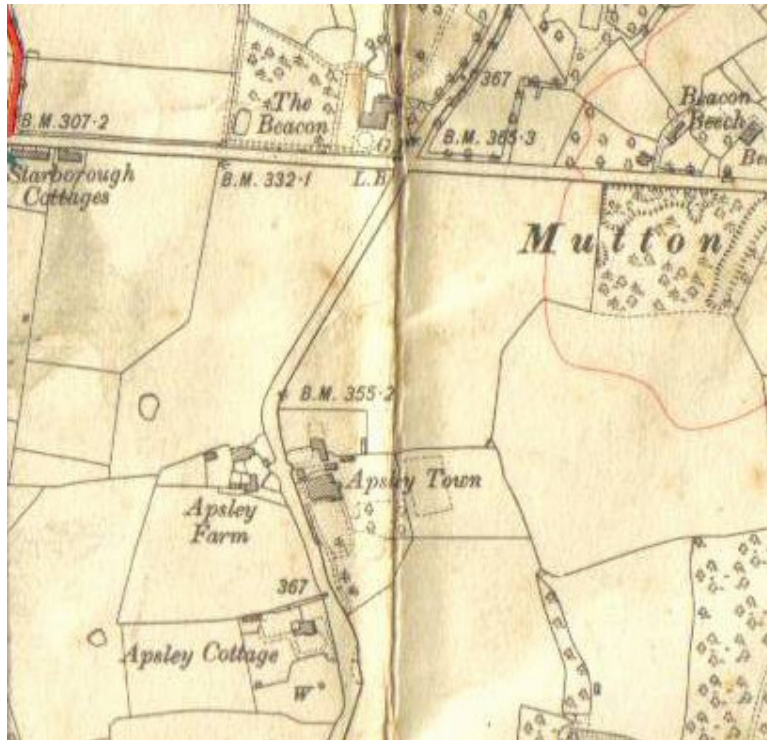


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THE BARR FAMILY OF APSLEY TOWN



O.S. Sheet XLIII N.W. Rev.1910

Lieutenant-General Henry James Barr 1815 - 1881

Henry Barr was born in Bombay on 8th April 1815, the son of Lt.-Col. David Barr of the Bombay Army. The Barrs were a military family; in successive generations most sons joined the forces of the East India Company, the Company that lay at the heart of British commercial, maritime and imperial activity for 250 years. After the Indian Mutiny in 1857, and subsequent demise of the East India Company, the sons of the family joined the British Army in India.

Henry received his military training at Addiscombe College, Croydon, from 1830 until 1832. Addiscombe Military Seminary was established in 1809, its purpose was to provide up to two years general and technical education for youths of between 14 and 18 who had been nominated for officer cadetships in the Company's forces. Attendance at Addiscombe was compulsory for artillery and engineer cadets, optional for cavalry and infantry cadets. Those "young men, whose talents and good conduct are to contribute not a little, to uphold the stability of one of the largest and most extraordinary empires that the world has ever witnessed". (*The Addiscombe Magazine*)

Officer Cadets were instructed in a wide range of subjects including Mathematics, Fortification, the Hindustani, Latin and French languages, and Civil, Military and Lithographic Drawing and Surveying. The regime was strict, with the threat of confinement in a 'Black-Hole', a small room beneath the chapel vestry, there to be fed on bread and water. It seems extraordinarily brutal to our 21st century eyes that 50 years or so after the emotional outburst following the Black Hole of Calcutta, a similar punishment should be meted out to cadets in training for service in India.

On 14th June 1832 2nd Lt. Henry Barr was commissioned in 2nd Bombay European Rifles and sailed to India to begin his military career.

In 1840, then a Lieutenant, he married Eliza Helen Alicia, daughter of Lt.-Col. James Keith, in Bombay.

Henry (alt.Harry) and Eliza had six children:

- David William Keith born Bombay 1846
- Anna born Bombay 1846 (married Samuel Tomkins)
- Eliza Louise Myers, born Bombay 1850 ("Lizzie" who later lived at Apsley Cottage)
- Emma Compton, born Bombay 1853 (married Arthur Cuthbert Jeddere Fisher)
- Harriet Alicia, born Bombay 1856 (lived with her sister at Apsley Cottage, 1913)
- Henry James Outram, born Brighton 1861, killed at the Battle of Maiwand 1880

Lieutenant-General Henry Barr retired in 1878, after 48 years service, and settled in 'Apsley House', Apsley Town, Dormans Land; he died there on 17th May 1881. Eliza died at Apsley Cottage on 24th Feb 1901, aged 81.

The London, Brighton and South Coast Railway line from Oxted to East Grinstead was under construction between 1881 and 1883. Eliza Louise Myers Barr, known as 'Lizzie' possibly to differentiate between her and her mother, worked with her sisters and the St Clair family to improve the welfare of the railway workers, providing entertainments, making clothes and providing medical services. Lizzie edited a newspaper *The Railway Magazine* from January 1882 until September 1883.

When Emma Compton Barr and Arthur Cuthbert Jeddere Fisher were married on 18th April 1882 they received a silver pencil case and several other presents from the workmen living and working on the new railway. They had three children: Helen, Gladys and Harry Cuthbert. Lieutenant Arthur Cuthbert died in 1886, aged 33, 6 months after the birth of his son.

