



# **Major Harry Thomson**

**(Awarded Military Cross)**



**Played with Adelaide University**



**Football Club: 1907**

**Law Student: LLB 1909**

**Rhodes Scholar: 1910**

## ***Background***

***Coinciding with the Centenary of Anzacs our incentive behind this series of biographical publications is the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Club's desire to honour our players who served in the Great War (1914 - 1918). These brave men put on hold their academic, professional and sporting careers for King and Country in the name of peace and freedom. The AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee is endeavouring to identify every one of our players who served and prepare life stories on all. This is to ensure their sacrifices and further contributions to society will be recognised by future generations.***

***On Anzac Day 2015, the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the Adelaide University Oval Pavilion and this was followed by the erection of a picket fence between the pavilion and the scoreboard with each picket bearing a plaque with the name of an AUFC/AUCC player who served.***

***The following documentation relates to the life of Harry Thomson. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.***

## The AIF Project

<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=300083>



### Harry THOMSON

Place of birth	Adelaide, South Australia
Religion	Protestant
Occupation	Barrister and Solicitor
Address	Weymouth Street, Adelaide, South Australia
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	27
Height	5' 8"
Weight	145 lbs
Next of kin	Aunt, Miss M L Thomson, C/o Varley, Evan Thomson, Solicitors, Mouth Street, Adelaide, South Australia
Previous military service	Sergeant St Peter's College Cadets King Edward's House (England)
Enlistment date	22 July 1915
Place of enlistment	Keswick, Adelaide
Rank on enlistment	2nd Lieutenant
Unit name	10th Battalion, 13th Reinforcement
AWM Embarkation Roll number	23/27/4
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Adelaide, South Australia, on board HMAT A30 <i>Borda</i> on 11 January 1916
Rank from Nominal Roll	Major
Unit from Nominal Roll	50th Battalion
Recommendations (Medals and Awards)	Military Cross
Fate	Recommendation date: 9 March 1918 Returned to Australia 6 May 1919
Medals	Military Cross  Source: 'Commonwealth Gazette' No. 169 Date: 4 October 1917 Military Cross  Source: 'Commonwealth Gazette' No. 165 Date: 24 October 1918
Discharge date	6 August 1919
Other details	Commenced return to Australia on board HT 'Kaiser-i-Hind', 6 May 1919; disembarked Adelaide, 14 June 1919; discharged (appointment terminated), Adelaide, 6 August 1919. Medals: British War Medal, Victory Medal
Date of death	18 October 1933
Sources	NAA: B2455, THOMSON Harry

# Service Records

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1837928>

**AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.**

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

**Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.**

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name THOMSON Harry

Unit 13<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry

Joined on Received commission 23.1X.1915

**Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.**

1. What is your Name? THOMSON, Harry
2. In the Parish of Adelaide in or near the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ in the County of \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalised British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) Natural born
4. What is your age? 27
5. What is your trade or calling? Barrister & Solicitor
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? Served Articles
7. Are you married? No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) And Mrs M. L. Thomson of Varley & Evans & Thomson Solicitors Adelaide
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Unfit, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge { Sergeant St Peter's College (Adelaide) King Edward's Horse (England)}
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? No
14. (For married men and widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service? \_\_\_\_\_

I, Harry Thomson do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allow not less than two fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of person enlisting Harry Thomson

\* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 15 years of age.  
† Two fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three fifths must be allotted.

4TH AUSTRALIAN

MILITARY FORCES.

## Application for a Commission in the

A. I. F. 1915

NO.	PARTICULARS	
1.	Surname ——— Other Names (in full) ———	THOMSON HARRY
2.	Educational Qualifications <small>(Candidates to be attached for service in District Headquarters.)</small>	B.A. (Oxford), LL.B. (Adelaide), Diploma in Law, Law and Political Science (Oxford), RHODES SCHOLAR
3.	Military Qualifications (previous Military Service, if any, to be stated) <small>(Candidates to be attached to their regiments, of U.K. Regulation 137.)</small>	Sergeant 1st Class (Adelaide), 1905 University Rifle Club 1910 King Edward's School (England) 1910-1913 K.L.B. School and Officers' School, A.L.F. - Sergeant
4.	Date on which applicant qualified at a competitive examination for first appointment as Second Lieutenant (U.K. Regulation 137)	1906
5.	Present Civil Employment	Barrister and Solicitor
6.	Date of Birth, and Age	27 <sup>th</sup> February, 1888 27 Years 6 Months
7.	If a British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject <small>(In the case of the latter, date and place of Naturalization to be stated.)</small>	British Subject
8.	Married or Single	Single
9.	Postal Address	4 Varley Street, Thomson Solicitors Rundle Street, Adelaide
10.	Next of Kin	Mrs. M. L. Thomson, 4 Varley Street, Thomson Solicitors, Adelaide
Date <u>September 6<sup>th</sup> 1915</u> (Signature of Applicant) <u>Harry Thomson</u>		

GAZETTED  
C. of A. GAZETTE.  
No. 116 of 25/9/15

NOTE.—Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces are required to attach a satisfactory certificate of moral character, or, if they are serving in the Permanent or Citizen Forces, to be recommended by their Commanding Officer. They are also to state on the back of this form the subjects in which they desire to be examined in Part II, and where exemptions are claimed for educational subjects, the authority for same is to be stated, and where necessary to be supported by certificates.

## MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

In the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces, Proceedings of Medical Board, in accordance with instructions contained in "Standing Orders for the Army Medical Services," will be substituted for this Certificate; such Board, however, will not be assembled until after the completion of the Candidate's medical examination has been approved by the Military Board of Administration.

I, Harold Howard Evans, do hereby certify to the correctness of the following particulars respecting the above-named applicant. I further certify that the applicant is not ruptured, has not been operated on for Hernia, and is capable of bearing the fatigue incident to the performance of military duty.

Height 5 ft. 8 1/2 in. Weight 10 st. 10 lb.  
Chest Measurement 36 1/2 in. Eyesight 6/6 both eyes

Signature of the Examining Medical Officer: H. Evans

## RECOMMENDATION AND CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

(Not required in the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces.)

I recommend that the candidate above-named be appointed a 2nd Lieutenant in the Corps under my command, and I certify—

- That such appointment will be within the authorized establishment for the current year.
- That the provisions of U.K. Reg. 137 have been fully complied with, or
- That the provisions of U.K. Reg. 138 have been fully complied with.
- That all candidates higher in order of merit, by competitive examination, have been absorbed.

On appointment the candidate will be posted to 3rd Bn. 1st Div. Squadron, Battery, or Coy., &c.

Date 13.9.15 Commanding 13.9.15 Regt. or Corps  
**RECOMMENDATION OF DISTRICT COMMANDANT.**  
 Recommended, candidate considered suitable.  
 Date 9 SEP 1915 13.9.15 13.9.15  
 COMMANDANT 4TH MIL. DISTRICT  
 Military District.

\* Sub-para. not applicable to be struck out.

N.B.—Record of War Service (if any) to be shown on back of form.

Seniority of Candidates as determined by competitive examination to be stated when two or more applications are forwarded on the same date.



## PARTICULARS OF SERVICE IN THE A.I.F. IN CONNECTION WITH

Major Harry THOMSON, M.C., ex- General List, A.I.F.

ISSUED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF REPATRIATION, ADELAIDE.

