



Thomas George Main

Private G/5284 Royal Sussex Regiment 7th Battalion, 12th Division

Died 7th July 1916 aged 35

Thomas was born to George Main and Anna Maria Nicklin in 1880 at Hambledon, Hampshire where George was employed as a shepherd. Thomas was the fifth of their six children. The 1881 Census shows the family was living at Droxford in Hampshire and that the children were Edith (1871), William (1875), Alice (1876), Fanny (1877), **Thomas** (1880) and Henry (1884). By 1891 the family had moved to Waterworks Road, Farlington in Hampshire. Thomas' father and older brother William were employed as shepherds. The 1901 Census shows that Thomas and his father George, now a widower, were employed as shepherds living at Eartham, Sussex and George's daughter Alice was keeping house for them. Marriage records show that Thomas married Alice F Goodyer in 1913 at Horsham. He would have been 33 years old.

Thomas enlisted in Horsham (date unknown) and according to Military records was resident in the Horsham area at the time. The fact that he is listed on both Thakeham and Shipley Memorials suggests he also had a connection with Thakeham, possibly living or working close to both parish boundaries.

The 7th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment was part of the British Fourth and French Sixth Armies which began the Somme offensive beginning on 1st July 1916. The 12th Division moved up to support the survivors of the 8th Division which had endured heavy losses at Orvillers La Boiselle on the first day of the engagement and resumed the attack on 3rd. There were initial successes but eventually the Allied armies were driven back to British lines. Thomas' Battalion set out on 7th July in early morning and with accompanying brigades made progress towards the second line of enemy defences. Early successes were again followed by retreat and heavy losses and it was during this attack that Thomas was lost. He was initially reported as missing but eventually listed as killed in action. By the 9th July the 12th Division had registered 4766 casualties.

Thomas' wife Alice would have waited many months for news of her husband. His 'missing' notice was not issued until September; perhaps giving some hope that he would be found. The Register of Soldiers' Effects shows that Alice received his war gratuity.

The Reverend Baker held a memorial service in Shipley Church in November to commemorate the Shipley men who had given their lives in this year of terrible losses.

Thomas has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, on Thakeham Parish War Memorial and Shipley Church Memorial. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

In Memory Of

Private

THOMAS GEORGE MAIN

Service Number: G/5284

7th Bn., Royal Sussex Regiment who died on 07 July 1916

Remembered with Honour

THIEPVAL MEMORIAL

Pier and Face 7 C.



**COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**