

Banstead Remembers

A double commemoration for two local men who died during World War One. Hugh Forster's connection to Banstead has only recently been discovered so he will be commemorated on the 101st anniversary of his death.



Major Hugh Forster

Player at Banstead Cricket Club

*8th King's Own Scottish Borderers
Died of his wounds
Aged 32*

Hugh Forster attended school in Banstead and played for Banstead Cricket Club. He was mortally wounded leading his men at the Battle of Loos.



Private Herbert Page

of 12 Oatlands Road, Burgh Heath

*11th Royal Fusiliers
Died of his wounds
Aged 22*

Herbert Page was a veteran of the Gallipoli campaign. Twice wounded, he suffered another, fatal, wound in the fighting at Thiepval.

WEDNESDAY 28th SEPTEMBER

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

We will remember each one

Major Hugh Forster Player at Banstead Cricket Club

Hugh Murray Forster was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 8th September 1883. He was the second of four children born to Ralph and Elizabeth Forster.

The family lived at The Grange, Sutton. Young Hugh attended Banstead Hall preparatory school and then Charterhouse. He became managing director of Bessler, Waechter & Co, a manufacturing firm, and travelled extensively in the years leading up to the war.

Hugh was a keen sportsman and played for the First XIs of Banstead and Sutton Cricket Clubs, appeared for the invitational Surrey Club and Ground team, played rugby for Sutton & Epsom and golf at Banstead Downs Golf Club. He was also a Freemason (Mid-Surrey Lodge) and Honorary District Secretary of Sutton & Cheam District Scouts.

Hugh was returning from a business trip to South Africa when war broke out. He joined the King's Own Scottish Borderers as a 2nd lieutenant, serving with the 8th (Service) Battalion. Within months he had been promoted to major and given command of 'C' Company.

Their first major action was to support the Highland Light Infantry on the first day of the Battle of Loos, 25th September 1915. Leading two platoons of his men after the Highlanders in the direction of Hill 70, Hugh had only just left the shelter of the British trenches when he was wounded, one of nearly 400 casualties of the 8th KOSB. He was treated at the 6th (London) Field Ambulance, which had "*heaps of wounded coming in.*" Hugh was too seriously wounded to be evacuated and died three days later. He was 32 years old.

Hugh is being commemorated on the 101st anniversary of his death as his connection to Banstead has only recently been discovered.

Private Herbert Page 12 Oatlands Road, Burgh Heath

Herbert John Page was born in December 1893 and baptised at All Saints', Banstead, on 29th April 1894. He was the son of William and Fanny Page and was the seventh of their eight children.

Herbert's father and most of his older brothers worked on local farms but Herbert first found work as a jobbing gardener and then became a butcher at one of Burgh Heath's two butcher's shops.

Herbert enlisted in the Army at Epsom on 7th September 1914 and joined the 2nd Royal Fusiliers. They sailed for the Adriatic in March 1915 and took part in the Gallipoli landings of 25th April 1915. Wounded during the fighting, he was evacuated to hospital in Africa. He rejoined his battalion in time to sail with them to France in March 1916.

The 2nd Battalion were among the first to leave their trenches on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, when Herbert was wounded again. He returned to action in France with the 1st Battalion in late August before transferring to the 11th (Service) Battalion on 4th September.

On 26th September, 11th Battalion took part in the capture of the village of Thiepval. Herbert was wounded again, fatally this time, and died two days later. He was 22 years old.