

We deeply regret to record the death of Sergt. William Edward Thornhill, 99th Field Ambulance, R.A.M.C., who succumbed to the ravages of war at his home, 10 Lansdowne Place, Dawlish, on Tuesday evening last. The deceased, who was aged 46, arrived home on leave from the front in a very bad state of health (owing to exposure) at the end of

November last. He was taken seriously ill before he had been home a few hours, and his life was despaired of from the first. He died of nephritis and syncope.

The late Sergt. Thornhill joined Kitchener's Army in Sept., 1915, when there was great need for men, although well over 40. He had been on active service in France ever since. By a pathetic coincidence the day following his death his name appeared as having been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of valuable service rendered with the Army in France.

Mr Thornhill was an up-country man, having been employed for 18 years at the Supt.'s Dept., Midland Railway, Derby, but had resided in Dawlish many years, when, on the death of Mr H Hartwill (the former secretary), he was selected from a large number of applicants and appointed Secretary of the Dawlish Gas and Coke Company. That was in April, 1910. A trained accountant and a very keen man of affairs, he proved a most able and competent servant of the company. Deceased had a good helpmeet in Mrs Thornhill, who is herself an expert shorthand-writer and typist, and when he joined up she showed her ability and industry by carrying on the Agencies which her husband had secured, including the local work of the Labour Bureau, and also assisted in the secretarial work of the Gas Company. Keen sympathy is felt with her and the family of two boys and a girl (whose ages are 11½, 10 and 6 respectively) in their affliction.

The funeral took place on Thursday afternoon, the Rev F Simmons (vicar) officiating. The mourners were: The Widow, Percy and Harry Thornhill (sons), Mrs Evans (mother-in-law), Mrs Bowden, Mr R Wood and Pte Satchell, R.A.M.C. Amongst those attending were Messrs J Gamlen and A Yelland (Directors Gas and Coke Company), H Versey (Manager and acting secretary, ditto), F Friend, H S Loram, F West and W Watling.

The coffin was of polished elm with brass fittings, the breathplate bearing the inscription:

Sergt. William E. Thornhill, M.S.M.
Died Jan. 21st, 1919,
Aged 46.

Wreaths, etc., were from the Widow and family, Mr and Mrs Bowden, the Directors Gas and Coke Company, Mr and Mrs H Versey, Mr P F S Creaghe, Mr S Burch and Pte Satchell.

Mr A J Slocombe was entrusted with the funeral arrangements.