George Alfred Bennett was born in Southampton in 1881 to parents Joseph and Elizabeth. The 1891 census shows Joseph and Elizabeth at 22 River Street, off Crosshouse Road, with their eight children of whom George, at 9 years old, is third youngest. In 1901 the family is living in Dock Terrace, but now only three of their children (all daughters) are living with them. George, who was probably away on a ship, is not listed. The 1911 census shows that George was living at 3 Deal Street with his now elderly parents. Joseph, who was then 68 years old, was described as a merchant seaman, and Elizabeth was 63 years old. They had been married for 45 years and had produced 11 children, 10 of whom were still alive in 1911. George is described as a ship’s stoker. Deal Street was formerly a little street off the north end of Dock Street near the Floating Bridge.

When he signed on for the Titanic in April 1912, George gave his age as 23, but census records show he was 31. George, who was unmarried, signed on the Titanic as a fireman, for which he would have received wages of £6 a month. His last ship had been the Olympic.

George died in the sinking and his body, if recovered, was never identified.

A death notice appeared in the Southampton Times on 04/05/1912:

‘Dearly Beloved Son of Joseph and Elizabeth Bennett of 3 Deal Street, Chapel. Aged 29 years.’

The confusion about George’s age continued in an in memoriam notice in the Southern daily Echo on 15/04/1913.

‘In Loving Memory of George, The Dearly Beloved Son of Joseph and Elizabeth Bennett. Aged 29 Years.’

The grave of George’s parents in the Old Cemetery on the Common (right) was discovered in 1999 by Mrs Pricilla Winn, George’s great niece. She also added an inscription which reads:

‘In Memory of George Alfred Bennett Son of J. and E. Bennett Fireman on the Titanic – Lost at Sea April 14/15 1912 Aged 30 Years.’

The Mansion House Titanic Relief Fund listed both parents as partial dependents, and a special grant of 2s 6d per week was made for three months, because Mrs Bennett was suffering from acute rheumatism which rendered her helpless.