- 22/ 7/15. Enlisted in the A.I.F.  
 16/ 9/15. Appointed 2nd Lieutenant.  
 11/ 1/16. Embarked for Active Service.  
 7/ 2/16. Arrived at Suez.  
 26/ 2/16. Transfd. to 50th Battalion ex 10th Bn.  
 29/ 2/16. Allotted and proceeded to join 50th Bn. and taken on strength (not yet absorbed).  
 12/ 3/16. Absorbed on strength of 50th Bn.  
 13/ 4/16. Admitted to British Red Cross Hosp. P.U.O.  
 26/ 4/16. Discharged to Lady Hewitt's No.12 Conv. Home Cairo.  
 30/ 4/16. Admitted to Lady Hewitt's Hosp.  
 1/ 5/16. TO BE LIEUTENANT.  
 6/ 5/16. Discharged ex Hosp. to Unit.  
 5/ 6/16. Proceeded to join F.E.F. ex Alexandria.  
 12/ 6/16. Disembarked at Marseilles.  
 16/ 8/16. WOUNDED IN ACTION, and admitted Off. Rest Hosp. Shell Shock.  
 17/ 8/16. To Lines.  
 23/ 8/16. Rejoined Unit.  
 5/ 1/ 17. To be seconded for training as Staff Captain to 4th Bde. Headquarters.  
 20/ 4/17. PROMOTED CAPTAIN.  
 20/ 5/17. Attached to Bde.H.Q. for duty.  
 6/ 7/17. WOUNDED IN ACTION, 2nd Occasion.  
 8/ 7/17. Admitted to 14th G.Hosp. Wimereux, G.S.W.Arm.  
 13/ 7/17. Embarked per "St. Denis" for England, - and admitted 3rd Lond. Gen. Hosp. G.S.W.Arm.  
 18/ 7/17. Ceases to be seconded as Staff Captain Trainee attd. 4th Bde.H.Q. on being evacuated wounded.  
 3/ 8/17. Transfd. to 5th Aux.Hosp.  
 27/ 8/17. Discharged ex 5th Aux.Hosp. to duty.  
 6/ 9/17. Proceeded Overseas to France.  
 8/ 9/17. Marched in Havre ex England.  
 9/ 9/17. Marched out to 4th Aust.Div.  
 21/ 9/17. Rejoined Unit.  
 29/ 9/17. To England on duty.  
 1/10/17. Joined Junior School course at Staff School, Cambridge.  
 25/12/17. Proceeded to 4th Inf.Bde.H.Q. for duty.  
 27/12/17. Attached to 4th F.D.Q. from 50th Bn.  
 4/ 1/18. TO BE STAFF-CAPTAIN, and seconded for duty as Staff Captain 4th Inf.Bde.  
 AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS.  
 9/ 6/18. Proceeded on leave France.  
 24/ 6/18. Rejoined 4th Bde.H.Q. from leave.  
 2/ 7/18. Relinquishes the appointment of Staff Capt. 4th Inf.Bde. and is seconded for duty with Director of Education, A.I.F. -  
 2/ 7/18. Ceases to hold appointment of Staff Captain 4th Inf.Bde. on transfer to Education Branch A.I.F.  
 27/7/ 18. Attached for duty Education Department.  
 25/ 9/18. Transfer for 50th Battalion and to be Deputy Director of Education (temp.).  
 7/10/18. Attached to A.I.F. Education Sch. Cambridge for duty as Commandant.  
 6/11/18. Rejoined A.D.H.Q. from on Rem. Cambridge. (Education).  
 23/11/18. Marched out.  
 10/12/18. Proceeded on duty to A.I.F. Depot in U.K. (Education).

1/ 1/19. TO RE MAJOR.  
 2/ 4/19. Sick in Billet (Demob.)  
 6/ 5/19. Struck off Strength, Demob. Dept. (A.I.F. Force)  
 London.- and marched out for Early Depart.  
 (Demob.)  
 6/ 5/19. Left England for return to Australia per  
 "Kaiser-i-Hind". Other Reasons -Sick.  
 14/ 6/19. Disembarked at Adelaide.  
 6/ 8/19. Appointment Termination - at Adelaide.

-----

Captain.  
 for Officer i/c Base Records.  
 29/ 9/21.

### Awarded the Military Cross

TELEPHONE:  
 CENTRAL 4741 3606.  
 In all communications regimental number,  
 rank, full name and unit of Soldier referred  
 to, are to be stated.

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

BASE RECORDS OFFICE,  
 VICTORIA BARRACKS,

Melbourne, 20th November, 1918.

Dear Madam,

I have much pleasure in forwarding hereunder copy of extract  
 from **Second** Supplement No. 30716, to the "London Gazette"  
 dated **3rd June, 1918,** relating to the conspicuous services  
 rendered by the undermentioned member of the Australian Imperial  
 Force.

AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS.

**Captain HARRY THOMSON . "**

The above has been promulgated in "Commonwealth of Australia  
 Gazette," No. 173 dated **7th November, 1918,**

Yours faithfully,

**Miss M.L. Thomson,**  
**C/o Varley Evan & Thomson,**  
**Solicitors, ADELAIDE. S.A.**

Major,  
 Officer i/c. Base Records.

DESPATCHED

C.16078.

## Biography

### Early Life

Harry Thomson was born at Norwood, South Australia on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 1888, the son of George Thomson and Florence Jeffery.

Harry's father, George, was a journalist who received his training on the literary staff of '*The Register*', in Adelaide. For many years he assisted in reporting the debates in the House of Assembly. In about 1891, George left Adelaide to join the staff of the Melbourne '*Age*,' and subsequently worked on the Melbourne '*Daily Telegraph*' and the '*Sydney Morning Herald*'.

Harry's mother, Florence, died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1895, of phthisis (pulmonary tuberculosis or a similar progressive wasting disease), at the West Terrace home of her father, Mr William H Jeffery, she was 28 years old. At the time of his mother's death, Harry was seven years of age and George, was working in Sydney.

When George returned to South Australia, he acted as Secretary to the Royal Commission, which enquired into the Beetaloo Waterworks (July 1896). George then went to Western Australia, where he was engaged on the '*West Australian*,' and afterwards on the '*Coolgardie Miner*'. George passed away on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 1899 of consumption, at Coolgardie, Western Australia, aged 35 years. Harry was thus a double orphan at the age of eleven.

### Schooling

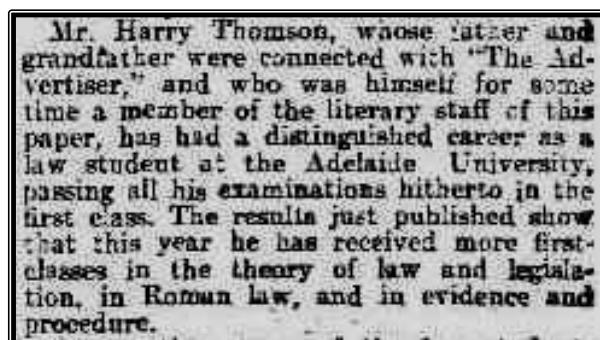
Harry's early schooling was undertaken at Unley Public School where he passed his Preliminary Examinations in 1900 and was awarded a public exhibition in December 1901. He then attended St Peter's College, Adelaide where he passed his Junior Examinations (equal 12<sup>th</sup>) in 1902, Senior Examinations (equal 15<sup>th</sup>) in 1903 and Higher Public Examinations (coming fifth in the General Honours List and first in Inorganic Chemistry) in 1904. Harry was a Sergeant in the St Peter's College Cadets.

### Early Career

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, father and uncle, Harry was on the literary staff of '*The Advertiser*' prior to commencing his University studies. He had decided study Law and was articled to the firm, Grundy & Pelley for three years.

### Adelaide University

Harry commenced studying law at Adelaide University in 1906. In 1907 he gained first-class passes in both the Law of Property and Constitutional Law and in 1909 the following article details further first-class results. Harry was one of two Stow Prize winners in 1909.



Harry was awarded his LLB in December 1909 and was awarded the Rhodes Scholarship.

More details of Harry's early life are recorded in the newspaper article below.



## RHODES SCHOLAR.

### MR. HARRY THOMSON SELECTED.

The Rhodes Selection Committee has resolved to recommend the appointment of Mr. Harry Thomson as the Rhodes scholar for 1910. Five candidates presented themselves for this scholarship. The successful candidate has qualified for admission to the LL.B. degree, which will be conferred upon him on Monday next. He also won a Stow prize at the LL.B. examinations in November. Mr. Thomson, who has had a consistently distinguished career at St. Peter's College and the University of Adelaide, was 21 years of age last February, and is the only son of the late Mr. George Thomson, who began literary work on The Register reporting staff in the eighties, and was afterwards connected with the daily press in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Perth. In 1901 the son won a Government open exhibition for three years at St. Peter's College, and was first on the list. The following year he took honours in the junior public examination, obtaining six credits, with three first places, and was proxime accessit for the Tennyson medal. He also carried off the senior public with honours in 1903, and won the Farrell scholarship of £50 a year for three years, given to the best scholar at his college under 16 years. In 1904 he passed the higher public with credit and first place in chemistry, was dux of St. Peter's College, and won the Young exhibition of £40 for the best scholar. The next year he passed the higher public with honours, won the Government University scholarship of £30 a year for three years, awarded on the results of the higher. This, however, he resigned. He was again dux of his college, and won the Old Collegians' scholarship of £50 a year for three years, and captured the prizes in French, Latin, mathematics, divinity, and the Smith history prize. The next year he began his LL.B.

course at the University, and in that year passed in Latin (first on the list), logic, psychology, and law of contracts. Last November he won the Stow prize, taking the only first class given in evidence and procedure, placed second on the list in the first class for Roman law, and was first class in theory of law. In athletics Mr. Thomson's record is also creditable. He tied for the College Cup in the intercollegiate sports in 1905. In University sports this year he was a member of the law school team (which won the inter-schools' race), was first in the 150 yards flat race and in the 440 yards flat race. In St. Peter's College sports he was second in the 120 yards flat (old scholars), and in the intercollegiate sports was a member of St. Peter's College old scholars' team, third in 100 yards championship, and third in 440 yards flat race. He has also taken an active interest in tennis and lacrosse, football and gymnastics. He has been sergeant in the Unley School Cadet Corps and in St. Peter's College Cadet Corps. In 1906 he was elected to represent Stow Literary Society in Union Parliament, and was reporter of the proceedings of that body. In 1907 he was appointed secretary of Stow Literary Society, and a member of the general committee of the South Australian Literary Societies' Union. He was also a member of the debating team which won the championship of the South Australian Literary Societies' Union, and has been secretary of the University Law Society, and this year won the Law Society debate prize.

