

## THRUM FAMILY



## THRUM

# Horatio Norman

Service No: 257



PTE. NORMAN H. THRUM,  
11th Battalion. Wounded.

Courtesy National Archives of  
Australia

## Basic Information

Name: Norman Horatio Thrum

Service Number: 257

Date of Enlistment: 9/9/1914

Age at Enlistment: 21 years 2 months

Civil Occupation: Seaman

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 5 Ft 6 inches

Weight: 133 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 33 ¼ inches

Complexion: Dark

Eye Colour: Brown

Hair Colour: Brown

Father: Edward Henry

Mother: Elizabeth Edith Morris

Siblings: Lillian Charlotte, Harry Shepherdson

Married: Blanche Marie Wilhelmina Seguy

Children: Patricia, Joan, Shirley and Deborah.

## Life Story

Norman's mother came to Western Australia to join other members of the Thrum family after the death of her husband at Quorn, South Australia, in 1904. Her parents-in-law resided at Picton and her brother-in-law was the Reverend John Robert Thrum who was the minister at York between 1905 and 1906.

It is believed that Norman and his mother, Edie, came to live with the Reverend Thrum in York, while his siblings went to live with their grandparents in Picton. Norman was enrolled at York School during that time, and his name is on the York School Honour Roll. However, the family was reunited and living in Perth by 1907.

By 1911, Norman was listed as an ordinary seaman on the crew list of the *SS Kapunda*, sailing between Melbourne and Sydney.

He joined the Royal Australian Navy in November of that year but was arrested in March 1912, after being Absent Without Leave for a week, and discharged as medically unfit and unsuitable for service. On his enlistment in the Army on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 1914, Norman stated he had eleven months' service with the Navy and claimed to have purchased a discharge, which was untrue.

His unit, the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia, on board HMAT A11 *Ascanius* on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1914.

On arrival in Egypt, Norman was admitted to the No. 2 General Hospital suffering from influenza but was discharged and back with his unit by the 24<sup>th</sup> February. He was briefly admitted again the following day and diagnosed with rheumatism.

Norman and his unit were among the first to land at Gallipoli on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1914. He survived the landing but received a gunshot wound to the foot on the 4<sup>th</sup> May.

Five days later, Norman was admitted to hospital in Heliopolis reporting frequent pain in his legs and shoulders from rheumatism. He was declared medically unfit and returned to Fremantle aboard the *Ballarat*, to be discharged after a Medical Board found him unsuitable for active service.

Interestingly, Norman appears not to have been issued a 1914/15 Star even though his War service record includes mention of a gunshot wound to his left foot at Gallipoli.

Norman married Blanche Seguy in Perth in 1916, after which he found work as an assistant at Drew Robinson & Co. in Albany.

By 1918, Norman was working as a conductor with Western Australian Government Railways and Tramways, and it was during this time that he lodged an application to acquire land through the Soldiers' Land Settlement Scheme.

In August 1918, Norman applied for employment assistance from the Repatriation Department, stating that he left his employment because of the dust. The Department of Repatriation requested a report from the W.A.G.R. & T. as to whether Norman had left of his free will and were informed that he had left of his own accord, having told them he expected to go on the land with assistance from the Repatriation Department.

Norman received some assistance and worked briefly as a Naval Guard but was soon discharged as medically unfit. In December, the State Board refused to grant him further sustenance assistance.

In January 1919, Norman travelled to Beverley to "Avondale," the State Farm, with a view to learning enough about farming to take up land. However, in April he again applied for sustenance assistance, stating he had left the State Farm because there was no accommodation for his wife which led to unpleasantness with the manager. His application was denied.

The Department of Repatriation, however was informed that Norman appeared unfit to take up farming life, and he was recalled to Perth to be placed in more suitable employment.

In March 1920, Norman travelled to Kununoppin where he had secured a position as a teamster. On the application for travel assistance, he listed his current employment as a theatrical employee, being paid six shillings a night. His father-in-law, "Professor" Seguy conducted the Esplanade Gardens in Perth, so it is likely that Norman was employed by him.

A month later, The Daily News reported that Norman accidentally shot George Waller in his legs while they were hunting kangaroos at Emu Hill.

That same month, he finally took up a block of land at Graball, Emu Hill, near Bruce Rock, under the Soldiers' Settlement Scheme. Norman continued to receive assistance from the Repatriation Department for a period of six months, at the rate of one pound, ten shillings per week.

In September 1921, Norman moved his family to Bruce Rock and then to Narembeen.

In 1922, he sold his block.

