

Private Walter Ernest Thompson

Walter Ernest THOMPSON, son of Robert McElroy THOMPSON and Martha Matilda May BULMER, was born on 6 Jun 1895 in Westmeath Twp. His parents were farming in Westmeath Twp., his dad being born there and his mother was born in Ross Twp. Six children were born to this marriage, however the first child died at 5 months, leaving Walter the oldest living child in the family. His mother died just after childbirth with her 6th child in 1905. Walter's siblings married into local families of Condie, Baird & Grawberger.¹

Walter Thompson enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on Jul 6, 1916 at Ottawa. He listed his occupation as farmer. He was described as 6' 1" and 170 lbs. His stature would have been greater than most local enlistees. He had medium complexion, blue eyes, and brown hair. He listed his father as his next of kin and beneficiary.²

Pte. Walter Thompson embarked at Halifax for England on May 28, 1917 with the 7th Reserve Battalion. He was transferred to the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and joined them in the field on Nov 4, 1917. There is no other entry about his service until his death on Aug 13, 1918. The circumstance of death registers did not survive beyond "S" in the alphabet. However, the notation on his file states that he was



Image 1: Pte. Walter Thompson³

The splendid success attending the efforts of our armies overseas, which is the cause of so much thanksgiving and rejoicing nationally, is bringing sadness and desolation to many of our homes, as the wires carry the news of another and another of our sons fallen on the world's field of battle. On Sunday morning last a large assembly gathered in St. Andrew's church to pay their last respects to the memory of Pte. Walter E. Thompson, son of Mr. Robert Thompson of Pembroke Road, who was among those recently reported killed in action in France. Pte. Thompson was twenty-four years of age and had been in the war almost from the beginning, having voluntarily undergone an operation in order that he might be accepted for service, and no doubt the splendid spirit which led him to overcome the obstacle rather than screen himself behind it, still actuated him as a soldier. The same noble courage of the Roman of old, who exclaimed "We'll find a way or make it," was his, and though he has gone down in his youth, and though we sorrow with the bereaved father and brothers, we are proud that again Westmeath has given a son for the great cause of freedom and righteousness. We are proud that our roll of honor of fallen heroes will bear forever the name of a soldier so brave and so courageous as Pte. Walter Ernest Thompson.

Image 2: Memorial Service³ Roll⁵

killed in the field from gunshot wounds to the head and neck.² The St. Andrew's United Church, Beachburg WWI Honor Roll⁶ indicates that he died at Amiens. Pte. Thompson was 23 years of age. He was buried in Boves West Communal Cemetery Extension at Boves, Somme, France.^{3,4}

Pte. Walter Ernest Thompson was commemorated on the Perretton United Church WWI Honor Roll⁵, St. Andrew's United Church, Beachburg WWI Honor Roll⁶, as well as the Beachburg⁷ & Westmeath⁸ War Memorials.



Image 3: Perretton U.C. WWI Honor

WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project



Image 4: Beachburg U.C. Honor Roll⁶



Image 5: Beachburg War Memorial⁷

Sources:

1. Bennett, F. (2022). *Faysgenealogy.com*. www.faysgenealogy.com. family history database & images; 2001-present. Cobden, ON. (Original sources noted in database)
2. "Personnel Records of the First World War." Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Digital images. Library and Archives Canada. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx>. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=265588>
3. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial: Veterans Affairs Canada. "The Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM)." Database. Veterans Affairs Canada. www.veterans.gc.ca/eng. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/587251>
4. "PVT W E Thompson (Unknown-1918) - Find a Grave Memorial, 13 Aug. 1918, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/179887793/w-e-thompson>
5. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The WWI Honor Roll*. Perretton United Church, Perretton, Ontario. 2010.
6. Moratz, Rev. Kevin. *Photograph of WWI Honor Roll*. St. Andrew's United Church, Beachburg. Westmeath, Ontario. November 2022.
7. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The Beachburg War Memorial*. Beachburg, Ontario. November 2022.
8. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The Westmeath War Memorial*. Westmeath, Ontario. November 2022.
9. Book of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/books/page?page=512&book=1&sort=pageAsc>