At the meeting of the Institute of Journalists on Monday afternoon it was decided to send a letter of congratulation to Mr. Harry Thomson, whose grandfather, uncle, and father, besides himself, were engaged in journalism in South Australia, upon his selection as the Rhodes scholar. The uncle and the father spent several years in The Register Office.

### University Sport

#### Football

Harry played football for the Adelaide University Football team in the Adelaide and Suburban Association in the 1907 season.

#### Rifle

Harry was a member of the Adelaide University Rifle Club in 1910.

## Athletics

Harry competed at the Adelaide University Sports in 1906 coming third in the 120 yards flat, he was third in the Mile Handicap at the Sports in 1908 and a consistent runner at the 1909 Sports.

The schools' flag race was comfortably won by the law quartet—a fast combination. A consistent runner throughout the day was H. Thomson. He finished first in a heat of the 75 yards flat event, but was not placed in the final: won the 150 yards flat and 440 yards flat (cup event); and was in the winning schools' team.

## Oxford University

In June 1910, Harry applied to the Full Court for the return of his matriculation certificate he had filed with his articles instead of a copy. Harry received a farewell at Bricknell's Cafe on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August with a crowd of law students and practitioners present. He departed for England onboard the *Otranto* on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of August 1910. Harry studied at Balliol College and joined the territorial troops (King Edward's Horse). He was among the troops who lined the route for the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1911.

In August 1911 a letter written home to a friend was published in '*The Register*'. The letter gives some details of his life in Oxford, the coronation, his three-week cycling tour on the Continent and his plans for travelling in the holidays, before his second year at Oxford commenced.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AT OXFORD.

Mr. Harry Thomson has completed his first year as a South Australian Rhodes scholar at Oxford. Writing from Balliol College to a friend in Adelaide, Mr. Thomson refers enthusiastically to the life and experience afforded by the great English University. "The first year has been a fairly quiet one (he writes), for there are very real limitations hedging about a 'freshet's' path up here. A couple of preliminary exams. passed, two or three moderate successes in the sporting line, the secretaryship of the Colonial Club, and a post in one of the Union Society's committees are the only events worth recording. But what matters it? The important things in Oxford are not these, but the life, the friends one makes, the points of view one gets, and the atmosphere one lives in." On the occasion of the Coronation Mr. Thomson was chosen among 16 Oxford representatives to attend the great procession as a colonial-military detachment. "The view we got was, of course, splendid," he states, "and the colonials seemed to be pretty popular, judging by the clapping the detachment got. On that evening I left London with a friend, and proceeded to put in the first three and a-half weeks of our long vacation in a cycling tour on the Continent. The Hague was the starting point, and our route was north to Leyden and Haarlem, east to Amsterdam, and south again to Utrecht, thus covering the pick of the attractions of Holland. Utrecht was followed by Cologne (with the finest cathedral in Germany), and from Cologne we dallied up the Rhine, now

from Cologne we dallied up the Rhine, now on one bank and now on the other. Ultimately we reached Heidelberg, having passed through Bonn, Coblenz, Mayence, Frankfurt, and other towns en route. In Heidelberg we had a four days' rest, and then journeyed westward towards Belgium, via Treves and Luxembourg, and subsequently visited Liege and Brussels. It is a trip which will always last in my memory. I was particularly charmed with Holland, and my friend and I have decided to award the Dutch the certificate of merit for cleanliness, tidiness, and general politeness. Most of them are good linguists, and all do what they can to oblige. The Rhine land was the most beautiful part of our trip. Every four or five miles along the great river, as it tore and rushed between mountains, were the ruins of some old castle showing on some hilltop, and every two or three miles on our trip we encountered some quaint little village with watchtower and church, and cobbled roads invented before the days of bicycles. I did not care for Belgium, and Brussels seemed to be only a secondhand pocket edition of Paris—without the redeeming points of Paris. On the whole we were both glad to get back to England—browner and thinner men." During July and August Mr. Thomson intended to spend three weeks in Wales, a fortnight at Weymouth, on the south coast, a fortnight in camp at Aldershot, and then three or four weeks in Scotland; before beginning his second year's studies.

Harry was selected to play lacrosse for Oxford against Cambridge on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1912 and in August 1912, he gained his B.A. Honours Jurisprudence Degree, placing in the top seven of 120 candidates.

**Mr. Harry Thomson, LL.B., the South Australian Rhodes scholar for 1910, may now be spoken of as "an Oxford blue." He was one of those chosen to play in the Oxford lacrosse team against Cambridge on March 6. South Australia was represented on that occasion by Dr. Kenneth Fry and Mr. Thomson.**

**Professor W. Jethro Brown has received a letter stating that Mr. Harry Thomson, a South Australian Rhodes scholar, has taken at Oxford his B.A. honours jurisprudence degree. He was placed in the first class among the first seven of 120 candidates.**

In June 1913 news arrived in South Australia that Harry was soon to return to the state and before he returned he was awarded the Compatriots' Club prize.

**Mr. Harry Thomson, who has just completed his course as a South Australian Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College, Oxford University, will leave England to-day upon his return to this State. Mr. Thomson expects to arrive in Adelaide by the R.M.S. Orama on July 14. Shortly afterwards he will apply for admission to the South Australian Bar, with a view to practise in the legal profession.**

**Mr. Harry Thomson, South Australian Rhodes scholar for 1910, has been awarded the Compatriots' Club prize for an essay, the subject of which was "The economic theory of commercial treaties; with special reference to such treaties or agreements in the nature of treaties between parts of the same Empire."**

## Pre-War Career

In July 1913, Harry applied for admission to as a practitioner of the Supreme Court of South Australia and was admitted to the Bar on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1913. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1913 Harry became a partner in the firm "Varley & Evan" joining Hiram Wentworth Varley and Griffith Mostyn Evan as solicitors at 22 Waymouth St, Adelaide. From the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 1915, the firm was known as "Varley, Evan & Thomson".

Harry commenced playing lacrosse for the Adelaide University B Grade from July 1913.

On his return to South Australia an interview was published in 'The Register'.

## RETURNED RHODES SCHOLAR

### Impressions Abroad.

After three years as a South Australian Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, Mr. Harry Thomson has returned to Adelaide to enter the legal profession. Mr. Thomson speaks in enthusiastic strain of experiences in Great Britain and the Continent, and, incidentally, pays tribute to the valuable legacy left by the great Cecil Rhodes to the British Empire, as well as to other countries. Each year there are about 170 Rhodes Scholars in residence at Oxford, one-half of whom are Americans, about 70 British colonists, and about a dozen Germans. That many of the British representatives have played an important part in the life of the university during recent years is well known, and Mr. Thomson, although loth to speak of his own academic feats, was, among other things, President of the Oxford Colonial Club and President of the University Law Debating Society. Speaking of Oxford in comparison with the great rival university of Cambridge, he mentioned that although the 21 colleges associated with the former place contain about 3,600 students, there are nearly 4,000 at Cambridge. In the realm of sports Mr. Thomson twice played for Oxford against Cambridge, and on each occasion the dark-blues were triumphant.

