

Surname	Thomas
Forename	Charles Harold
Initials	C H H
Age	
Honours/Awards	
Date died	20/09/1917
Rank	Lieutenant
Regiment	Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)
Unit/Squadron	214 th Coy.
Service Number	
Cemetery/Memorial	Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery And Extension
Grave Reference	II. K. 19.
Further Information	Before the war was on the literary staff for the Wallasey News. Killed in the push to the east of Ypres.



News Report
(From October, 1917)

Two Sons Killed

The many friends of this town of Captain G.C. Thomas, who will be remembered in connection with the promoting of the Lancashire Naval Training School for Poor Boys, will be sorry to hear that his two sons have been killed in action in France.

The elder of the two, Mr. [Honoratus Leigh M. Thomas](#), was second-lieutenant in the 8th Bedfordshire Regiment, and in the great push on the Somme on the 15th September, last year, he was pronounced missing and believed killed, which the War Office has since confirmed.

The second boy, Mr. Charles Harold H. Thomas, was first-lieutenant in the Machine Gun Corps, and on the 20th last month he was reported killed in the recent push to the East of Ypres. Before joining the Army Mr. Charles H. H.

Thomas was on the literary staff of the "Wallasey News," and his old comrades who were following his military career with interest, mourn the loss of a colleague who will be remembered for many fine qualities.

Captain Thomas has reason to be proud of the way these two sons of his are reported to have acquitted themselves, as judged by the following letters to him from their respective commanding officers.

Referring to the first-named officer the O.C. of the 8th Bedfords wrote:-
"Dear Commander Thomas – You will have heard no doubt by now that your son went into action on the 15th. He put up a splendid fight, but was reported believed to be killed. We lost all our officers that day, sniped or got by machine guns. Your boy was such a splendid lad. He did not say much, but he worked very well, and looked after his platoon splendidly, and was beloved by officers and men. I hope we may get further news of his body, but the battlefield is so huge and the casualties so numerous that it is impossible to take steps to find out all we want to know. We are to have another big show again shortly. I trust with success. Hatch, of your son's company, was wounded. I would like to express to you the deep sympathy of all ranks at your great sorrow – Yours faithfully, Harry Scott, Colonel, Commanding 8th Bedfords."

"N.B. – If we can get further information I will let you know. The place where he was killed is now firmly in our hands."

Of the second son, the O.C. of the M.G. Company, of the Machine Gun Corps, wrote:-

"Commander Thomas. – I deeply regret that it is my duty to report to you, sir, that your son, Lieut. C.H. Thomas, was killed in action on the 20th inst. He, with 2nd Lieut. Marsden, also killed, and Lieuts. Maslin and Scott, both wounded, was ordered to place M.G.'s on a certain hill for the attack on the date named. All the guns reached their objectives, and did Trojan work, for which I have since been personally thanked by the Divisional General. During a lull in the fighting the two killed officers were dealing with the wounded, and had actually placed a slightly wounded lance-corporal on a stretcher, and were just directing the stretcher bearers where they should go, when the whole group of five (2 officers, 2 stretcher bearers, and the wounded lance-corporal) received a direct hit with a 5.9in. high explosive shell.

"The whole affair is most deplorable, especially in view of the splendid work all there had previously done. I believe sir, you are already aware of the part of the front we hold, and your son lies buried at 3 -----, it being impossible to move either of the five from the spot where they fell. I trust, sir, you will accept my sincere sympathies with you in your loss, which is also a great loss to all the Company here, as he was very popular in our mess, and also the section over which he had control, as is witnessed by the fact that he had on several occasions supplied his men with boxing gloves, and various prizes out of his own pocket, in order to keep up the sporting element in his section, which he certainly succeeded in doing.

"I had fears when I first heard the news that your son had been exposing himself unnecessarily, as he was rather inclined that way, as I have myself cautioned him

more than once about this; but on investigation I find that Thomas was doing his duty with all possible care, and could not possibly have brought on the hostile fire, which was a steady barrage which was just ceasing when that unlucky shell caught the party of five. You may not be aware, sir, Thomas was extremely cool under fire, notwithstanding the fact that his active service was only a few months, and to lose him like this has been one of the hardest bits of the war yet received by. – Yours very sincerely, Chas. T. Norris (Capt. And O.C. – M.G. Coy.)”

These two letters provide glowing testimony to the way these two young officers have acquitted themselves, and like so many others in this great war have proved themselves not unworthy sons of the country that gave them birth.

Like the two sons, Captain Thomas, who is Commander in the R.N.R., is also on active service on the British Naval Staff in France, and was recently presented by the Mayor and Corporation of a well-known French town in the north of France with a special medal for his having saved the town from bombardment by the heavy 16in, guns inside the German lines by a system of smoke screens which he placed over the town when the bombardment commenced.

References and Acknowledgments

Commonwealth War Grave Commission
Wallasey Central Library – Reference Library

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