

PRIVATE HARRY SIDNEY THOMPSON

2096, Depot, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died of wounds aged 25 on 4 October 1920

Buried with honour in *Tewkesbury Cemetery*; C-474

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



Tewkesbury Cemetery
Grave C-474



Pte. H.S. Thompson
[Graphic 27/3/1915]



Gloucestershire
Regiment

HARRY SIDNEY THOMPSON was the son of Robert and Emma Thompson, of Wall's Court, Tewkesbury, according to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database. Background information on the family is scarce, however, possibly due to a variation in the spelling of names. The only concrete evidence appears on the 1911 Census which confirms that Harry, without a middle name of Sidney, was the only child of Robert and Emily (not Emma) Thompson. Robert was originally from Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, whilst Emily (or Emma) came from Weston-super-Mare in Somerset. Harry's birth year was estimated as 1895 and he was said to have been born in Upton-on-Severn, Worcestershire, although there is no corresponding birth record for that name and around that time in Upton. Nevertheless, the family were living in Tewkesbury in 1911 in Double Alley, High Street. At the time of Harry's death his parents had moved to Wall's Court.

Harry enlisted on 8 August 1914 in the Gloucestershire Regiment and is commemorated on the Abbey Memorial Roll as a 'Reservist & Territorial'. Originally he was allocated to the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion, a depot battalion which absorbed and trained new recruits. His medal records indicate that he arrived in France on 20 January 1915, thus qualifying for the award of the '1914-15 Star' medal. He was then posted to the 1st Battalion, no doubt as part of a replacement draft. The battalion was a pre-war regular unit in the 3rd Infantry Brigade, 1st Division, and had moved to France in August 1914 as part of the original British Expeditionary Force.

On 27 February 1915 the *Register* reported

that Harry had become a casualty; a subsequent edition of the *Graphic* on 27 March stated that he was 'now in Wincanton Hospital, suffering from frost bite'. Harry must have already returned to Tewkesbury by the time of that report as his marriage to Nellie Gladys Peacey was registered in the March quarter of 1915. He remained in the regiment, attached to the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion until his discharge on 30 November 1915. He was awarded a 'Silver War Badge' to evidence that he had undertaken military service and had been discharged from the Army because of wounds or illness. The records confirmed that the reason for discharge was 'sickness' and that he had served 'overseas'.

Nothing more was heard of Harry until his death, aged just 25, was registered in Tewkesbury on 4 October 1920. The cause of death was cited as 'Phthisis' (Tuberculosis/TB). His occupation was Dairyman and Army Pensioner. Harry was living at 27 Gravel Walk when Nellie certified his death and he was then buried in the World War One section of *Tewkesbury Cemetery* on 9 October.

Harry and Nellie did not have any children and in 1923, three years after his death, Nellie Thompson remarried to William Cole. A daughter, Jean M., was born in Tewkesbury in 1932 but the family seem to have moved to the Cheltenham area prior to the 1939 Electoral Roll. Of the family, only Harry and Nellie, together with her second husband William, are buried in Tewkesbury Cemetery. Nellie Gladys Cole died in 1975 at the age of 80.

Private H. S. Thompson is commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey.