

First World War Service Record of Bertram Leeds Thomas Barnett

The following is from the National Archives Ref: WO 339/19776

Name in full BARNETT, Bertram Leeds Thomas.

Personal No. 38355

Date of Birth 21-6-1875

Rank	Date of Appointment	London Gazette	Former Service, &
Inspector of Mechan. Tpt.			
Riding Master			
Quartermaster			
Second Lieutenant			
Lieutenant			
Captain	18-1-15	29-1-15	
Major			
Lt.-Colonel			
Adjutant			

NOT TO BE DESTROYED MEDAL ROLL

Station	Date of joining	Duties	Station	Date of joining	Duties
Wolwich	14-11-14	12th Div Train **			
Hythe.	18-1-15	12th Div Train.			

Died April 18/1915 Suicide whilst of unbalanced mind 38355/2

General remarks on military service:—

** Appointed Temporary Captain 14-11-1914, Gazette dated 17-11-1914, Appointment cancelled Gazette dated 3rd December 1914. Subsequently re-appointed 18-1-15, Gazette 29-1-15

The Senior Division should be used for a candidate who is neither a cadet or ex-cadet of the Officers Training Corps, nor a member of a University. Form M.T. 392 should be used for an Officers Training Corps (Senior Division) University candidate.

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO A TEMPORARY COMMISSION IN THE
REGULAR ARMY FOR THE PERIOD OF THE WAR.

The candidate will complete the following particulars and obtain certificates below as to character and educational qualification.

Name in full	Surname. <i>Barnett</i> Christian names. <i>Bertram Leeds Thomas</i>
Date of birth.	<i>21st June 1875</i>
Whether married.	<i>no</i> <i>Capt -</i>
Whether of pure European descent.	<i>Yes</i> <i>Gasotta 18/Jan/11</i>
Whether a British born or a naturalized British subject.	<i>British</i> <i>app^t = 12th Dec 1911</i>
Permanent address.	<i>Hyton, Ely, Cambs</i>
Present address for correspondence.	<i>Same</i>
Whether now serving, or previously served, in any other Government Department (Home, Indian, or Colonial). If so, give particulars.	<i>Formerly Private Cambridge University R.V. Maj. Surg^t 7th Div of Cav^y Mtd. Infantry Asst. Medical Officer of Health Hong Kong Inspector Public Health Dept. Ceylon Capt. 2nd Land. Div. T.S. Column (Supply) Civil Surgeon Pribilof Camp</i>
Whether able to ride.	<i>Yes.</i>

2501 2500 10/14 H.W.V.
2502 2503 10/14

I.B. I am an M.A. of Cambridge and am therefore a member of that university although not in residence.

38355

Confidential

59 Camp, A S H.

20th. April 1915.

From, O. C.
12th. Divisional Train.
To, Secretary,
War Office,
London, S.W.

HEAD OFFICES
12TH DIV. TRAIN
20 APR 1915
Reg No. 7/600/5

21 APR 15
OFFICE.

Sir,

In confirmation of my Telegram T/183 dated
18th. instant, I beg to report death of Captain
Bertram Leeds Thomas Barnett, 12th. Divisional Train,
A.S.C. at about 7 a.m. 18th. instant.

Inquest held 19th. instant - Verdict "Suicide
"whilst of unsound mind."

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. Williams

Lt. Colonel.

O.C. 12th. Divisional Train, A.S.C.

20/4/15

ARMY OFFICER'S SUICIDE AT ASH CAMP.

SAD END OF CONSCIENTIOUS
CAPTAIN.

WORRIED OVER WORK AND LEG
AILMENT.

A SPLENDID TRIBUTE BY HIS
COLONEL.

THE INQUEST AND VERDICT.

