G/553052 PRIVATE
THOMAS D DANIELS
ROYAL FUSILIERS



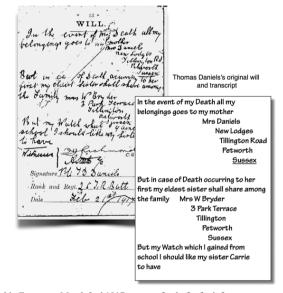Thomas Daniels, Tillington Church Choir 1912

**Thomas Daniel Daniels** was born on January 31st 1898 in Tillington to Daniel and Ann Daniels, the youngest of six children. He was christened in All Hallows' Church on February 13th 1898. At the time of the 1901 census the family was living at New Cottages, Petworth, but by 1911 they had retuned to Tillington Parish and were living at 521 Monument Lodge.

**At the age of four years** and eight months Thomas became a pupil at Tillington School with the admission number 813. He attended school for ten years and left two days after his 14th birthday on February 2nd 1912. It is likely that he either joined his father as a farm labourer or his elder brother, Jesse who was an assistant gardener.

**Thomas either enlisted** in the army after September 1st 1916 or he was conscripted after this date, since we know that he underwent basic training with the 25th Training Reserve Battalion. This Battalion was not designated the 25th until September. His Training Reserve number was TR/9/1226. Thomas made a Will dated February 21st 1917, suggesting that on this date he was coming to the end of his training and preparing to serve overseas.

Private Thomas Daniels



Baptism entry in All Hallows' Church Records



Thomas Daniels's original will and transcript

In the event of my Death all my belongings goes to my mother
Mrs Daniels
New Lodges
Tillington Road
Petworth
Sussex

But in case of Death occurring to her first my eldest sister shall share among the family   Mrs W Bryder
3 Park Terrace
Tillington
Petworth
Sussex
But my Watch which I gained from school I should like my sister Carrie to have



Medal Roll showing service number and battalions

**He was posted** to the 1st Battalion, Royal Fusiliers and as Private Thomas Daniels GS/53052 arrived in France on March 2nd 1917 as part of a draft of reinforcements. From the base depot on the French Coast he was posted to the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers, probably because of the two battalions already fighting on the Western Front the 2nd was in greater need of reinforcements.

**Private Daniels** and the men of the 2nd Battalion fought with distinction and he survived the first two major encounters with the enemy (Battles of Langemarck and Broodseinde), but was killed during the Battle of Poelcappelle on October 9th 1917. In this battle the main objective for the 29th Division was to move forward approximately 2,000 yards. The night before the attack rain poured down in torrents and all the potholes were brimful of water. At midnight the rain stopped and the attack began at 5.20 am. In reaching the first objective, 'Olga Farm', German machine guns quickly caused many casualties and the 2nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers moved up to provide reinforcements and together with surviving troops they began a second advance by rushes from shell-hole to shell-hole. Fire from two German fortified positions then stopped any further advance and the enemy began a counter attack. At 8.55 am, heavy shelling from British artillery smashed the German attack and the final objective was taken at 10.00 am. It was sometime during the second and final advances that Pte Daniels lost his life, probably cut down by German machine gun fire.

*'It was a desperate day's work. The two fusilier battalions had shown themselves supreme in attack and defence'.*





British War Medal

Victory Medal

**Private Thomas Daniel Daniels G/53052** died in this battle lasting one day, along with 51 officers and 1,109 other soldiers. He does not have a marked grave but is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, north east of Ypres. This Memorial to the Missing commemorates 34,887 names of men from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died from 16th August 1917 onwards and who have no known graves. It is located on the ridge reached by the Commonwealth Forces on October 4th 1917 during the Battle of Broodseinde, a battle in which Thomas took part.



*And many a thousand men to-night must die;
So many that they will not count the Dead.*

In a French Village - Maurice Baring