Thomas Moss





Rank: - Lance Sergeant

Number: - 2616273

Regiment: - Grenadier Guards 1st Battalion

Died: - Killed in Action 8 March 1945 aged 23 years

Cemetery: - Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany 43.A.4.

HE'S LEFT A NAME, HIS VIRTUES LIVE GRAVED ON THE TABLETS OF THE HEART

Thomas was born c.1922 registered Thorne the son of Thomas and Norah Moss (nee Davill, m. 1920, registered Dewsbury) . Marjorie D was born in 1923 (Thorne) and Ronald L in 1928 (Doncaster) in 1939 the family was living at 4,

Whittaker Street, Batley. Thomas was employed at J. B. & W. Hirst's, Lady Ann Mills.

Thomas joined the Guards in March 1939 and after training for six months was posted to Windsor. He was at Windsor for 3 ½ years and served in the Intelligence Section as a P.T. Instructor and M.G. Instructor. With the rank of Sergeant he transferred to the Armoured Division of the Guards and was in the 1st Motor Division at the time of his death.

Thomas went to France a week after D-Day and took part in the fighting at Caen, was amongst the first troops to enter Brussels and was next with the advance part in Holland and assisted in the capture of Nijmegen Bridge (now known as Grenadier Bridge). After being in the contingent sent back to Belgium to stop the German break- through he was granted seven days 'ballot' leave in January 1945 when he became engaged.

He had only been back at the Western Front when he was killed. In a letter to his mother his Commanding Officer (Major George Thorpe) expressed regret and sympathy and said it was '*the worst possible luck'* but had the one redeeming feature that death was instantaneous. The whole company shared his sympathy. Major Thorpe wrote in the letter: -



SERGT. THOS. MOSS FALLS ON WESTERN FRONT

Became Engaged On His Last Leave

Sergeant Thomas Moss, Grenadier Guards, aged 23, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Moss, 4, Whitaker Street, Batley, is reported to have been killed on the Western Front on March 8th. On his last leave he became engaged to Company Quartermaster Sergeant E. Richardson, A.T.S., of Tamworth.

Sergt. Moss joined the Guards in March, 1939, trained for six months, and was posted to Windsor, where he was for 3½ years and served in the Intelligence Section as a P.T. instructor and M.G. instructor.

With the rank of sergeant he transferred to the Armoured Division of the Guards and was in the 1st Motor Division at the time of his death.

Thomas Moss.

Sergt. Moss was drafted to France a week after D-Day, took part in the fighting at Caen, was among the first troops to enter Brussels, and was next with the advance party to Holland, and assisted in the capture intact of Nijmegen Bridge (now known as the Grenadier Bridge).

After being in the contingent sent back to Belgium to stop the German break-through, he was granted seven days 'ballot leave in January, when he became engaged.

He had only been back on the Western Front a month when his death occurred. He would have completed his seven years' service in 12 months' time. He used to be employed at Messrs. J. B. and W. Hirst's Lady Ann Mill.

In a letter to Mrs. Moss the C.O. (Major George Thorne) expressed regret and sympathy, and said "it was the worst possible luck" but had the one redeeming feature that death was instantaneous. The whole Company shared his regret.

A striking tribute to the late Sergt. Moss is contained in the following letter from Major Thorne to deceased's mother: "He was no ordinary person, and it makes it all the harder that it should have happened when the war is so nearly over and Germany already beaten. The Brigade of Guards, and especially this Regiment, rely for their supremacy on their N.C.O.'s and your son had in him all that, and lots more. He was proficient at his job, and inspired confidence in his section ,a most loyal supporter and tireless worker for his platoon commander, a cheerful willingness to lend a hand at all times, and a most delightful personality to have near one.

"He is buried in the little cemetery for our brigade, near Kapellen, north-east of Geldern. I can only add I feel it to have been a very great honour to have had him in my Company. He will not go unavenged. Please let his fiancee know how very sorry we are for her."

Batley News, 31 Mar 1945

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feel it to have been a great honour to have had him in my Company. He will not go un-avenged. Please let his fiancée know how very sorry we are for her."

After the war Reichswald Forest War Cemetery was created and burials were brought in from all over western Germany and is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the country.

Thomas was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal and is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group