

Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)

Name: Maurice Thompson Barker

Rank: Private

Service Number: 4577

Date of Death: 29th September 1915

Age: 18

Regiment/Service: British Red Cross Society
Attached to Friend's Ambulance Unit

Award:

Grave/Memorial Reference: II. D. 19.

Cemetery/Memorial: ABBEVILLE COMMUNAL CEMETERY, FRANCE
Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church. Panel A

UK Cemetery/Memorial: St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)
Hitchin Boys Grammar School Memorial.



Pre War:

Maurice was born on the 31st August 1897. He was the only son of Frank Barker who owned a tailor's business. His home was at 12, Sun Street, Hitchin. His mother, Lucy Barker, had already died by the time of his death. As a young child he attended Miss P. Sharpe's School in Bucklersbury for seven years. He attended the Hitchin Grammar School from 1908 to 1913 and on leaving went to Pitman's Metropolitan School. After schooldays, he joined the local Fire Service when men were in short supply due to the war.

As a Quaker, he felt unable to join the army, but instead devoted himself to the work of the British Red Cross with the Friend's Ambulance.

Wartime Service:

He went to France early in July 1915 and was attached to the British West Indies Regiment as Private Number 4577.

Whilst serving in France he was bitten by a mosquito. The wound became inflamed and had to be lanced but later he died of blood poisoning. This was almost certainly in No. 3 British Red Cross Society Hospital, known as the Friends Ambulance Hospital, which was operating in the area at that time. Permission could not be obtained to return his body to England and he was buried in a cemetery near where he had been stationed. This was Abbeville Communal Cemetery in France in Plot 2, Row D, Grave 19.

His gravestone shows him as a private soldier with the British Red Cross Society attached to the Friends Ambulance Unit and that he died on the 29th September 1915. A private inscription on the stone reads "*I am he that liveth and was dead and behold I am alive for evermore. Rev. 1:18*".

Additional Information:

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

www.hitchinatwar.org.uk