#### —France and Germany.—

Six months of the year, so far as the Rhodes Scholars are concerned, are devoted more or less to travel, and in this connection, as an observant student, Mr. Thomson visited France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium, in addition to many places in England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Channel Islands. He was particularly interested in the Franco-German question, and while in France on two or three occasions learned much concerning the subject from the French point of view. In his opinion there are no signs of the alleged decadence of the great republic, which he speaks of as a wonderful country, with a system of decentralization that is an object lesson to any other nation. The fertile land within its borders is split up like a chessboard, to use the observer's own words, with scores of cities of well-distributed population, each apparently alive with patriotism. A month or so ago a spy scare prevailed to some extent throughout France, and considerable precautions were taken by the authorities to guard against national secrets leaking out, but the popular feeling of the nation seems to be that it was never stronger than now or more ready to meet any hostile power. Of course, Germany is the principal object of all French military preparations, and it is even said that every gun is pointed toward the Teutonic dominions, while horses are ever in readiness to proceed in that direction. During the past few months gold has been unobtainable from French banks, or in Berlin, for that matter. In the latter metropolis it is understood that £70,000,000 in gold is being kept for any possible war-like complications. La France results of the entente cordiale with Great Bri-

tain are manifest on all sides, but there is an often expressed desire among Frenchmen that some more definite war understanding should exist between the two great peoples. There is a constant interchange of visits between London and Paris on the part of scholars of educational establishments in the two capitals, and in many other directions the utmost good feeling prevails on each side of the Channel.

#### —European Comments.—

Touching further upon European affairs, Mr. Thomson remarked that there was considerable satisfaction in France over the fact that the Turks, associated with German officers and using German artillery, had been so signally defeated by the Balkan Allies, with whom French officers have been advising factors, and who have employed French artillery throughout their campaign. Reverting once more to the Franco-German issue, he said it was the common belief in France that Germany would never attack the republic first, as in that event the active support of Austria might not be forthcoming in her behalf; but that the Teutons would strive rather to trap France into first declaring war should trouble really arise. In some quarters in France it is thought that the recent landing of the German military airship in French territory was a deliberate attempt to provoke national resentment. Contrary to what was believed abroad at the time, the people assert that the secrets contained in the German airship were already in the possession of the French War Office, and that there was nothing new to learn from them.

#### —Affairs in England.—

During his stay at Oxford Mr. Thomson was prominently associated with the Law Debating Society, which was founded just after his arrival in England. The society meets once a fortnight, and its proceedings are occasionally presided over by eminent English Judges, King's Counsel, and others. Among those who have acted as adjudicators at mock trials are Mr. Justice Banks, Mr. Rawlinson, K.C. (Recorder of Cambridge), and Sir Robert Finlay, an ex-Attorney-General of England. Sir William Anson, M.P., a representative of Oxford University in the House of Commons, is one of the most ardent supporters of the Law Society, which began with about a dozen foundation members, and now boasts 60, comprising the majority of the students taking law at Oxford. The Prince of Wales is at present a most popular figure at Oxford. Mr. Thomson describes His Royal Highness as having a quiet and retiring disposition, but as thoroughly enjoying his 'varsity life'. Not long before his departure from Oxford Mr. Thomson

presided at the annual dinner of the Colonial Club, as its President. On that occasion the guests included Earl Grey (President of the Royal Colonial Institute and an ex-Governor of Canada) and Sir George Reid (High Commissioner for Australia). When finally questioned concerning the much-discussed suffragette outrages in the old country, the returned graduate expressed the opinion that the apparent inability of the present British Government to effectively deal with the problem was due possibly to party politics and a fear that if too drastic steps were taken to punish the militants the Unionists would make political capital out of the matter. In a few days Mr. Thomson will apply for admission to the Supreme Court Bar. It is interesting to note that last Friday morning he received a wireless message on the R.M.S. Orama from Mr. Henry Brose the South Australian Rhodes Scholar now en route to England. The communication was sent as the Orama passed the outgoing steamer in the Australian Bigg.



Harry became president of the Unley School Old Scholars Association in October 1913.

In February 1915, Harry became engaged to Miss Florence Price, the third daughter of the late Hon. Thomas Price and Mrs Price of Hawthorn. Harry played lacrosse for Goodwood in 1915.

## World War I

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 1915, Harry enlisted as a Private at the Mitcham Camp, Adelaide. He was 27 years and 5 months old, 5' 7¾", 145 lbs, with a fair complexion, blue eyes and fair hair. His next-of-kin was his aunt, Margaret L. Thomson. Harry attended the Non-Commissioned Officer's School and embarked for active service on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1916.

Harry's war service is well documented in the typed pages from his Service Record at pages 6 and 7 above and the newspaper articles below. He became a Lieutenant on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1916 and a Captain on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1917. The State Library of South Australia holds Harry's diary from 1916 and it states that Harry transferred to the 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion on its formation and he wrote the Battalion song.

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 1917**

Lieutenant Harry Thomson, who left South Australia for the front in January, 1916, has been promoted to the position of Assistant Staff Captain of the 4th Australian Brigade. The recent official report that he was wounded was incorrect, as, with the exception of one day's leave, he has not been absent from his battalion since he reached the western front in June last.



General Sir William Riddell Birdwood decorating an officer for bravery in the first attack on the Hindenburg Line.

The ceremony took place at Ribemont.

Left to right: Captain (Capt) O'Regan MC, Australian Army Medical Corps (AAMC); General Birdwood; Capt H Thomson MC; unidentified (partially obscured); Capt Henry Champion de Crespigny; unidentified (partially obscured); unidentified (standing near a group of unidentified men); Capt A H Fraser MC, Staff Captain of the 4th Infantry Brigade (holding papers); Lieutenant Colonel R Dowse DSO (partially obscured by Fraser); Brigadier General C H Brand CB CMG DSO, Commanding the 4th Infantry Brigade; Mr C E W Bean, Australian Official Correspondent (wearing light coloured pants); Major Hyman (partially obscured by Bean); Major C M Johnston DSO, 15th Battalion (partially obscured by Johnston); Capt D Maxwell MC (standing extreme right).

AWM Image: E00451



Harry was wounded on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1917.

B.R. Form No. 9.

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

A.C.C.                      BASE RECORDS OFFICE,  
VICTORIA BARRACKS,  
MELBOURNE,                      21st. July 1917.

Dear Madam /  
I now beg to advise you that Captain H. Thomson,  
has been reported admitted 14th. General Hospital,  
Boulogne, France, 8/7/17, suffering from gunshot wound Forearm  
His postal address will be:— Severe.

Captain H. Thomson  
50th. Battalion (late 10th. Battalion)  
Australian Imperial Force,  
Abroad.

In the absence of further reports it is to be assumed that satisfactory progress is being maintained, but anything later received will be promptly transmitted, it being clearly understood that if no further advice is forwarded this department has no more information to supply.

Yours faithfully,  
**J. M. LEAN**, Major,  
*Officer in Charge, Base Records.*

D.194/3.17.—C.3416.

