

Gerald Kendrick Barnett

Gerald Barnett was born in April 1921 in Cheadle, Cheshire, where his father worked in a cotton mill. In 1930, the family moved to Leyland in Lancashire and there Gerald won a scholarship to the grammar school.

After leaving school in 1936, Gerald Barnett went to work in the office of the School of Architecture in Liverpool and then became a student there in 1940. He joined the University Officer Training Corps and the Leyland Home Guard.

In June 1942, Gerald Barnett was posted to Bournemouth's Officer Cadet Training school and began six months training. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in November 1942 and was posted to the 14th Battalion DLI in Devon before moving to the East Surrey Regiment. He then sailed for North Africa, where in July he eventually joined the 16th Battalion DLI as a Platoon Commander with 'C' Company.

In early September 1943, 16 DLI took part in the landings on the Italian mainland at Salerno. During a German counter attack, Lieutenant Barnett was wounded in the face by a grenade and was evacuated to North Africa.

After his recovery, Gerald Barnett returned in December 1943 to his battalion in Italy but, only a few weeks later in January 1944, he was severely wounded by machine gun bullets in the neck and shoulder. After months spent in hospital in Naples, he was finally evacuated to England.

In December 1944, he was posted to the 9th Battalion Green Howards training in North Yorkshire. In December 1945, Captain Barnett sailed with his new battalion to Cyprus but was then posted to work in Palestine.

Finally, in December 1946, Gerald Barnett was demobilised and left the Army. Despite his injuries that made drawing difficult, he returned to the School of Architecture. On his retirement, Gerald Barnett was Deputy County Architect of Shropshire. He died in Shrewsbury in May 1993.

Gerald Barnett was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1991.