

Private Stephen Barter©
Regimental number: 513840
14th Battalion, London Regiment (London Scottish)

born: 22 May 1898–died: 12 October 1918

Private Stephen Barter was the first child and only son of Samuel Barter and his wife Louise Ortnier. His father Samuel was born in about 1867 in Millbrook, Southampton, Hampshire, and his mother Louise in about 1869 in Wandsworth, Surrey.¹

Although he was born in Southampton, Stephen's father was brought up, from at least the age of 4, in Battersea, London.² In 1891, at the age of 24, he was a civil servant and living with his parents and siblings in Battersea.³ He and Louise married in 1895 in Wandsworth.⁴ Stephen, was born on 22 May 1898 in Chertsey, Surrey,⁵ and in 1901 the family was living in Horsell, in the district of Chertsey.⁶ When Stephen was young, his father was working (at least part of the time) for the army pay department of the War Office.⁷

Stephen's two sisters, Margaret and Betty, were both born in Wandsworth—Margaret in 1903⁸ and Betty in 1905.⁹ Sadly, Betty died when she was just 3 years old.¹⁰

Two years later, Stephen's father died. He was just 43 years old when he died on 31 January 1910 in St. Thomas' Hospital in Surrey. At the time the family was living at 46 Crockerton Road in Upper Tooting, a borough of Wandsworth in southwest London.¹¹

By 1911, Louise had moved with her son and daughter to St Olaves, Pierremont Avenue in Broadstairs, Kent¹²—just a few minutes' walk from the east coast and the English Channel. However, they returned to the London area shortly afterwards and his mother was living at 54 Cautley Avenue in Clapham Common in 1915, when Stephen was admitted to Strand School¹³—established in 1893 primarily as a school for training young men for the civil service. (He had previously attended the City of London School, where he was enrolled in August 1909,¹⁴ and Ramsgate County Secondary School.) Stephen was admitted on 10 February 1915.

The Strand School got its name from its first home in King's College in the Strand, London. In 1913, the school moved to Elm Park—between Tulse Hill and Brixton Hill in South London.¹⁵

Stephen's school record indicates that, when he left the Strand School on 19 May 1916, he went into the Honourable Artillery Company. If Stephen went to the HAC, it was a stepping-stone, because he enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force on 22 May 1916 in London and joined the 14th Battalion of the London Regiment.¹⁶ When he enlisted as a private, he was described as a student. At 5' 10½", Stephen was well over the average height for a British soldier.¹⁷

Stephen did not go to France until over a year later. It is not known where he was during this time. There is an indication that he may have been in Queen Mary's Military Hospital in Whalley, Lancashire, suffering from German measles. If this is the case, it was only the beginning. His service record is not clear, but Stephen's military service appears to be peppered with illness and injury.

He arrived in Le Havre, France, on 10 June 1917 and went to the base depot. He joined his unit over a month later. In late September, he had an inflammation of the connecting tissue in his chin and

was admitted to No. 39 General Hospital in Le Havre. He later had impetigo, but it is not clear whether the two are related.

He returned to his unit in late October 1917, only to be wounded at the end of November. He was admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station with gunshot wounds to his eye and right hip and later sent to the Convalescent General Hospital in Le Tréport. It is not clear when he returned to his unit but, in September 1917, he was appointed an acting lance corporal.

At the end of November 1917, he was injured and admitted to hospital again. Then, the following March he received gunshot wounds to his left leg. He was given a four-day furlough to England in March and went home to Cautley Avenue. That was likely the last time he saw his family. After he returned to France, he reverted to being a private and joined his unit on 2 October 1918. Two days later he was fatally wounded.