Quite a gloom was cast over the Army Service Corps camp at Ash Ranges when it became known on Sunday morning that Captain Bertram Leeds Thomas Barnett, one of the most popular officers in the Corps, had met with his death in circumstances of a particularly sad and distressing character. The deceased captain, who had been acting as officer in charge of supplies, appears to have worried a great deal over his work which, as all our military readers are aware, must inevitably have been of a most exacting and onerous nature. But though his military duties undoubtedly troubled him Captain Barnett was still more worried by varicose veins which for some time had caused him pain and rendered him a victim of insomnia. Some few years ago he was a captain in the Army Service Corps (T.F.), and towards the end of last year he re-joined his old Corps, but only a few days had elapsed before he was gazetted out of the Army in consequence of his varicose veins, in respect of which he underwent an operation. So successful, however, was the medical treatment he received that he was again accepted in the Army Service Corps. His leg ailment unfortunately was not altogether cured, and fearing, as an extremely conscientious officer, that he would be unable to serve his King and country he took his life in a moment of temporary insanity. The tragedy was a particularly sad one, and, as stated, caused the most profound regret amongst the officers and men of the Army Service Corps encamped at Ash, as indeed it did throughout the whole of the Aldershot Command. The late Captain Barnett was thirty-nine years of age and unmarried. Before enlisting he resided at Nyton, Cambridgeshire, and was Medical Officer of Health for the County of Ely. Previously he had acted as Medical Officer of Health at Hong Kong and had many friends in China. He had besides held the position of Port Health Officer at Suez, Egypt, and prior to taking up duty as Medical Officer at Ely, read for a solicitor for two years.

THE INQUEST.

The inquest was held at the Bridge House Hotel, Ash Vale, on Monday morning by the

to a surgeon three weeks ago to his varicose veins and since quite himself.

In answer to the Coroner, Williams said he last saw the mess. He asked him if his legs were troubling him that he was sorry to say they advised him to wear trousers breeches and gaiters.

"I believe he had a poorer self than other people had, Colonel, before stating that he the deceased captain down on

AN UNPREMEDITATED

Lieutenant C. Elliott, Royal Corps, described deceased, known since the beginning, very hard working and conscientious who was worried over his duty his leg. He came to witness a ago and told him what a suffer about his leg. Witness saw at about ten o'clock on Saturday deceased was always complaining a certain spot in his leg. complained of sleeplessness, but died depressed. He had been dead when witness saw him on Sunday about a quarter to eight.

Questioned by the Coroner deceased could not have been so when he took his life. His act had been quite unpremeditated.

The Coroner, in summing up, the evidence of deceased's brother-in-law Elliott the jury must at the time Captain Barnett was not of a sound mind. He would agree that it was a very case there was no suggestion any outside difficulties one some in suicide cases. There was with deceased's Army account finances were in quite a satisfactory state.

The jury found that deceased died while temporarily insane and deep sympathy towards his brother.

THE NEED FOR A MORTUARY.

Before the inquiry closed the referred to the need which existed for a mortuary.

The Foreman: I think the favour of one.

The Coroner: Yes, but it is the Parish Council who have the duty.

Mr. F. C. Hawkins: Could Council say there shall be one use appealing to the Parish at present.

"You should have a fresh

Medical Officer at Ely, read for a surgeon for two years.

THE INQUEST.

The inquest was held at the Bridge House Hotel, Ash Vale, on Monday morning by the Coroner for West Surrey (Mr. Gilbert H. White) and a jury, of which Mr. Richard Hunt was elected foreman. Superintendent Simmonds, Surrey Constabulary, as well as P.S. Sawyer and P.C. Heasman, was present.

In opening the inquiry the Coroner said he was afraid there would be no doubt as to the cause of Captain Barnett's death, and if it was the opinion of the jury that he took his own life they would have to consider the state of his mind when he did so. The case, added the Coroner, seemed to be an exceedingly sad one, and the deceased a particularly hard working and conscientious officer.

Evidence of identification was given by Mr. H. T. Barnett, of Hextable, Kent, who stated that he was his brother. The home address of deceased was Nyton, Cambridgeshire, he being the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Ely. He was 39 years of age and was a single man. Formerly a captain in the Army Service Corps (T.F.), he rejoined after the outbreak of the war. Witness saw him about three weeks ago, when he seemed fairly well and was very hopeful. He was worried about varicose veins, but his general health seemed to be very good.

The Coroner: He had been operated upon for varicose veins, I believe?

Witness: He was invalided out of the Army in consequence of varicose veins, but he thought it was his duty to re-join, so he underwent a serious operation.

The Coroner: You know of no financial worry or anything of that sort?

Witness: No; just the opposite. I believe he had no worry but sleeplessness. His varicose veins led to sleeplessness which prevented him from carrying out his duties.

A.S.C. DRIVERS' EVIDENCE.

