

George Henry Vanner born 11.01.1887 at 26 Nelson Street Ryde IOW. Died 02.09.1960 at 28 West Street Ryde.

George Married Beatrice Linda (nee Louis) at Worthing on 25th February 1915 they had four children my father being the second child.

He had to work hard for his father before going to school and on returning home. At the age of 12 he passed the school certificate which allowed him to leave school. He went to work for his father driving the horse carriages taking tippy day trippers up and down the esplanade past the Flat Iron Inn at the corner of the Strand and to the park as far as St John's church at Elmfield and back to the pier. Eventually he persuaded his father to let him train as a carpenter and his father purchased some tools for him. He did well and worked on pier construction he went to Worthing to work. When the Great War came he volunteered and was drafted into Camberwell Gun Brigade as a wheeler on an eighteen pound gun. During the war he was awarded the Maple Leaf (mentioned in dispatches) and the French Medal Militaire, this was awarded during the great push at the Somme he was ordered to go and repair a broken wheel of a gun carriage whilst under fire this he did and the gun was saved. He took part in other campaigns, Phassendale, Ypres and Mons and he often said he wonder why he had been lucky enough to have survived the carnage.

On return from the war he was unemployed for a long time and the family had to go through the Means test this meant that officials would come and inspect ones house and anything that could be sold for money had to be sold before any help was given. He eventually got work on pier construction at Bembridge, building the lifeboat slip. At the outbreak of the Second World War he was sent to Bulls yard at Cowes he had an old bike that he would use to get there, he always took a thermos and four cheese sandwiches.

He was also a football referee and my father would go with him to matches and loved going over to Portsmouth and Gosport as afterwards they would always go to Drivers for tea.

In 1937 the family moved to 28 West Street Ryde this was the families' final home after many moves.

He was badly gassed in the war and this caused him to suffer badly with severe chest troubles, a year before his death he was diagnosed with lung cancer.

My father states that his father was not a demonstrative man but he never once raised his hand in anger to any of his children, although he himself had suffered corporal punishment from his father but he never practised this himself.

Memories kindly submitted by Yvonne Spreadborough