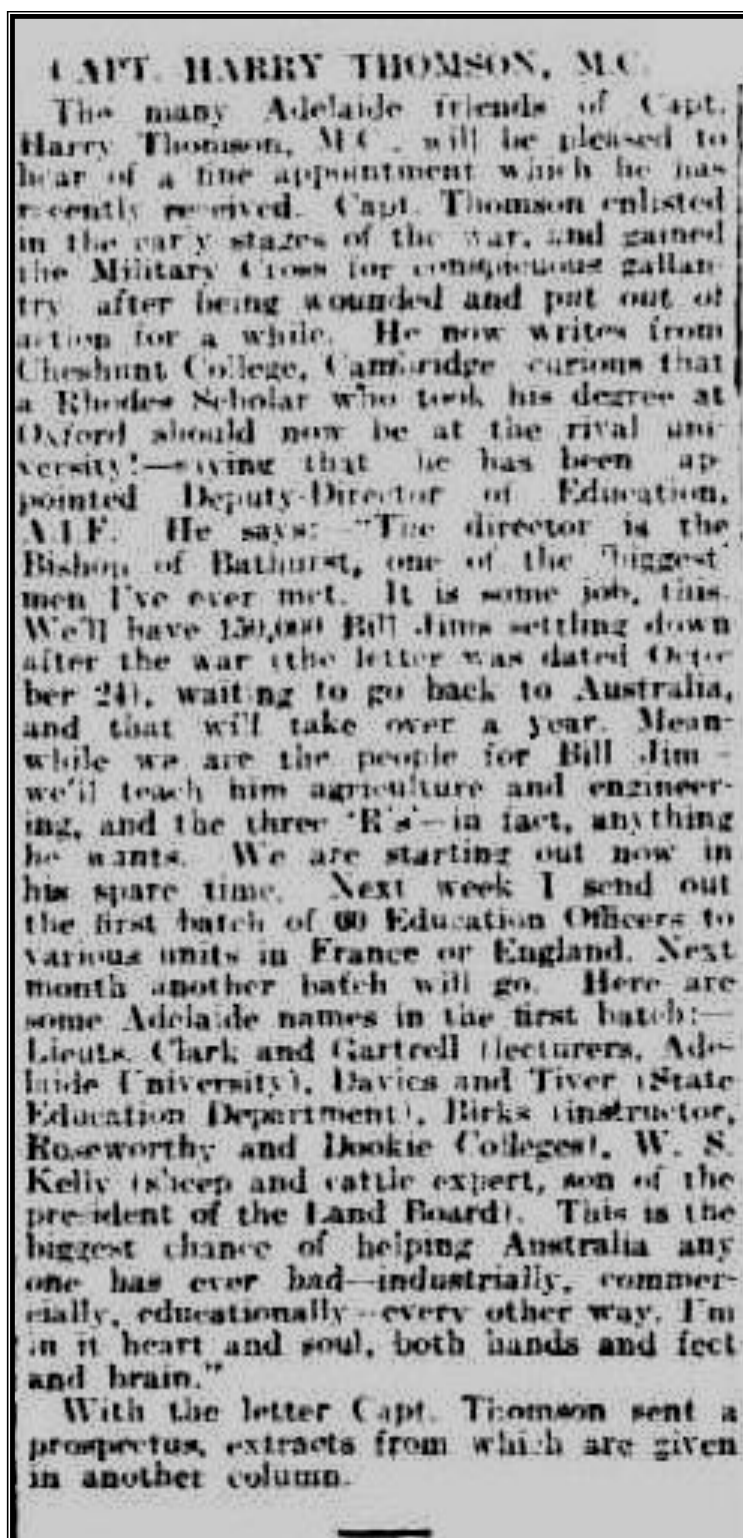
On the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1918, Harry was appointed to the role of Staff Captain and awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous service.

6 June 1918

**Captain Thomson.**

Captain Harry Thomson, who has been awarded the Military Cross, is an ex-member of "The Advertiser" literary staff, and a grandson of the late Mr. W. H. Jeffery, who was for many years managing printer in "The Advertiser" Office. Captain Thomson is a son of the late Mr. George Thomson, who also was a member of "The Advertiser" reporting staff. He was educated at St. Peter's College, and upon deciding to adopt the law as a profession he served his articles with Messrs. Varley & Evan. He had a brilliant University career, and was chosen as the Rhodes Scholar in 1909. Upon returning to Adelaide from Oxford University he became a member of the legal firm with which he had previously been connected, and the business is still carried on as that of Messrs. Varley, Evan, and Thomson. Captain Thomson enlisted in 1915, was made a lieutenant later on, and in April, 1917, was gazetted captain in the 50th Battalion. He is acting as staff-captain in an Australian infantry brigade.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1918, Harry transferred to the Education Branch, AIF and was a Deputy Director of the AIF Education Service which aimed "to help each individual soldier in mind, character, and occupation, and by doing so to help the future of Australia after the war".



On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1919, Harry was promoted to the rank of Major. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 1919, while still on active service, Major Harry Thomson married Edith Anne Marie Charlotte Le Floch of Quimperle, France, the daughter of Alain Le Floch at the Parish Church, Hersham, Surrey, UK. Harry and his wife returned to Australia on the *Kaiser-i-Hind*, departing from the UK on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 1919 and arriving in Adelaide on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1919. Harry's appointment with the AIF was terminated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1919.

1919. Marriage solemnized at *The Parish Church* in the Parish of *Northam* in the County of *Swire*

Columns --	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
177	<i>January 1919</i>	<i>Harry Thomson</i>	<i>30 Years</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Major Australian Imperial Force</i>	<i>West Pine House</i>	<i>George Thomson (deceased)</i>	<i>Journalist</i>
	<i>1919</i>	<i>Edith Anne Marie Charlotte Le Hock</i>	<i>25 Years</i>	<i>Spinster</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Quimperle, France</i>	<i>Alain Le Hock</i>	<i>Gentleman</i>

Married in the *Parish Church* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Established Church* by *Licence* or after \_\_\_\_\_ by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Harry Thomson* in the Presence of us, *Edith Anne Marie Charlotte Le Hock*, *Fredrick Walter Robinson* *J. M. Baillie*

### Post-War Career and Family Life

Harry returned to the practice of the law with Varley, Evan and Thomson. He was welcomed back to Adelaide by the Johnian Club (a non-sectarian society established in Adelaide on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1913, for the 'study and discussion of literary, scientific and other subjects of general interest').

Harry and Edith holidayed at Lake Victoria in July 1919 and then took a flat at Unley Park.

Harry and Edith's elder son, Alain Harry Thomson was born at Quambi, South Terrace, Adelaide, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 1920 and a second son, Cedric Jeffery Thomson was born on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 1923.

Harry was present at the Adelaide University Sports in 1920 and in September 1923, he became the President of the SA Amateur Athletics Association. In 1923, Harry was also Vice President of the Goodwood Lacrosse Club and a Trustee of St Mark's College.

In June 1924, Edith took Alain (aged 4) with her on a trip back to France. A newspaper article in August 1925 described Harry as follows:

**One-time Rhodes scholar Mr. Harry Thomson is a lawyer. His hobby is leader writing and his pastime tennis, while he is a keen critic of a game of football.**

"Leader writing" was the writing of articles which would appear on the leader page of a newspaper. Harry wrote many such articles on politics, economic matters, the Olympic Games and other topics for the 'News' with the by-line "By Harry Thomson".

In August 1925, Harry was a judge at the Intercollegiate Boxing match.

In July 1926, Harry and Edith holidayed in Sydney for a fortnight.

In 1928, Harry was described as a past President of the Unley RSL.

After the death of his law practice partner, Mr H. Varley, Harry was appointed a legal assessor on the Adelaide Voluntary Tribunal of Arbitration. In August 1928 Harry became a Vice-President of the SA Law Society and in December 1928, he became a member of the Adelaide University Council.

Sadly, for the family, Edith's mother, Suzanne Le Floch passed away suddenly in February 1929.

### Who's Who in Australia, 1929

#### **THOMSON, Harry.**

M.A. (Oxon.), LL.B., Dip. Ec. Barrister and Solicitor, Varley, Evan and Thomson. Address: Waymouth St., Adelaide, S.A. Est. 1890. Dir. S.A. Hotel. Member Council St. Mark's College. Chairman St. Peter's Old Scholars' Ass'n. Born: Adelaide, 1883. Son of George and Florence Thomson (nee Jeffery), of Adelaide. Educated: Unley School, St. Peter's College, Adelaide University and Balliol College, Oxford. In 1910 was awarded Rhodes Scholarship for S.A. Began professional career with "Advertiser," 1906. In 1913 commenced practising as Barrister and Solicitor. Lectured at Adelaide University on Law of Wrongs, 1920-25. Joint author, Aust'n Edition of Introduction to the Study of Social Problems, 1919. Served during Great War with 50th Batt. and 4th Brigade Headquarters, in Egypt and France, 1915-19, holding rank of Major. Gained M.C. Deputy Dir. of Education of A.I.F. after Armistice. Married: Edith Anne Marie Charlotte Le Floch, daughter of Alain Le Floch, of Quimperle, France, 1919. Issue: Two sons. Clubs: Naval and Military, University and R.S.A. Society: St. Peter's Collegiate No. 53. Recreations: Tennis, golf and motoring. Politics: Liberal. Creed: Anglican. Home address: Elm St., Millswood, Adelaide, S.A.

Harry was present at an Old Scholars event at Unley Public School in April 1929.

### **NOTABLE UNLEY OLD BOYS**

#### **Mr. H. Thomson, Rhodes Scholar; Mr. Price, M.H.R.**

Unley public school has given South Australia leading citizens. Many of them gathered at the jubilee celebrations there yesterday, and exchanged reminiscences.

One whose career redounds to the credit of his old school is Mr. Harry Thomson, a South Australian Rhodes scholar. He won a bursary at Unley, and then went through St. Peter's College to Adelaide University. There he graduated LL.B. in 1906, and the same year went to Balliol College, Oxford, under the Rhodes bequest.