Driver Frederick Curran, Army Service Corps, encamped at Ash Ranges, stated that at 6.30 on Sunday morning he saw the deceased outside his tent. When he came out he looked both sides of the tent. He was not dressed, but had pyjamas on. Witness, who was taking a horse to water, did not speak to him.

Driver O. G. Tidmarsh, Army Service Corps, said he was servant to the deceased officer, whom he last saw alive on Saturday night at about ten o'clock. He seemed to be quite all right then. Witness went to his tent at about 7.20 on Sunday morning and found him hanging from the pole. He felt his limbs, which were cold, and, believing him to be dead, summoned another captain, who acquainted the Commanding Officer of the division. The witness added that the deceased's feet were just off the ground, one being in the chair close by.

Mr. F. C. Hawkins: Couldn't Council say there shall be one? I use appealing to the Parish Council at present.

"You should have a fresh one another juryman.

Mr. D. Barritt: We have a and I thought they would have that.

The Coroner: The Village would probably object.

The Coroner, replying to a further question, said that after a body had to the house of a licensed victualler, I thought it was only fair that should be held there.

The jury agreed.

The funeral takes place this afternoon at the military cemetery at military honours, the arrangements being in the hands of Messrs. Finch and S.

F. C. Hawkins
Lt. Colonel.
Divisional Train.

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THE COLONEL'S HIGH OPINION.

Lieut.-Colonel FitzWilliams, commanding the 12th Divisional Train, Army Service Corps, New Army, deposed that deceased, whom he had known for 15 years or more, was a temporary captain. He joined the New Army on November 14th and left on the 23rd of November to undergo an operation. He rejoined on January 18th and had been under witness ever since in the capacity of Supply Officer to one of the Brigades.

"What opinion did you form of him?" asked the Coroner.

"My opinion," replied Colonel FitzWilliams, "was that he was a conscientious and hard working officer, who showed very much ability. He was very well liked by his brother officers."

The Colonel went on to say he understood the operation undergone by the deceased was not so successful as he anticipated and that the supply work worried him—more than one could see outwardly. Fearing a breakdown, and not wishing to resign and live at home at home, watching his comrades working for their country, Captain Barnett appeared to have taken the course he thought best for the good of the Service. The colonel added that deceased was over-conscientious and worried over his supply duties, which few outside the Army Service Corps could appreciate. He (witness) was told that Captain Barnett went

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In answer to the Coroner, Colonel Fitz-Williams said he last saw deceased alive in the mess. He asked him if it was true that his legs were troubling him, and he replied that he was sorry to say they were. Witness advised him to wear trousers instead of riding breeches and gaiters.

"I believe he had a poorer opinion of himself than other people had," remarked the Colonel, before stating that he assisted to cut the deceased captain down on Sunday morning.

AN UNPREMEDITATED ACTION.

Lieutenant C. Elliott, Royal Army Medical Corps, described deceased, whom he had known since the beginning of March, as a very hard working and conscientious officer, who was worried over his duties as well as his leg. He came to witness about four weeks ago and told him what a surgeon had said about his leg. Witness saw him in his tent at about ten o'clock on Saturday night. The deceased was always complaining of a pain in a certain spot in his leg. He also complained of sleeplessness, but did not seem very depressed. He had been dead about an hour when witness saw him on Sunday morning at about a quarter to eight.

Questioned by the Coroner witness said the deceased could not have been of a sound mind when he took his life. His action, he thought, had been quite unpremeditated.

The Coroner, in summing up, said that after the evidence of deceased's brother and Lieutenant Elliott the jury must be certain that at the time Captain Barnett took his life he was not of a sound mind. He was sure they would agree that it was a very sad case, because there was no suggestion that there were any outside difficulties one sometimes heard of in suicide cases. There was nothing amiss with deceased's Army accounts and his own finances were in quite a satisfactory state.

The jury found that deceased committed suicide while temporarily insane and expressed deep sympathy towards his brother.

THE NEED FOR A MORTUARY.

Before the inquiry closed the Coroner again referred to the need which exists in Ash for a mortuary.

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Mr. F. C. Hawkins: Couldn't the District Council say there shall be one? It is not much use appealing to the Parish Council we have at present.

"You should have a fresh one," observed another jurymen.

Mr. D. Barritt: We have a Village Hall and I thought they would have made use of that.

The Coroner: The Village Hall trustees would probably object.

