

Banstead Remembers

Gunner George Daniels

of 44 Diceland Road

*15th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery
Died of wounds sustained in France, aged 20*



FRIDAY 12th AUGUST

at All Saints Church, Banstead

11:50am: a short service of remembrance will be held

Noon: a church bell will be tolled 100 times

The churchyard flag will be raised to half mast at 7:30am and lowered at 5:30pm

George was the first of two husbands that Alice Lee lost in the war. He is one of nearly 20 local men who died in the Battle of the Somme. Please come and remember the sacrifice that was made in World War One.

*We will remember **each** one*

Gunner George Daniels of 44 Diceland Road

George was born in Godstone in 1896. He was the eldest of three children born to Obed, a labourer, and Sarah Daniels. He was baptised at St Nicholas, Godstone, on 10th May of that year.

George was just 8 years old when he lost his father. Sarah remarried and the new family settled down in Caterham. In 1911, they were living in Coulsdon and George had started to work on a local farm.

George came to Woodmansterne before the war broke out and must have met the Lee family. William and Ellen Lee had at least nine children and George was a contemporary of the younger children: Kate, Walter and Alice. The Lee family were soon to move to 44 Diceland Road, Banstead.

Two of the older Lee brothers had served with the Royal Garrison Artillery and George chose to join the R.G.A. when war broke out. He attested at Croydon in August 1914, adding a year to his age so that he was old enough to serve overseas.

George sailed to France in July 1915 with 15th Siege Battery. Just a few weeks before he left, he and Alice Lee were married at Fareham, Hampshire.

The Royal Garrison Artillery were responsible for the Army's big guns and siege batteries had the biggest guns of all. They sat thousands of yards behind the line and bombarded strongpoints with huge shells. 15th Siege Battery were equipped with four 6-inch 30cwt howitzers and about 50 men were needed per gun to keep them supplied with ammunition, in good working order and firing around the clock.

They were split into 2 sections and spent autumn and winter 1915 in Picardy, the rolling chalk grassland through which the Somme ran, and further north, near Arras. They were withdrawn from action in the spring to re-equip with new guns. Back home in Diceland Road, Alice gave birth to a daughter, Ellen.

George's battery took part in the huge 7-day bombardment that heralded the start of the Battle of the Somme and were then constantly in action as the fighting continued.

On 23rd July, George's battery was shelled and he was hit by shrapnel. His left thighbone was fractured. He was evacuated and shipped home to England to be treated at the Salford Royal Hospital in Manchester. His wound became infected and, on 12th August, George died of blood poisoning. He was 20 years old.

George was buried at All Saints', Banstead, on 17th August. He is commemorated on the Banstead War Memorial, the Garton Memorial in All Saints' churchyard and on the wooden panels in the Lady Chapel at All Saints'.

Alice would later lose her second husband, Stanley Skelton, to the war.