Mr. H. Thomson

His earlier promise was fulfilled there in law and economic and political science courses. His war services were distinguished. He reached the rank of major, and won the Military Cross.

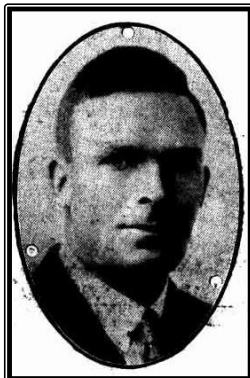
Mr. Price, M.H.R., who was at the celebrations yesterday, attended the school in 1893. He is the son of a Premier who rendered outstanding service to education in South Australia.



In August 1930, Harry underwent an operation for appendicitis at Calvary Hospital, North Adelaide and two weeks later he underwent a second operation at the same hospital. By mid-August he was progressing satisfactorily.

In late August 1930, Harry was appointed a King's Council and in 1931, Harry became President of the SA Law Society (February) and President of the SA Returned Soldiers League (December 1931 to November 1932).

August 1930



Harry Thomson, K.C.

February 1931

**MR. H. THOMSON, K.C.**

**NEW PRESIDENT OF LAW SOCIETY**

Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C., has been elected president of the Law Society of South Australia, in succession to Mr. T. S. O'Halloran, K.C., who has retired after having held the office for five years.

Mr. Thomson is a former member of "The Advertiser" literary staff. His father, Mr. George Thomson, was also a member of the reporting staff, and his grandfather, Mr. W. H. Jeffery, was for many years managing printer of "The Advertiser." The new president of the Law Society was educated at St. Peter's College, and after deciding to adopt the law as his profession, was articled to the firm of Varley and Evan, of which he is now a member. He had a brilliant University career, winning the Stow prize, and being selected Rhodes Scholar for 1909.

After a distinguished career at Oxford, Mr. Thomson was admitted to the South Australian Bar in 1913, and enlisted for active service in 1915. He gained his commission in the field, rising to the rank of major, and winning the Military Cross. He was prominently connected with the scheme for the education of A.I.F. troops while abroad. Three or four years ago he did especially good work when appearing for certain members of the police force before the Bribery Commission. In August last he was appointed King's Counsel with Messrs. G. C. Ligertwood and H. Mayo.


A small, square-framed black and white portrait of a man with dark hair, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking directly at the camera.



December 1931

**The New President**

Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C., who was nominated for the position of president unopposed, has made a name for himself in both his civil and military careers. He is a former member of the literary staff of "The Advertiser," with which both his father and grandfather were connected. He was educated at St. Peter's College, and when he left school was articled to the law firm of Varley and Evan, of which he is now a member. He was selected as the Rhodes Scholar for 1909, and after a distinguished career at Oxford, was admitted to the South Australian Bar in 1913. In 1915 he enlisted, and joined the 10th Battalion, but in 1916 was transferred to the 50th Battalion. He gained his commission in the field, rising to the rank of major, and winning the Military Cross. Altogether he saw three and a half years of active service, mostly in Egypt and France. Mr. Thomson was the first president of the Unley sub-branch of the R.S. and S.I. League, and is still actively associated with it.



**Mr. H. Thomson, K.C.**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1932, Harry and Edith left onboard the 'Nestor' on a holiday trip to America and Europe. They were to be away for six months and returned home in mid September 1932.

### Harry Thomson, K.C., On Holiday

**H**ARRY Thomson, K.C., who is travelling with his wife on a holiday trip, writing from London to a friend in Adelaide, says—"At present it looks as if I shall leave for New York on July 16 or July 23. We had an excellent motor tour last month. Next month I go to Jersey to play golf for a week, and then on to Paris for a few days. I like to vary the city with the country. In fact, but for the people one meets in London, I'd rather be in the English country—it is so beautiful. Last week-end I spent up at Oxford, mostly reminiscing. It was very pleasant, and the port was quite good. I was pleased to discover the other day here my old friend, Barrington Ward, as assistant editor of the 'Times.' We had lunch yesterday, and it was interesting to get his angle on certain newspaper problems. There is somewhat of a newspaper war on here at present, and they have all gone competition mad." It is a far cry back to the days when Harry Thomson, a reporter on "The Advertiser," and I as representing the old "Register," reported a vintage picnic at Brighton. Luncheon was served under the jetty, and Tom Price grew eloquent as he attuned his flowing periods to the surging sea.

September 1932



In March 1933, Harry became the first President of the newly formed Association of Rhodes Scholars in Australia.

**FORMER RHODES  
SCHOLARS MEET  
Mr. Thomson, K.C., Chair-  
man Of New Association**

**MELBOURNE, March 3.**  
The first conference of the Association of Rhodes Scholars in Australia was held at Trinity College, Melbourne, on Monday and Tuesday, and was attended by delegates from Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Queensland. It was expected that Mr. Justice Halse Rogers would be present as a delegate from New South Wales, but a rearrangement of court work at the last moment made it impossible for him to leave Sydney. Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C. (South Australia) was elected chairman.

## Death

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1933, Harry passed away aged only 45. He had been diagnosed with leukaemia four years before his death and had known that without rapid advances in medical treatment, he was doomed. He left his wife and two sons. Harry was buried at the West Terrace Cemetery.

He left an estate valued for probate at £18,913, subject to deductions for debts and other liabilities. He made a bequest of £60 to be divided among members of the staff of Varley, Evans, Thomson and Buttrose and certain law books to his partners. The remainder of the estate was left for the benefit of his widow and sons.

Many tributes were published in the Adelaide papers and some of them are included below.

### **Knew He Was Doomed**

His medical advisers informed Mr. Thomson four years ago that the best they could hope to do was by treatment to prolong his life for, perhaps, eight years. In the meantime a remedy might be found. Two years ago the doctors told him he could not live more than another two years.

Mr. Thomson did not tell even his most intimate friends of the dire prophecy of his medical advisers, but continued handling important cases in the courts and working at high pressure on the multitude of exacting details associated with the conduct of a large practice. This strength of will was typical of the man.

But the end had to come. A few weeks ago, following a particularly arduous spell in important cases which would have taxed the strength of a man enjoying normal health, Mr. Thomson had to take to his bed. With the same efficiency which had characterised his professional work, he completed the disposal of his property and lapsed into unconsciousness, tragically beyond the aid of medical science.

### **Judicial Mind**

He had a host of friends. Some of Adelaide's leading lawyers and medical practitioners look upon his passing as the loss of a man who had been really a true friend when they wanted one.

He had a ready wit. He saw the humor in a situation much quicker than most people, and then a smile, which was not cynical, though many people thought it was, passed over his face.

A keen tennis player, there was deliberateness in his every stroke. And it was the same in his scholastic and professional career. He knew where he wanted to go, and he went there with the least amount of effort and fuss.

Possessing the solid foundation of a sound education and a judicial mind, his friends expected that ultimately he would be offered a judgeship.

The funeral of Mr. Thomson will leave his former home, Elm street, Millwood, at 3 p.m. tomorrow for the West Terrace Cemetery. The Rev. A. Depledge Sykes will officiate at the graveside.

(Other references on Page 9)

## **LAW SOCIETY'S TRIBUTE**

### **Mr. Villeneuve Smith, Expresses Sympathy**

"The death of Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C., in the meridian of his powers, bereaves the legal profession of one of its brightest ornaments and a universal friend, and the State itself sustains a blow in the heavy loss of a cultured and upright gentleman," said the president of the Law Society (Mr. F. Villeneuve Smith, K.C.).

"His remarkable talents developed and enriched by great scholarship, had the gracious accompaniments of courtesy, geniality, and loyalty. Severe in self-judgment, he knew how to bear a friend's infirmities, and the doors of his chambers were open wide to the junior in need of advice or assistance.

"As a member of the council of the Law Society and later, as its president, he labored unremittingly for the interests of the profession and for the maintenance, by its members, of its traditional ideals of which his own were a pattern.

"In every circle where his sunny nature radiated, in his home, in his chambers, in his profession, in his universities, and beyond all these, in the world, he was loved, admired, and honored, and he leaves behind him a memory and an example which may serve as an inspiration to those who follow him.

"The council of the Law Society and the society itself lament the loss of one of its most valued members and cherished friends, and offer to the afflicted widow and children their deep and heartfelt sympathy."

## R.S.L. Condolences

"With all returned men and women I am deeply grieved to hear of the death of this great man," said the president of the R.S.L. (Col. R. B. Jacob). "Our association has suffered an irreparable loss by the death of this comrade, who was a member of the State board, and last year acted as State president."