The Coroner, replying to a further observation, said that after a body had been taken to the house of a licensed victualler he thought it was only fair that the inquest should be held there.

The jury agreed.

The funeral takes place this (Thursday) afternoon at the military cemetery, with full military honours, the arrangements being in the hands of Messrs. Finch and Sons.

Lt. Colonel.



From

The Officer Commanding,

2nd London Divisional Transport & Supply Column,

To

The General Officer Commanding,

2nd London Division, Territorial Force.

Grove House, Hollywood Road,
Fulham, S. W.
3rd February, 1909.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward and recommend the attached application of Mr. B.L.T. Barnett, for a commission in the 2nd London Divisional Transport and Supply Column, to be posted as Supply Captain to the 6th London Brigade Company, 2nd London Divisional Transport and Supply Column, with effect from the 1st February, 1909.

Army Form E.536 and copy of birth certificate attached herewith.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

B. A. Dalziel Colonel,

Commanding 2nd London Divl. T & S Column.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY A CANDIDATE FOR APPOINTMENT TO A
COMMISSION IN THE AUXILIARY FORCES.

It is of great importance, especially in the case of Militia and Imperial Yeomanry Candidates for the Regular Forces, that the names given in the Birth Certificate should be correctly given on this form, and it is to be clearly understood that, where they differ, the names and date of Birth given in the Birth or Baptismal Certificate will be accepted for Official record.

Regiment or Corps for which recommended

2nd London Div. 3rd S. Column

If more than one Battalion Regt., for which
Battalion recommended

Rank to which to be appointed

Captain

1. What is your full Surname?
2. What are your full Christian names? [See "N.B." above.]
3. What is the exact date of your birth? [See "N.B." above.]
4. What is your height?
5. Where were you born?
6. At what school or college were you educated?
7. What is your address for correspondence?
8. What is your profession or occupation?
9. Do you now hold a Commission, or are you now serving in any of His Majesty's Regular, Auxiliary, Indian or Colonial Forces? If so, state the nature of the commission, or the capacity in which you are serving.
10. Have you served in any of His Majesty's Regular, Auxiliary, Indian or Colonial Forces?
If so, state:
 - a. The Regiment or Corps in which you served.
 - b. If commissioned, the date of the resignation of your commission.
 - c. Your rank on retirement.
 - d. If not commissioned, the date of your discharge.
 - e. Under what circumstances you retired, or were discharged.
11. Have you been nominated for any other Regiment or Corps?

Barnett
Bertram Leeds Thomas
21st June 1875
5.10
Aldingbourne Sussex
Malvern & 3rd John's Coll Cambridge
114 Queen Victoria St. E. C
Law Student

No

Ans of Coast R.V. (Infantry)
Cambridge University R.V.
Civil Surgeon Ribright (Guards Corps)
(1902)

Colonel or
Acting Sergeant
about 1901
Retired at own request.

No

I certify the above answers to be correct.

Signature of Candidate in full

Bertram J. Barnett

Date

26th Jan 1909

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

I certify that Bertram J. Barnett is fit in health for the discharge of the duties of
an Officer of Militia, Imperial Yeomanry, or Volunteers.

Signature

F. C. Rose F.R.C.

Date

Jan 30. 1909

* Does not apply to a candidate who has served as a Commissioned Officer in the Regular Army or the Auxiliary Forces.

Certificate of Moral Character from the head of the School, College or other Educational Establishment at which the Candidate has been educated during the past two years. If this certificate does not cover a period of two years, or if the Candidate has not been at School during that period, a certificate signed by the Minister of the Parish or other local clergyman, or a Magistrate, must be furnished: or if the Candidate has served in the Regular Forces, a certificate from his Commanding Officer.†

I hereby certify to the good moral character of B. L. T. Barnett
for the last two years

Signature Edward Jenks

‡Description Principal and Director of Legal

Date 31 Jan. 1909.

To be filled in
when the first
certificate
does not cover
two years.

I hereby certify to the good moral character of

from _____ to _____

Signature _____

‡Description _____

Date _____

† Not applicable to candidates who retire from the Regular Forces expressly for the purpose of serving in the Militia or Imperial Yeomanry.
‡ Here state whether Tutor, Head of School or College, Minister of Parish or other local clergyman, or Magistrate, &c.

