

# Codford War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I

26207 RIFLEMAN

**S. THOMAS**

N.Z. RIFLE BRIGADE

14TH JANUARY, 1918 Age 21



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Rifleman S.Thomas is located in Third Row (Left Hand Side) Grave Plot # 61 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

*(CWGC Reference - Grave # 104)*

Samuel Thomas was born 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1896 at Christchurch, New Zealand. He was a 20 year old, single, Teamster from Pukihinau, New Zealand when he enlisted on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 26207 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Isaac Samuel Thomas of Mara, Rakanui, New Zealand.

Pte Samuel Thomas was admitted to hospital while at Trentham Camp in New Zealand from 11<sup>th</sup> May until 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 with influenza.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas embarked with New Zealand Rifle Brigade, 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, F Company from Wellington, New Zealand on HMNZT (64) *Devon* on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1916, destination England. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 1916.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was admitted to Military Hospital at Devonport on arrival in England with influenza – slight. He was transferred to Base Depot at Codford, Wiltshire on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1916.

Rifleman Thomas was marched into Sling Army Camp, Wiltshire on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1917. He was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 with influenza & then transferred to Convalescent Hospital at Hornchurch on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1917. He was discharged from Hornchurch on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 to report to Codford on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1917.

Rifleman Thomas was marched back into Sling Army Camp, Wiltshire on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1917 & left for France on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1917.

Rifleman Thomas was marched into camp at Etaples, France on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1917. He joined the Battalion & was posted to A Company in the Field at Rouen, France on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1917.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was reported wounded on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 with a shrapnel wound to neck, jaw & right shoulder.

Rifleman Thomas was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand Field Ambulance on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 then transferred to No. 2 Australian CCS on the same day. On 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1917 he was admitted to No. 14 General Hospital & invalided back to UK on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1917.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was admitted to No. 2 New Zealand General Hospital at Walton, England on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 & then transferred to Convalescent Hospital at Hornchurch on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1917 & discharged from there on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1917 to report to Codford, Wiltshire on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1917.

Samuel Thomas married Gertrude Lillian Berry on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1917 at Holy Trinity Church, in the district of West Ham, Essex.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1917 with broncho catarrh.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas died on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1918 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of ruptured abscess in throat.

A death for Samuel Thomas, aged 22, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, Codford.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas, 26207 was last attached to New Zealand Rifle Brigade. He had served in the Western European War Front in 1917.

Rifleman Samuel Thomas was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Rifleman Thomas' wife – Mrs S. Thomas of 49 Grosvenor Rd, Westminster, London, England.

(20 pages of Rifleman Samuel Thomas's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

*Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission & PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand.*

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## Newspaper Reports

### NEW ZEALAND ARMY

#### TO-DAY'S CASUALTY LIST

#### DIED OF SICKNESS

Thomas, S., 26207, R.B. (I.S. Thomas, Rakanui, f) 14<sup>th</sup> Jan

*(Evening Post, Volume XCV, Issue 17, 19 January, 1918)*

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Rifleman S. Thomas has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Rifleman S. Thomas' Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery



*(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)*