353118 W.J.PARKER.
L/Cpl. 352619 H.A.FISHER.
Pte. 351425 L.BARKER.
Pte. 351013 J. RHODES.
Pte. 352994 H.P.JOHNSON.
Pte.352502 H.H.TWISS.
Pte. 352353 J.C.ECCLES.
Pte. 350877 H.EATON (Attd to No. 3 Sig. Corps).
Pte. 351120 G. GALLEY (Attd. to 198 L.T.M.R)

The Distinguished Conduct Medal.
C.S.M. (A/R.S.M.) 351191 J.W.PEAGRAM.
Sgt. 351023 F.DICKINSON.
Pte. 352520 A.BEECH.

The War Diary (Appendix G) mentions the following details:

The following is a list of Officers of this Battalion who took part in the Operations on the PASSCHENDAELE RIDGE on the 9th October 1917.

Headquarters:

Lieut-Col J.L. HESELTON
Capt. & Adj. W. BROWNE BAGSHAW
Capt. O. GLEESON (R.A.M.C).
Lieut. E.N. OPPENHEIMER
2nd Lieut. G.H.BARRATTKilled

A Company.

Capt.E. PILLING Sick.
2nd Lieut. R.E.WATLING..... Wounded.
2nd Lieut. T.M.CARLEY..... Wounded.
2nd Lieut. A.H.EDGHILL..... Killed.

B Company.

Capt. A.B.WIGHTMAN..... Wounded.
2nd Lieut. H.H.WILSON..... Wounded.
2nd Lieut. J.M.SMITH Wounded.
2nd Lieut. P.PARLINGTONNothing recorded.

C Company.

Capt. J.V.DONNELLYKilled.
2nd Lieut. L.G.WRIGLEY Killed.
2nd Lieut. G.N.B.REEVE Wounded.
2nd Lieut. P.E.CARLISLE Wounded.

D Company.

2nd Lieut. S RUDDICK Sick.
2nd Lieut. H.G.AINSWORTH Missing believed killed.
2nd Lieut. E. O. ROMAN Wounded.
2nd Lieut. N.JONES Sick.

Taken from the Ashton Pals website War Diary for the action where George Barratt was killed. <http://ashtonpals.webs.com/>

Also taken from the Ashton Pals website: <http://ashtonpals.webs.com/1917page4.htm>

Published in the Reporter 20th October 1917.

ASHTON OFFICER

Lieut. G.H. Barratt Killed in Recent Advance.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Barratt, of Moss Bank, Richmond Street, Ashton, on Tuesday received a telegram from the War Office conveying the sad tidings that their third son, Lieut. GEORGE. H. BARRATT, of the 2/9th Battalion Manchester Regiment (Ashton Territorials) was killed in action in France whilst bravely carrying out his military duties on October 10th. Lieut. BARRATT was 23 years of age. He offered his services on the outbreak of the war. Enlisting as a Private in the 2/8th Battalion Manchester Regiment (Ardwick) he obtained a commission in the 2/9th Manchesters, being gazetted in March 1915. He was appointed signalling officer to the Battalion, and later acted as Brigade Signalling officer in France. He was a specialist in other subjects and had gained a good many certificates, and had been complimented by the Divisional General. Lieut. BARRATT was a member of the Ashton Cricket Club. Prior to enlistment he was on the staff of the County Bank, Stamford Street. In his last letter home he was very cheery, and said they were all proud to be selected to take their part in the recent offensive and were eagerly looking forward to it. (**Lieut. G.H.Barratt is recorded on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the missing**).

Background:

In 1911 George was living with his parents Herbert and Annie Barratt and his three brothers at 33 Richmond Street, Ashton. His Dad was a railway clerk and so was his brother Harold, George was a bank clerk and his brother Allan was still at school aged 11 and there was baby Kenneth aged 1.

In 1901 they are at 370 Katherine Street, and in 1891 at 68 Blandford Street.

His affairs went through probate:

BARRATT George Herbert of Moss Bank Richmond-street Ashton-under-Lyne **Lancashire** a lieutenant 9th battalion Manchester regiment territorial force died 9 October 1917 in Belgium Administration **Lancaster** 18 April to Herbert Barratt railway audit clerk. Effects £165 17s.