

Banstead Remembers

MONDAY 31st DECEMBER

Our **final** memorial service will be held at **11:50am** at All Saints Church

*Private Alfred Reed
of 5 Memory Cottages, Burgh Heath*

*Royal Army Medical Corps
Served in Africa
Died, aged 24*

*Private Herbert Chandler
of 26 Court Road*

*Royal Army Service Corps
Served in France
Died, aged 43*

*Private Thomas Stallwood
of Banstead Asylum*

*Royal Army Medical Corps
Served in Mesopotamia, Greece and India
Died, aged 41*

*Private Dick Caselton
of 30 Diceland Road*

*3rd Royal Fusiliers
Served in Belgium
Died, aged 27*

We will remember *each* one

After the Guns Fell Silent

After the signing of the Armistice on the Western Front, the Allied armies of liberation became armies of occupation, advancing to the banks of the Rhine to ensure Germany would not resume hostilities while the Allied governments were discussing what the terms of the peace should be amongst themselves. It would take months before most men returned home and hundreds of thousands of troops would still be serving overseas at the time of the signing of peace in June 1919.

In Tanzania, Spanish Flu struck in November 1918, not long after it had hit Banstead. More than 300 Allied soldiers (and many more civilians) lost their lives in Dar es Salaam in November and December, including Burgh Heath's **Alfred Reed**, a gardener who lived at 5 Memory Cottages. He had been serving in Africa with the Royal Army Medical Corps since 1915. Alfred died on New Year's Eve 1918, aged 24.

Veteran soldiers began to return home during the winter as the British Army was gradually reduced in strength, some of their places taken by young conscripts who had been in training when the guns fell silent. The first to return home were the Old Contemptibles of 1914 and the Kitchener volunteers of 1915. Men like Court Road's **Herbert Chandler**, a chauffeur, who had gone out to France in 1916 or later, faced a long wait to get back to their families. He was one of thousands of men working for the Royal Army Service Corps to recover and repair battle-damaged vehicles. On 23rd April 1919, with his family expecting him to return home imminently, Herbert died from self-inflicted injuries. He was 43. He left a widow and three children.

Peace was signed at Versailles on 28th June, the fifth anniversary of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and was celebrated on 23rd July, a month and a day later. In Banstead, the returned servicemen were honoured with a dinner at the village school and then that night, there was a parade of Japanese lanterns, bonfires were lit on the Downs and fireworks lit up the rain-darkened skies.

Celebration gave way to remembrance as the year wore on. Men physically and mentally scarred by the war, grieving widows and children who had lost their fathers or brothers were left to pick up the pieces of their peacetime lives supported by family, friends and the best efforts of the parish and ex-servicemen's organisations.

Thomas Stallwood, a male nurse at Banstead Asylum, returned from three years away in Mesopotamia (Iraq), Salonika (Thessaloniki, Greece) and India with the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1919 and returned to work. He had seen service in unhealthy climes and had developed a heart condition while serving his country. He had to retire on medical grounds after just a few months and died on 27th January 1921, aged 41, just a few months before eligibility for war graves came to an end.

Following months of hospital treatment, Diceland Road's **Dick Caselton**, a chauffeur who had been wounded while serving as a private in the Royal Fusiliers at Ypres, was discharged from the Army. He became a lorry driver, got married and started a family in Mitcham. He died from bronchitis on 16th March 1921, aged 27, the doctor giving his primary cause of death as having been gassed. He was the last man recorded in the parish memorial book as having died as a result of the war.