"His keen willingness at all times to assist the diggers, and his valuable advice that was always available, can never be replaced."

"Personally I have lost a great friend. We served together at the war, and have been closely associated ever since. The deepest sympathy of all former service men and women in this State is extended to his widow and family."

## Mr. H. Thomson, K.C., Dead

### FINE LEGAL CAREER

### Brilliant Scholar And Athlete

### MANY FRIENDS

Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C., brilliant scholar, lawyer, and sportsman, and senior partner in the firm of Varley, Evan, Thomson, & Buttrose, died last night at the age of 45 years.

By his death South Australia has lost a lawyer of outstanding ability. At Unley State School, at St. Peter's College, at Adelaide University, and as Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University he took every obstacle in his stride. Scholarship had succeeded scholarship.

On his return from the war he quickly forged ahead into a place in the front rank of the legal profession, and at the time of his death, in the prime of life, had a lucrative practice.

Mr. Thomson died from a rare disease known as leukaemia, which means that the white corpuscles in the blood are so powerful that they engulf the red. Research workers throughout the world are striving to discover both the cause of, and remedy for, the disease.



THE LATE MR. HARRY THOMSON, K.C.

## Late Mr. Thomson

(Continued from Page 1)

## STROVE FOR SUCCESS

## Father Died At Early Age

## DUX OF SCHOOL

Mr. Thomson had worked hard to reach his eminence in the legal profession. Because of the death of his father at an early age, an aunt, who was a school teacher, had the care of him in the days of his youth, and he amply repaid the sacrifice she made for him. He was dux of the Unley State School, and went on to St. Peter's College, where he jumped from triumph to triumph.

He was a school prefect and a member of the inter-collegiate sports team.

Mr. Thomson passed the junior certificate examination in 1902, the senior in 1903, and the higher public in 1904 and 1905. He won the Farrell Open Scholarship in 1903, and the Young Exhibition the following year. This can be awarded only once to each person, otherwise he would have probably won it again in 1905. However, he was awarded a University scholarship, and the old collegians' scholarship, and the Smith History Prize in that year.

## RHODES SCHOLAR

At the University he studied law and took his LL.B. degree.

He was chosen Rhodes Scholar for 1910, and entered Balliol College, Oxford. While there he secured his degree as Master of Arts and also the Diploma of Economics. He won his half Oxford blue for lacrosse, and played that game for Oxford against Cambridge in 1912 and 1913.

Mr. Thomson had not been back in Australia long when war broke out. He enlisted in 1915, went away with the 13th reinforcements of the 10th Battalion, and was later drafted into the 50th Battalion, and was in the heavy fighting at Pozieres and Monquet Farm. Soon afterward he was appointed staff captain on 4th Brigade headquarters under Gen. Brand, and while serving in this capacity was awarded the Military Cross.

### ORGANISING ABILITY

From France Mr. Thomson went to England to be deputy director of the scheme launched by the Federal Government for the education of Australian soldiers who wanted to avail themselves of the opportunity. In this work Mr. Thomson showed himself to be possessed of marked organising ability, and he was promoted to the rank of major.

At the close of hostilities Mr. Thomson married a French woman, whom he had met some years previously. There are two young boys in the family, Allan and Cedric.

On his return to Adelaide Mr. Thomson joined the old established firm of Varley and Evan. Mr. Mostyn Evan died, and then Mr. Varley, and Mr. Thomson found himself at the head of it.

For five years—from 1920 to 1925—he was lecturer in law at the University of Adelaide, and he had been a member of the University council since 1923. Mr. Thomson was also a member of the Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee. He was made a K.C. in 1930, was president of the Law Society in 1931, president of the South Australian branch of the R.S.L. in 1932, and president of the South Australian Amateur Athletic Association in 1923-5. He was a director of News Ltd.

## In Local Court

In the Adelaide Local Court today Mr. C. C. Crump, on behalf of the Bar, said that Mr. Thomson had endeared himself to the whole of the legal profession. Many of the younger members had sat under him when he lectured in law at the University.

"We knew him not only as a lecturer, but as a genuine friend," said Mr. Crump. "A student could go to him as one man to another and have a straight talk."

Mr. Crump referred to Mr. Thomson's brilliant career, and added:—"He practised his profession in accordance with its highest ideals. His death is the loss of the country in general but to the juniors of the profession in particular, for Mr. Thomson was only a young man."

Mr. L. H. Haelam, S.M., who presided in the Local Court, said that Mr. Thomson regularly practised in the court, and his appearances were most welcome for two reasons.

These were his charm and ability—and his extraordinary legal attainments. He had been cut off at the zenith of his career.

## Courts Adjourn

After having expressed regret at the death of Mr. Thomson, Mr. President Kelly, in the Industrial Court today, adjourned the proceedings for 10 minutes as a mark of respect.

He said that as the president of the Industrial Court and of the Board of Industry, he wished publicly to express his condolences.

"It is unnecessary for me to speak of Mr. Thomson's unlimited ability and capacity for work, his distinctions in the literary and athletic, as well as the academic fields, Mr. President Kelly continued.

"I am sure that the members of the Bar will join with me in expressing deep regret in the loss of one of the most able sons of the State.

Mr. S. C. G. Wright, on behalf of members of the Bar, said that all regretted Mr. Thomson's death.

The Bankruptcy Court was adjourned for five minutes as a mark of respect to Mr. Thomson. The Registrar (Mr. A. S. Howland) and Mr. J. L. Travers, the latter on behalf of the Bar, made sympathetic references to his death.

## At the Legacy Club

Sympathetic references to the death of Mr. Thomson, a member of the club, were made at the weekly luncheon of the Legacy Club today. Expressions of condolence were also made to Dr. Rex and Mr. Stewart Matters on the death of their father Cr. T. J. Matters.

## Athletes' Sympathy

"Mr. Thomson was a man for whom I had the greatest admiration—somewhat reserved, but of wonderful worth," said the president of the South Australian Amateur Athletic Association (Mr. A. G. Fenner). "Not only the realm of athletics, but South Australia and Australia as a whole, will feel his loss.

"He combined a brilliant brain with a charming personality. We amateur sportsmen will be desolate in the absence of one who had hardly reached his prime.

"Mr. Thompson held the office of president of our association for three years, from 1923 to 1925. He was a boxing judge from 1924 onward and acted in that capacity in the State championships in August this year. In addition, he acted as referee at all official State athletic championships."



# MOURED BY ALL SECTIONS

## Burial of Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C.

### STRIKING TRIBUTES

Striking tribute to the high esteem in which the late Harry Thomson, K.C., was held, came from all sections of the community today. It was shown by means of floral tributes, messages of condolence to his family from all parts of Australia, and most of all by the wonderfully representative gathering at his burial.

Mr. Thomson had been a brilliant scholar, lawyer, and sportsman, and was senior partner in the legal firm of Varley, Evan, Thomson, and Buttrose. In addition his war service, and his close association with the R.S.L. in the years that followed, extended his friendships to an even wider sphere.

Throughout the day floral tributes of every design were arriving at Mr. Thomson's home, Elm street, Goodwood. When the cortege moved off for West Terrace Cemetery many of Adelaide's most prominent citizens followed the hearse to pay their last respects to an honored friend.

### BISHOP AT SERVICE

A brief service was conducted in the house by the Bishop of Adelaide (Dr. A. Nutter Thomas), in conjunction with the Rev. A. Depledge Sykes. They are also officiating at the graveside.

The Attorney-General (Mr. Jeffries), who had called a conference to discuss relief employment for this afternoon, attended the house before hurrying back to that appointment.

Pall-bearers were the president and vice-president of the Law Society (Messrs. F. Villeneuve Smith and C. L. Jessop), Mr. Thomson's legal partners (Messrs. Ian Buttrose and S. H. Lewis), and two members of the Rhodes Scholars' Association (Mr. R. J. Rudall, M.P., and Dr. W. Ray).

Among the organisations officially represented at the graveside were the University of Adelaide, Supreme Court, Crown

Law Office, the Law Society, Returned Soldiers' League, St. Mark's College, St. Peter's Collegians' Association, St. Peter's Collegians' Masonic Lodge, Rhodes Scholars' Association, South Australian Amateur Athletic Association, and the Lacrosse Association.

News Ltd., of which Mr. Thomson was a director, was represented by the chairman of directors (Mr. A. E. Clarkson), the general manager (Mr. Harold Burston) and the secretary (Mr. B. H. Roberts).

