

Private George William Thompson©
Regimental number: 11488
8th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)

born: 16 February 1896 – died: 30 June 1916

Private George William Thompson was born on 16 February 1896 and baptized on 17 January 1902 at Christ Church in Luton, Kent.¹ He was the youngest son of Thomas and Sarah Ann Thompson.² Thomas was born about 1849 in Capstone, Chatham, Kent, and Sarah Ann in about 1852 in Snodland, Kent.³ Sarah Ann was probably the former Sarah Ann Monday and married Thomas Thompson in Medway, Kent, in 1879.⁴

They had eight children, three of whom died in childhood.⁵ The children who have been identified include Henry (born in 1880),⁶ Elizabeth Ann (born in 1882),⁷ Rose Mary (born in 1883),⁸ Thomas John (born in 1888),⁹ and then probably twins: Richard Henry (born in 1891)¹⁰ and Theriza Jane (born in 1891).¹¹ Both the twins probably died before their second birthday.¹² The identities of George's other siblings are not known.

George's father was a farm labourer. Shortly after their marriage and the birth of their first son, his parents were living on Queen's Road, Chatham.¹³ They probably lived at that address for more than a decade.¹⁴ In 1901, the family was still in Chatham, but had moved to Capstone. Thomas was now a woodcutter, working at home. Sarah and two of the children (Henry and Thomas) were obviously helping him by chopping firewood.¹⁵ In 1911, the family was living at Yew Tree Cottage in Capstone, where George's father, at the age of 62, was still a woodcutter.¹⁶

George enlisted in the 8th Battalion of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment.¹⁷ In June 1916, the 8th Battalion was on the Front, near Dranouter in northern France.¹⁸ The battalion's sector was heavily bombarded by the enemy in retaliation for gas released the previous day. There were 40 casualties—George may have been one of them. He was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station where he died of his wounds on 30 June or 1 July 1916.¹⁹ He was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Grave Reference: II. E. 122).²⁰

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 No. 1 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 soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.²¹

As his next of kin, George's mother was notified of his death²² and she received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.²³

George was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²⁴

George's father probably died near Medway in September 1927.²⁵

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- ¹ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson, FHL film number: 1473673, Reference ID: P85-1-11 p 40
- ² *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, (www.cwgc.org: accessed 3 December ? 2016), entry for Thompson, George William, Service No: G/11488
- ³ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Registration district number: 47, Sub-registration district: Rochester and Chatham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 29, Household schedule number: 64, Piece: 3913
- ⁴ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Thomas Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 782
- ⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson
- ⁶ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 December ? 2016), entry for Henry Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 556
- ⁷ "England & Wales births 1837–2006," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Rose Mary Thompson, District: Medway, County: Kent, Volume: 2A, Page: 359
- ⁸ "England & Wales births 1837–2006," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Elizabeth Ann Thompson, District: Medway, County: Kent, Volume: 2A, Page: 584
- ⁹ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Thomas Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 589
- ¹⁰ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Richard Henry Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 627; "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Richard Henry Thompson, FHL film number: 1473672, Reference ID: 58
- ¹¹ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Thirza [*sic*] Jane Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 627; "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Theriza Jane Thompson, FHL film number: 1473672, Reference ID: 58. There are different spellings for her first name, but Theriza is the one on her baptismal record.
- ¹² "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Richard Henry Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 331; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Teresa [*sic*] Jane Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 331
- ¹³ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 September 2016), entry for Thomas Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Sub-registration district: Gillingham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 42, Piece: 895, Folio: 98, Page: 8
- ¹⁴ "1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 October 2016), entry for Thomas Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Archive reference: RG12; Piece number: 665, Folio: 14, Page: 21
- ¹⁵ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 September 2016), entry for George Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Sub-registration district: Rochester and Chatham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 51, Piece: 731, Folio: 2265, Page: 6, Household schedule number: 36
- ¹⁶ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson

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- ¹⁷ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson
- ¹⁸ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," Regiment or unit: Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment, Sub-unit: 8th Battalion, Division: 24th Division, Diary dates: 1915 Aug - 1919 Apr, Piece description: Piece 2213/2: 8 Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) (1915 Aug - 1919 Apr), Piece number: 2213
- ¹⁹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 July 2016), entry for Thompson, J.
- ²⁰ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, (www.cwgc.org: accessed 3 December 2016), entry for Thompson, George William
- ²¹ "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)
- ²² "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 July 2016), entry for Thompson, J.
- ²³ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for George William Thompson
- ²⁴ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2016), entry for George W Thompson
- ²⁵ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Thomas Thompson, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 707