Private Thomas Alfred Hulme
Regimental number: 8225
1st Battalion, North Staffordshire (Prince of Wales's) Regiment

born: about 1888 - died: 2 May 1916

Private Thomas Alfred Hulme, born in about 1888 in Longton, Staffordshire, was the son of Thomas and Harriet Hulme.[1] Both his parents were born in Caverswall, Staffordshire – his father, in about 1858 and his mother in about 1860. Thomas (son of Thomas) and Harriet (the former Harriet Heath, daughter of William Heath) were married in St Michael's Church in Stone, Staffordshire on 14 November 1881.[2] They had at least four children: Annie Elizabeth (born in 1883),[3] Mary Emily (born in 1885),[4] Thomas and Sarah E. (born in about 1896).[5]

In the spring of 1901, the family was living at 41 Gate Street in Longton, where Thomas' father was a coal miner/ underground loader.[6] Harriet's brother, Joseph,[7] a domestic carter, was also living with them. A few months later Thomas' mother died.

In 1910, Thomas married Florence Edwards near Stoke-on-Trent[8] and his son, Thomas A. was born the same year.[9] His son was at least the fourth generation of Hulme sons to be named Thomas. In 1911, Thomas, his wife and son were living in Longton with Thomas' sister, Annie, who had married James Edwards in 1905.[10] Thomas was working as a loader underground in a coal mine. Thomas and Annie's sister, Sarah, and their widowed father, Thomas, were also living with them. The eldest Thomas was still working a coal carter in a pottery.

Thomas enlisted in Guernsey as a Private in the North Staffordshire Regiment[11] and joined the British Expeditionary Force in France on 1 May 1915.[12]

In April 1916, the 1st Battalion of the regiment was stationed north of Wulverghem, Belgium.[13] At 12.55 a.m. on 30 April a gas alarm was given and then, at 1.20 a.m., a German attack began. There was considerable confusion because of the suddenness of the attack and the fact that the men were still wearing their smoke helmets and, as a result, were partially blinded. Although the Battalion had to evacuate the area, the enemy was not able to advance and much of the area was reoccupied. A shortage of bombs prevented anything more than a steady advance of the Battalion and the enemy was able to return to its own lines. The enemy had taken one man prisoner and killed or wounded a dozen more men. Thomas may have been one of the wounded. He died of his wounds on 2 May at the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.[14] One patient died at the 1st CCCS on 2 May[15] – maybe it was Thomas. Thomas lost four comrades from his battalion in the few days at the end of April and beginning of May: Private Oliver Llewellyn Boon, Private James Morgan, Private Samuel Bertrem (Bert) Clewlow and Private George William Burrows. Most of his comrades had been poisoned by chlorine gas.

He was a member of the Church of England[16] and was buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Plot II, Row D, Grave 73).[17] Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several Casualty Clearing Stations, including the 1st Canadian, were quartered there for considerable periods. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918, and occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when graves were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.[18]

A letter was sent to his wife, who was living then at 41 Gage Street in Longton, to notify her of his death and she received the monies owing to Thomas from the army after his death.[19]

Thomas was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914-15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).[20]

Thomas' wife remarried, marrying William H. Hawkes in Stoke-on-Trent at the end of 1917. It appears that they had at least one son, William H., born in about 1924.[21]

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[1] "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2015), entry for Thomas A. Hulme, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Sub-registration district: Longton, ED, institution, or vessel: 09, Piece: 2615, Folio: 38, Page Number: 11, Household schedule number: 71

[2] "Staffordshire marriages," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Thomas Hulme, Archive Reference: STONE/21; Page: 60, Register Type: Marriage, Record set: Staffordshire marriages

[3] "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Annie Elizabeth Hulme, Archive reference: D3585/1/2, Page: 54

[4] "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Mary Emily Hulme, Archive reference: D790/1/2, Page: 87

[5] "1901 England Census," entry for Thomas A. Hulme

[6] Ibid.

[7] "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Harriet Heath, Registration district: Cheadle, ED, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 2745, Folio: 81, Page Number: 24

[8] "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2015), entry for Thomas Hulme, District: Stoke on Trent, County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6B, Page: 355

[9] "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Thomas A. Hulme, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 291

[10] "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Annie Elizabeth Hulme, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 209

[11] "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 August 2015), entry for Thomas Albert Hulme

[12] "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2015), entry for Thomas A. Hulme

[13] "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914-1920," ," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 16 August 2015), Regiment or Unit: Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire) Regiment, Sub Unit: 1st Battalion, Division: 24th Division, Diary Dates: 1915 Nov - 1919 May, Piece Description: Piece 2213/1: 1 Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment (1915 Nov - 1919 May), Piece Number: 2213

[14] "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIIC10, volume 4556, Record number 82

[15] "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)

[16] "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 82

[17] "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Hulme, T.A., Service No: 8225

[18] "Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000047/Bailleul%20Communal%20Cemetery,%20Nord; accessed 5 August 2015)
[19] "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 3 September 2015), entry for Thomas Albert Hulme
[20] "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Thomas A. Hulme
[21] "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for William H. Hawkes, Registration district: Stoke on Trent, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 487