

## Sidney Barnard Thompson



Sidney Barnard Thompson was born in Staverton in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire in the March Quarter of 1880. He was the second of six surviving children born to Barnard George (1853-1913) and Susan Isabel Thompson (1853-1924), nee Blackwell, who had married in 1874 in Cambridge. Edith Louise was the eldest born in 1875, Ernest John in 1884, Ethel Marion in 1886, Winifred Muriel in 1888, Grace Evelyn in 1893 and Percy Barnard in 1891. Their father was a "certificated" schoolteacher and the family moved around the Cheltenham area with his job, living in the schoolhouses. By the time of the 1911 census, he was a head teacher in Leckhampton and just Winifred and Grace remained at home.

When he was nineteen Sidney enlisted as a Trooper in the 21<sup>st</sup> Lancers (Imperial Yeomanry) and saw active service with this cavalry regiment in Cape Colony, Transvaal and South Africa. When the Boer War ended in 1902 he joined the Reserves.

He moved to Battersea, living as a boarder, and was appointed as an Inspector for the RSPCA, giving evidence in police courts, including Brentford.

In 1911 he married Lily May Charman and moved to Twickenham and the 1914 Electoral Roll for Twickenham shows him living at 185 Amyand Park Road, Twickenham. But war was declared in 1914 and as a reservist he was called up immediately.

He joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Lancers Battalion and Household Cavalry And Cavalry Of The Line (Incl. Yeomanry And Imperial Camel Corps) Regiment, as a sergeant on 10<sup>th</sup> October and was sent with the British Expeditionary Force to France. Tragically, he was killed in action on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1914, just 18 days after he enlisted. He was buried in Le Touret Military Cemetery, Festubert, France and is honoured in the memorial there, as well as the Isleworth Memorial and at St John's Church in Isleworth. His widow, Lily May received his effects of £110.

The Middlesex Chronicle on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1915, reported the circumstances of his death as follows

"He took part with this corps in most of the brilliant charges in which the 9<sup>th</sup> figured in the opening stages of the campaign. The 9<sup>th</sup> Lancers were clearing a district of the Germans. Our cavalymen had to pass across the country to some gardens and farm buildings. As they moved closer to the German positions they found some barbed wire entanglements. Sergeant Thompson was leading his troop and had just cut the wire with a pair of clippers when a shell burst near him. A trooper who was next to him happened at that moment to stumble over the wire and fall down. He escaped but Sergeant Thompson was hit in the chest. The trooper picked him up but the sergeant was only able to say "Good-bye."

