

## LIEUTENANT LIONEL WATSON MOORE

5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 22 on 27 August 1916

Remembered with honour on *Thiepval Memorial*; Pier and Face 5A and 5B

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey and on the Grammar School Memorial



*Thiepval Memorial, France*



*Lt. L. W. Moore [R. Stayt]*



*Gloucestershire Regiment*

**LIONEL WATSON MOORE** was born in Tewkesbury in 1893, the younger son of Thomas Weaver Moore and Ellen (formerly Watson). The family home was 'Battledown', Gloucester Road (now demolished). His father was a partner in the famous auctioneering firm; his mother was the daughter of philanthropist, George Watson, in whose honour Lionel was named. He began his education at the Grammar School before boarding at Kings School, Worcester. By 1914 he was a student doctor at Guy's Hospital – and a member of the Officers' Training Corps.

In August 1914 Lionel 'enlisted as private soldier' and served with his older brother, Thomas, in the 1st/5th Battalion (the Territorial Force Battalion, in which their father had reformed the Tewkesbury Company); he was 'quickly promoted to Officer'. The battalion landed on 29 March 1915 at Boulogne as part of the 48th (South Midland) Division; Lionel was thus awarded the '1914-15 Star' medal.

Lionel was last home on leave in June 1916 when the Division was preparing for the *Battles of the Somme 1916*. The battalion was involved in some of the earlier phases in July and on 25 August, during the *Battle of Pozières*, it moved into the front line in readiness for an attack. Lionel had taken command of B Company on 2 August and the War Diary for 27 August recorded that: *'The Battalion was ordered to attack ... B Company [attacked] on left, both in two lines across the open ... large party of Germans held out but were ultimately forced to retire across the open when our Lewis guns accounted for all but 3. Several dug outs were bombed and trench consolidated ... About 50 prisoners were taken ... enemy's other losses*

*estimated at about 200 killed and wounded'*.

**Lt. Lionel Watson Moore** was killed in that attack on 27 August 1916. The *Register* recorded that his death came after he *'led a trench raid after lighting up a cigarette; he ran down a trench firing and laughing and the Germans surrendered'*, except one who, 'out of spite' or not knowing of the surrender, shot him through the head, killing him instantly. In anger, a wounded private shot Germans until he also died. It had been suggested that Lionel was *'determined to avenge his brother's death'*. His older brother, **Lt. Thomas H. Moore** [†], had been killed almost a year earlier on 27 September 1915, also in the Somme sector.

The death of another member of this well-known local family touched a nerve: Lionel *'was one of the best ... of the flower of the race who have given their all for their country, king and people'*. His Colonel commented that he was *'a worthy successor to his splendid brother'*. His padre attempted some consolation: *'I buried your splendid soldier son this morning at 4 a.m. in the very trench in which he and his men were killed while taking it most magnificently. I watched him and his Company. They went over the parapet as if they were on parade and great execution was inflicted.'*

However, despite the padre's words, Lionel's grave marker was evidently lost in later fighting; his body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the *Thiepval Memorial*.

In 1918 his parents placed a special memorial plaque to the sacrifice of their two sons in St. Faith's Chapel in the Abbey. Lionel is also remembered on the Roll of War Service and the Roll of the Fallen at the University of London.