Emma and Arthur's son, Harry Cuthbert, erected the lych-gate at St John's Church. In 1912 he also gave the Altar Table to St John's, which was carved by his aunt, Eliza [Lizzie] Barr of Apsley Cottage.

Lt.-Col. Sir David William Keith Barr, KCSI. 1846 – 1916

He was born 29th Nov 1846, the eldest son of Lt.-Gen. Henry James Barr. He was educated privately and at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was commissioned Ensign in 44th (East Essex) Regiment of foot in 1864.

He then served with the 33rd Reg. Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment in the Abyssinian Campaign of 1868. The regiment took a prominent role in the campaign, leading the final assault on Magdala on Easter Sunday, 13th April 1868.

In 1869 he entered the Indian Political Service as Political Assistant in Central India, and was promoted to Asst. Agent to the Governor-General for Central India in 1874. Further promotions took him to Jodhpur and Rewah.

It was in 1887 that he assumed a major role in the Indian political scene when he was appointed 'Resident' at Gwalior, i.e. the representative of the Governor. His duties included the education and training of the Maharajah, then a boy of 11. Six years later he went to Kashmir as Resident, afterwards returning to Central India as Agent to the Governor-General. In 1900 he was transferred to the "blue ribbon" of the Indian Political Service, Hyderabad.

His obituary in *The Times* read:

'...From the accession of the late Nizam in 1880 to Sir David's arrival, affairs in the State had presented a regular repetition of downward progressions followed by violent and ineffectual repair. It fell to Sir David to inaugurate an entire change of policy...by inducing the Nizam to govern in fact as well as in name...When he was called to the India Council in 1905 he carried with him the affectionate regard of a great number of ruling princes...He did valuable work editing the regular news-sheet in Urdu and other Indian languages, which was prepared to keep the Indian soldiers in France informed of the affairs in their native country and of the progress of the war. [The Great War, 1914-18]'

In recognition of his distinguished services he was created Knight Commander (Order of the Star of India) in 1902. He retired to his home at 92 Onslow Gardens, South Kensington in 1915.

Sir David Barr married in 1871 the daughter of Major-General J. Guillum Scott. They had a family of three sons and a daughter; their eldest son **Major Henry K Barr** of the Indian Army died in 1916 less than a month before his father's death.

Sir David Barr died at his home on 22nd Nov 1916.

2nd Lieutenant Henry James Outram Barr 1861 – 1880

Henry James Outram Barr was born on 7th January 1861, in Brighton, the youngest son of Lieutenant-General Henry James Barr, Bombay Staff Corps. He trained for the Indian Civil Service but then decided to join the army.



He then trained at Sandhurst where he was appointed Hon. Queen's India Cadet in February 1879. He was commissioned, 2nd Lieutenant 66th (Berkshire) Regiment of Foot on 14th January 1880. After two months leave with his family 2nd Lieutenant Henry J O Barr sailed to India on Thursday 11th March 1880, onboard the troopship 'Jumna'. The sea journey took four months, there followed an overland journey to the North West frontier of India, through The Bolan Pass to Kandahar to fight in the war with Afghanistan.

A few days later, on 27th July 1880, 2nd Lieutenant Henry James Outram Barr was killed in the Battle of Maiwand, near Kandahar, in the 2nd Afghan War, whilst carrying the Regimental Colour, aged 19.

His death was reported in *The Times* 10 Aug 1880: 'On the 27th July; killed in action at Kushk-i-Nakhud, Afghanistan, Lieutenant Harry James Outram Barr, 66th Regiment, aged 19, youngest son of General H J Barr, Apsleytown, East Grinstead'.

An account of the Battle of Maiwand is held by the National Army Museum. The following extract is from Lt. O'Donnell's account: '...At the beginning of the fight the colours were carried by Olivey and Honeywood, both of whom clung to them after they were wounded. Olivey, it is said, angrily refusing to give them up. Honeywood badly hurt in the legs and unable to stand, was holding his colour up high and calling on his men to rally round it, when the the death-shot struck him. Barr and Sgt.-Major Cuppage, who took them next, were killed almost at once...Heath the Brigade-Major had his head taken off with a round shot...of the 4 youngsters who joined us only the other day, only one came out of the battle.'

The font in the newly built Parish Church at Dormans Land was given in memory of Henry James Outram Barr by his brother, Captain David William Keith Barr, and his four sisters: Mrs Anna B M Tomkins, Miss Eliza Louise Myers Barr, Mrs Emma Compton Jeddere Fisher and Miss Harriet Alicia Barr.

Major Henry Keith Barr 1873 – 1916

Henry Keith Barr was born at Indore, India, on 20th August 1872. The eldest son of Lt.-Col Sir David William Keith Barr. He became a Gentleman cadet at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and assumed his 1st Command on 13th August 1892 with 38th King George's Own Central India Horse.

He fought in the Tirah Campaign, 1897-98 and received a medal and 2 clasps.

On the 3rd Aug 1916 Henry Keith Barr married Elsie Violet St Clare Matthews at Brompton Parish Church. Less than 12 weeks later Henry died from an illness contracted on active service with the Indian Army in France on 25th October 1916. His widow, Elsie died June 1920, aged 24.

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Sources:

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