

# DANIEL ARTHUR SIMON



10th August 1918

1889-1918 Aged 28

## Private 1069203, 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion.

Daniel was the only child of Daniel William Simon, a bank clerk from Hampstead, London, and Mary Hannah Mirfield from Bradford. He was born on 19th August 1889 at 48 Leamington Street, the family home near Lister Park for some twenty years. He was a pupil at Bradford Grammar School for two years from shortly after his thirteenth birthday, in forms Second and Fourth Modern Upper. In his second term his mother died and his father did not remarry. Daniel junior's second year at the Grammar School was not a success and he left in July 1905. He is encountered next in 1911 as a 'Farm Pupil' at Kirkhill Farm near Malton. In July 1912 he emigrated to Saskatchewan, Canada, where he became a farmer at Swift Current. Whether he possessed a small-holding or worked for an established farmer is not known.

Although the province of Saskatchewan responded to the outbreak of war with patriotic enthusiasm, Daniel did not volunteer until fighting had been raging for more than two years. On 6th December 1916, in the depths of the harsh Saskatchewan winter, he joined up declaring his age was 31 although in reality he was 27. His medical inspection records he was 5 feet 8 inches tall, his chest measured 40 inches when fully expanded and he weighed 180 pounds. He then spent the whole of 1917 in training with 249th Overseas Battalion before he landed at Liverpool early in March 1918. In May he was sent to France but it would be a further two months before he joined 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, 8th Brigade, 3rd Canadian Division, in the field near Arras. Despite their name, the regiments of the Canadian Mounted Rifles had been dismounted early in the war and fought as infantry.

For the first weeks Simon was with the battalion it was in G.H.Q. reserve and spent its time in training and sports before it began the move south in late



July. The 100,000 men of the Canadian Corps concentrated south-east Amiens in complete secrecy with the aid of an elaborate deception scheme to avoid alerting the Germans to its presence. Its task was to attack alongside the Australian Corps in the Battle of Amiens on 8th August, supported by British, Indian, American and French troops. The intention was disengage Amiens, a major rail junction, from the threat of German guns. The attack commenced at 4.20 a.m., preceded by a creeping barrage fired by 2000 guns and spear-headed by 420 tanks. The advance was cloaked by a dense mist which shielded the attackers from German machine-gun posts for the first hour and a half, although it also confused the attackers. The attack at Amiens has been described as 'one of the most remarkable days of the war' and for General Ludendorff the collapse of the German defenders made it 'the Black Day of the German Army.'

Simon's battalion was in action for three days. On 8th August, it captured the village of Hangard and casualties were surprisingly light; on the 9th it participated in the capture of Le Quesnel village; then on the morning of 10th August it formed up to attack Bouchoir village, jumping off at 7.45 a.m. Despite resistance from artillery and machine-gun fire the enemy was pushed back between two and three kilometres. The price of this operation was twenty-five men killed, three officers and 107 Other Ranks wounded. Daniel Simon was killed instantly by a shell as he advanced through the village. Initially he was buried north-east of the village. In 1920 his body was moved to Bouchoir New British Cemetery.



## Acknowledgements:

There is no photo of Simon's in the School memorial book. His father moved to St. Leonard's on Sea near the end of the war. The family was researched using Ancestry.com. I have assumed that the Daniel Arthur Simon recorded at Kirkhill Farm in 1911 is identical with the subject of this biography. The place of birth is given as Hampstead, Yorkshire. There is no such place in Yorkshire, but his father was born in Hampstead, Middlesex. The age is right for my subject and Daniel did indeed become a farmer. His years at B.G.S. are recorded in the Annual Reports for 1904 and 1905. His arrival at Halifax, Nova Scotia from Liverpool is recorded on 8th July in 'Canadian Passenger Lists' (Ancestry). The remainder of the biography is based on the Canadian Service Record (<<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=229866>>), and the Casualty Record (<<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/308730>>). The photo of the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion badge is from <[https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=canadian+mounted+rifles+ww1&rlz=1C1GIGM\\_enGB602GB602&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=1hXIT6jPpeUScM%253A%252CWYM67f179lpTM%252C\\_&usg=AFrqEzdU4Uqf7vFZZHz40dgt9a-7OQaFzg&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwicv727otncAhWkD8AKHcNDAmUQ9QEwCXoECAEQDg#imgrc=dHJF5TLjmUabMM](https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=canadian+mounted+rifles+ww1&rlz=1C1GIGM_enGB602GB602&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=1hXIT6jPpeUScM%253A%252CWYM67f179lpTM%252C_&usg=AFrqEzdU4Uqf7vFZZHz40dgt9a-7OQaFzg&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwicv727otncAhWkD8AKHcNDAmUQ9QEwCXoECAEQDg#imgrc=dHJF5TLjmUabMM)>. The unit War Diary is available at <<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/results/images?mod->

[ule=images&SortSpec=score+desc&Language=eng&ShowForm=hide&SearchIn\\_1=mikanNumber&SearchInText\\_1=2004667&Operator\\_1=AND&SearchIn\\_2=&SearchInText\\_2=&Operator\\_2=AND&SearchIn\\_3=&SearchInText\\_3=&Level=&MaterialDateOperator=after&MaterialDate=&DigitalImages=1&Source=&ResultCount=10](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/lac-bac/results/images?mod-ule=images&SortSpec=score+desc&Language=eng&ShowForm=hide&SearchIn_1=mikanNumber&SearchInText_1=2004667&Operator_1=AND&SearchIn_2=&SearchInText_2=&Operator_2=AND&SearchIn_3=&SearchInText_3=&Level=&MaterialDateOperator=after&MaterialDate=&DigitalImages=1&Source=&ResultCount=10)>.

For the Battle of Amiens, see for example Nick Lloyd, *Hundred Days. The End of the Great War* (Penguin edition, London, 2014), quoting from 54.

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