

Banstead Remembers

*Trooper George Tichener
of Court House, Court Road*

*10th (Prince of Wales's Own Royal) Hussars
Served in Belgium and France
Killed in action, aged 35*



TUESDAY 11th APRIL

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

The Battle of Arras is often forgotten, overshadowed by the fighting that took place before it on the Somme and afterwards at Passchendaele. 8 men from Banstead and Burgh Heath were killed in the battle; 7 of them have no known resting place and are commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

*We will remember **each** one*

Trooper George Tichener of Court House, Court Road

George Tichener was born in March 1882 in Chaldon, Surrey, and baptised at the village church of St Peter & St Paul on 9th April that year. He was one of the eldest of James (a farm labourer) and Emily Tichener's twelve children.

George worked as a groom in Chaldon and then for the Norris family, of Longshaw, Chipstead, who moved to Banstead in 1910-11. They lived at Court House, on the corner of Court Road and Holly Lane, which is now St Anne's School. The age of the motorcar had dawned but the Norrises preferred to keep using their carriages and they employed a coachman and two grooms. George lived in the stables.

George, 32 years old but claiming to be 29, 5ft 8in tall, dark complexioned with dark brown hair and blue eyes, volunteered for service just a fortnight after war broke out, attesting with the 3rd (King's Own) Hussars on 20th August 1914 at Kingston.

The 3rd Hussars had already deployed to France before George joined and he was soon transferred to the 10th (Prince of Wales's Own Royal) Hussars. The 10th Royal Hussars went to France in October 1914 and fought on foot at Ypres, in Belgium, during the winter and the following spring. George joined them in late May 1915.

There were few opportunities to use cavalry in the trench warfare of the Western Front and few breakthroughs were made in battle for them to exploit. The 10th Hussars were unused reserves in the Battle of Loos (September 1915) and in the Battle of the Somme (July-November 1916). Sometimes they held trenches as infantry, often they were training miles from the battlefield and waiting for a call to arms that never came. Eventually the cavalymen were formed into pioneer battalions to work in the trenches and on the roads during the winter of 1916-17.

On 9th April 1917, the Battle of Arras began and the 10th Royal Hussars again waited in vain for a breakthrough to be made by the infantry. Two days later, their opportunity seemed to have come and they were sent to move past the village of Monchy-le-Preux, believed to be in British hands, and to seize the high ground beyond. They found Monchy under heavy bombardment and what few remnants of infantry that were still left in the village were sheltering from the barrage in cellars. Under murderous artillery and machine-gun fire and with a German counterattack apparently imminent, the cavalry could go no further so dismounted and dug in as best they could with the few tools they had and put the village in a state of defence.

George Tichener was killed in action that day, one of the 10th Royal Hussars' many casualties on 11th and 12th April 1917. He was 35 years old.