At some point, Norman and Blanche parted ways. Their marriage produced four children, but it is unclear how many were fathered by Norman or by Arnold Brophy, Blanche's second husband. Blanche was using the name Brophy by 1931, although she did not marry Arnold Brophy until 1941, and one of the daughters, Joan, wrote of being separated from her parents in the 1930s, never seeing her father again. It appears that the children may have been removed from the care of Blanche and Arnold.

After selling his block, Norman appears to have been employed as a conductor and repairer for W.A.G.R. & T. before taking on jobs as a railway repairer and contractor in the Goldfields.

In 1929, he appeared in the Fremantle Court charged with driving under the influence of liquor, having collided with a stationary car in South Fremantle and not stopping immediately. He was fined ten pounds and his licence was suspended for six months. Norman was living in Midland Junction at the time.

By early 1930, Norman was known to be at "Yeeda" Station, near Derby. He was using the name Michael O'Brien.

In August, his remains were found after being missing from the Station for over six months. He was identified by tattoos on one arm.

The Derby R.S.L. arranged for his burial. The death certificate was registered in the name of Michael O'Brien but amended on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1937 to read "Norman Thrum, otherwise known as Michael O'Brien," on the declaration of his mother, Edie.

## THRUM

# Harry Shepherdson

Service No: 918



## Basic Information

Name: Harry Shepherdson Thrum

Service Number: 918

Date of Enlistment: 20/1/16

Age at Enlistment: 19 years 12 months

Civil Occupation: Clerk

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal, 1914/15 Star

Height: 5 Ft 6 ½ inches

Weight: 123 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 35 inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Grey

Hair Colour: Fair

Father: Edward Henry

Mother: Elizabeth Edith Morris

Siblings: Lillian Charlotte, Norman Horatio

## Life Story

Harry Shepherdson Thrum was born in South Australia in 1896.

His mother, known as Edie, came to Western Australia to join other members of the Thrum family after the death of her husband at Quorn, South Australia, in 1904. Her parents-in-law resided at Picton and her brother-in-law was the Reverend John Robert Thrum who was the minister at York between 1905 and 1906. Harry and Charlotte went to live with their grandparents in Picton, while Norman and his mother lived with the Reverend Thrum in York.

By 1907, the family was reunited and living in Perth. Harry became a student at Perth Boys' School and was placed first in his class when he was in Standard VI.

In 1912, Harry sat, and passed, the Public Service Entrance Examinations after which he was employed as a clerk in the Mines Department. Harry also studied bookkeeping at Perth Technical School and passed his examinations in December 1914 with first class honours.

Harry was a member of the Y.M.C.A. and won a 440 yards swimming race in the Y.M.C.A.'s 7<sup>th</sup> annual interstate tournament held at the Perth City Baths in 1913. According to the particulars completed by his mother for his entry onto the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial, Harry also served for five years with the 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry (West Australian Rifles) prior to his enlistment during the War.

Harry, along with two friends from the Mines Department, enlisted in the 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1916. He left Australia on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1916 and arrived in England on the 21<sup>st</sup> July.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> October, Harry was promoted to Lance Corporal and, on the 25<sup>th</sup> October, to Corporal. He finally proceeded to France on the 25<sup>th</sup> November but, just one month later, was hospitalised with mumps before joining his Battalion in the Field on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 1917.



MEMBERS OF THE MACHINE-GUN SECTION OF THE 44th BATTALION, PHOTOGRAPHED AT SALISBURY PLAIN.

The group includes, Sergeants C. L. Bingley, R. Casey, Corporal L. J. Parks, Lance Corporals H. Thrum, R. H. Rutherford, Privates E. C. Rogers, F. Thorn, H. Vincent, H. Wade, P. S. Back, W. Sturton, G. F. Devenish, W. H. L. McNeece, C. R. Davies, A. J. Mullins, J. Lloyd Jones and F. E. Pound.

Courtesy National Archives of Australia

It was reported in The West Australian newspaper on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> December 1916 that:

*Mrs. F. Thrum, of 349 Roberts road, Subiaco, has received word from her son, Harry (late of the Mines Department, Perth), who left Western Australia as lance corporal, with the machine gun section of the 44th Battalion, that he has had much experience with the new Lewis gun, and after giving instruction to novices in the use of the weapon has been promoted to the rank of corporal.*

On the 25<sup>th</sup> February, Harry was detached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division School. He re-joined his unit in the Field on the 11<sup>th</sup> March and, on the 10<sup>th</sup> June, was promoted to Temporary Sergeant. Harry was promoted to Sergeant on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1917.

Harry Thrum was Killed in Action on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1917. This was the date of the Battle of Broodseinde at Ypres. 6 400 members of the Australian Imperial Force were killed or wounded during the battle.

Harry Shepherdson Thrum is commemorated at Ypres, Belgium, on the Menin Gate Memorial.



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## References

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