

Thomas Ashby Barron was born in Borrowash, Derbyshire, on 3 September 1872.

He graduated in April 1893 from St. Bartholomew's Hospital in Physiology, and in 1895 was licensed by the Royal College of Physicians (LRCS), and became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS).

Around 1897 he became a physician in Spondon, Derbyshire, where at the 1901 census he was living at 42 Oxford Street, Spondon.

In 1908 he joined the 1st North Midland Field Ambulance, R.A.M.C. (T.F.), as a Lieutenant.

Thomas Ashby Barron was promoted to Major on 1 January 1914 and served on the Western Front with the 1st North Midland Field Ambulance from 26 February 1915; he commanded the unit from 9th June 1918 until the end of the First World War.

Whilst on leave, on 22nd June 1918, he was decorated with the Distinguished Service Order by King George V at Buckingham Palace.

During the First World War the 1st North Midland Field Ambulance supported the 46th (North Midland) Division during two particularly notable campaigns, on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1st July 1916, and during the Battle of St. Quentin Canal from 29th September 1918.

On both of these occasions the War Diary of the 1st North Midland Field Ambulance notes the work of Thomas Ashby Barron.

At 2am on 1/7/1916, Major Barron, with 3 medical officers and 60 stretcher bearers, took position at the top of the communication trenches to be able to attend to wounded in the front line trenches, after the battalions left the parapet in their attack at Gommecourt.

On 8/7/1916 Thomas Ashby Barron was recommended for immediate reward, to the Assistant Director of Medical Services, on account of his good work on 1st July 1916.

On the 29th/30th September 1918, Thomas Ashby Barron, commanding the 1st North Midland Field Ambulance, visited all the Advanced Dressing Stations established by his unit, including beyond the St. Quentin Canal, in Bellenglise, to ensure all were adequately resourced. The Canal and Riqueval Bridge had been captured by the 46th Division in an assault crossing on 29/9/1918.

When the Territorial Army was formed in 1920, he commanded the 137th (North Midland) Field Ambulance and was appointed ADMS of the 46th (North Midland) Division.

Following the First World War he was President of the 46th Division Memorial Committee and arranged a tour to the unveiling of the Memorial, at Bellenglise, on 4th October 1922. Colonel Barron was also a Secretary of the first 46th Division annual dinner, held in London on 29th September 1919.

Due to ill health he resigned his commission in July 1925, and died after a heart operation in Glasgow Royal Infirmary on 14 August 1926.

Mentioned in Despatches - London Gazette - 24 December 1917 and 25 May 1918.

Distinguished Service Order - London Gazette - 3 June 1918.

Territorial Decoration - London Gazette - 4 January 1924

Timothy McCracken

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