Stephen was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station¹⁸ on 12 October 1918 with gunshot wounds that perforated his larynx and penetrated his shoulders. He died that day and was buried the next day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 7, Row B, Grave 65) with the Canadian chaplain A. D. Reid presiding.¹⁹

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Étrun, near Arras, France. The first burials in the cemetery took place in March 1917.²⁰ No. 1 CCCS arrived at the beginning of September 1918 and was stationed near Duisans for two months. As a result of the serious and urgent nature of the cases admitted to No. 1 CCCS, the death rate was high in October—a total of 83 deaths occurred during the month.²¹

The chaplain sent a letter to his mother to notify her of her son's death.²² His personal possessions—"letters, photos, purse, badge, dagger in case, mouth organ, lock of hair, in tin fold, photo case, note book"—were sent to his mother in April 1919. Later she had the following inscription included on his gravestone:

DULCE ET DECORUM EST
PRO PATRIA MORI²³

Stephen was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²⁴

Stephen died leaving only his mother and one sibling. Sadly, both had died by 1939—his mother in 1937²⁵ and his sister in early 1939. This was apparently the end of that branch of the Barter family.

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¹ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter, Registration district: Chertsey, Sub-registration district: Chobham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 594, Folio: 22, Page: 13, Household schedule number: 79

² "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Samuel Barter, Registration district: Wandsworth, Sub-registration district: Battersea, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 28, Household schedule number: 136, Piece: 704, Folio: 104, Page: 32

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- ³ “1891 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Samuel Barter, Registration district: Wandsworth, Sub-registration district: West Battersea, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 66, Piece: 439, Folio: 77
- ⁴ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Samuel Barter, Registration district: Wandsworth, Inferred county: London, Volume: 1d, Page: 1212
- ⁵ “GRO online index (birth),” *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Barter, Stephen, Registration district: Chertsey, Volume 02A, Page 57
- ⁶ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter, Registration district: Chertsey, Sub-registration district: Chobham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 594, Folio: 22, Page: 13, Household schedule number: 79
- ⁷ “The City of London School Digital Archive,” *City of London School* (<https://www.clsarchive.org.uk/>: accessed 16 May 2021); “Strand School,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strand_School: accessed 16 May 2021)
- ⁸ “GRO online index (birth),” *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Barter, Margaret, Registration district: Wandsworth, Volume 01D, Page 774
- ⁹ “GRO online index (birth),” *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Barter, Betty, Registration district: Wandsworth, Volume 01D, Page 755
- ¹⁰ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 January 2021), entry for Betty Barter, Registration district: Wandsworth, Inferred county: London, Volume: 1d, Page: 340
- ¹¹ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 December 2021), entry for Samuel Barter
- ¹² “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter, Registration district number: 63, Sub-registration district: Broadstairs, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 03, Piece: 4505
- ¹³ “London, England, School Admissions and Discharges, 1912–1918,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter
- ¹⁴ The City of London School Digital Archive,” *City of London School*
- ¹⁵ “Strand School,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strand_School: accessed 16 May 2021)
- ¹⁶ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter. Unless otherwise noted, all information about Stephen’s military service comes from this file.
- ¹⁷ “Size really does matter,” *The Independent* (<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/size-really-does-matter-1538539.html>: accessed 18 May 2021), 22 October 2011
- ¹⁸ A very comprehensive description of the casualty clearing stations is presented in the blog “Casualty Clearing Stations During WW1,” *Chiddicks Family Tree* (<https://chiddicksfamilytree.com/2021/05/09/casualty-clearing-stations-during-ww1/>: accessed 13 May 2021)
- ¹⁹ “No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Barter, S.
- ²⁰ “Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun,” *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 7 October 2015)
- ²¹ “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/>: accessed 17 June 2015)
- ²² “No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*, entry for Barter, S.
- ²³ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter. [This line is from the Roman lyrical poet Horace's *Odes* and the line is roughly translated as “It is sweet and glorious to die for one's country.” (https://military.wikia.org/wiki/Dulce_et_decorum_est_pro_patria_mori)]

²⁴ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Stephen Barter

²⁵ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 May 2021), entry for Louise Barter, Registration district: Surrey South Western, Inferred county: Surrey, Volume: 2a, Page: 502