### JUDGE PAINE'S TRIBUTE

In the Bankruptcy Court today Judge Paine said that it was the first formal occasion which he had had to refer to Mr. Thomson's death.

"Mr. Thomson has been cut off by what must seem to us an inscrutably adverse Fate, when he had attained a high standard in his profession," said His Honor.

"His talents were wide in their scope. Not only in law, but in the commercial sphere he had shown marked ability.

"Mr. Thomson always held himself modestly and courageously. His many friends will always remark on his charm and strength of character."

Mr. K. C. Wilson, on behalf of the Bar, said that Mr. Thomson had been particularly helpful to the younger members of the legal profession.

"No one could have better upheld the dignity and honor of his profession," said Mr. Wilson. "He was untiring in his efforts to help others."

Judge Paine and Mr. Wilson both expressed sympathy with the widow and sons of Mr. Thomson.

## DEATH OF MR. THOMSON, K.C.

### Notable Legal And Scholastic Career

#### FORMER RHODES SCHOLAR

Mr. Harry Thomson, K.C., died late on Wednesday night at his home at Millwood after an illness lasting several weeks. Although only 45 years of age, he had had a distinguished career at the Bar following brilliant academic achievements at St. Peter's College and the Universities of Adelaide and Oxford.

The disease from which Mr. Thomson died was a rare one known as leucocythaemia, which is characterised by an excessive number of white corpuscles in the blood and progressive anaemia. He was told some years ago by doctors that he had it, and that, although it might take some time to run its course, the length of his life was definitely limited unless research workers found a cure in the meantime. There is no satisfactory treatment known for the disease, and in the absence of the discovery of one, he knew that he was doomed.

Two years ago he was told he had only two years to live, but only those in the closest touch with him knew. To others associated with him professionally or in his many other interests he seemed in the prime of life. He continued his legal work, having undertaken important cases even in recent months. However, a few weeks ago he became too ill to attend his office, and gradually became worse.



The late Mr. Thomson

Before adopting the law as his profession, Mr. Thomson was a member of the literary staff of "The Advertiser," his father, Mr. George Thomson, having also been a reporter on this paper, and his grandfather, Mr. W. H. Jeffery, for many years managing printer. Leaving "The Advertiser," Mr. Harry Thomson was articled to the firm of Varley & Evan, in which he subsequently became a partner. His accomplishments at the Adelaide University were crowned by his selection as Rhodes Scholar in 1909, and his admission to the South Australian Bar, in 1913, followed a notable career at Oxford, where, apart from his further scholastic successes, he gained a half-blue for lacrosse. In 1912 he gained first-class honors in jurisprudence at Oxford, and in November of the same

year graduated B.A. Oxon. In June, 1913, he took a diploma in economic and political science with distinction. How high a position he gained at Oxford is evidenced by the fact that in 1912-13 he was president of the Law Society, and in 1913 was president of the Colonial Club.

#### Military Success

In 1915 Mr. Thomson enlisted and added military laurels to his other achievements by rising to the rank of major and winning the Military Cross. He saw three and a half years' active service, mainly in Egypt and France. He was particularly interested in a scheme for educating the Australian troops, and had Cheshunt College under his direct supervision.

Since the war Mr. Thomson has been eminently successful at the Bar, and was appointed King's Counsel in August, 1930. In 1931 he was elected president of both the Law Society of South Australia and of the Returned Soldiers' League. He was chairman of the conference of Rhodes Scholars in Melbourne in March last. He was on the councils of the University of Adelaide and of St. Mark's College.

#### Court Adjourned For 10 Minutes

When the Industrial Court assembled yesterday morning the president (Mr. W. R. Kelly) said he had received an intimation of the death of Mr. Thomson. As President of the Industrial Court and of the Board of Industry he wished publicly to express his sincere sympathy with the relatives. It was unnecessary for him to speak of Mr. Thomson's undoubted ability, or his capacity for work, or of his distinctions in the literary and athletic fields, or of his academic attainments. He was sure that the members of the Bar would join with him in his expression of deep regret at the loss of one of the ablest sons of the State.

Mr. S. C. G. Wright, on behalf of the Bar, said he was sure that the members of the profession joined with the president in the regret he had expressed.

The court adjourned for 10 minutes as a mark of respect.

In the Adelaide Local Court Mr. C. C. Crump said Mr. Thomson had endeared himself to members of the legal profession. Many of the junior members had sat under him when he was a lecturer on law at the Adelaide University. To many of them he had been a true friend. They felt they could go to him and have a straight out talk. He had always held and carried out in the exercise of his profession, the highest ideals. His death was a loss not only to the profession, but also to the country generally.

Mr. L. H. Haslam, S.M., who was on the bench, said Mr. Thomson's appearances in the Local Court were always welcome, partly because of his charm and ability and also because of his extraordinary legal attainments. He had been cut off in the very zenith of his career and when he could naturally have expected to enjoy the rewards of his hard work.

Officials of the S.A. Amateur Athletic Association expressed great regret at the passing of Mr. Thomson, who was at one time president of the association, and since took a keen interest in the doings of the amateur sports movement in South Australia.

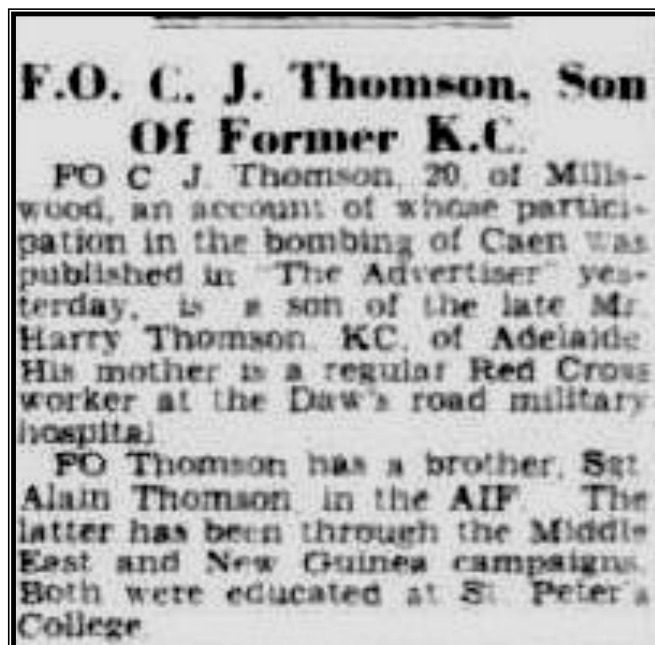
Mr. Thomson has left a widow and two sons, who are being educated at St. Peter's College.

## Legacy

Harry and Edith's sons were both educated at St Peter's College, Adelaide.

In World War II, Alain, SN SX2980, was a Warrent Officer, Class 2 in the AIF and was involved in the Middle East and New Guinea campaigns. Cedric, SN 417904, was a Flying Officer in the RAAF in WWII, he was involved in the bombing of Caen and in D Day, he was awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French government.

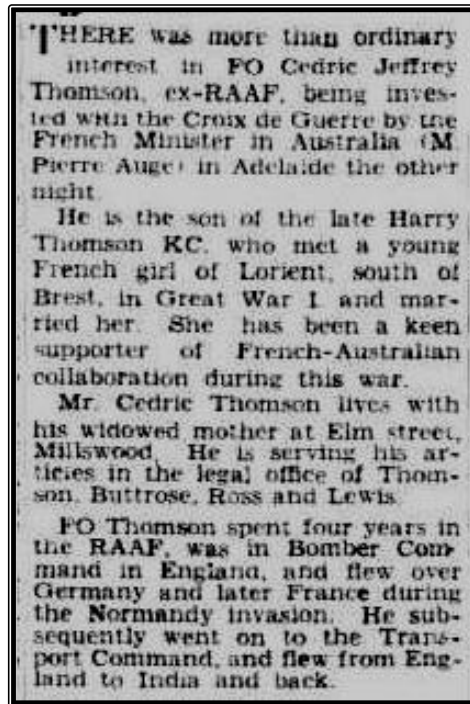
7 October 1944



10 August 1945



9 October 1947



Alain became engaged to Joan Margaret Farquhar, the younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Farquhar of Glen Osmond in October 1946. The couple had a daughter born in October 1948 and a second daughter (Diana Margaret) born on 15 July 1951. Alain died on 9 September 2007 and was cremated at Centennial Park, Adelaide.

Cedric followed his father into the law. He was articled to his father's old firm and gained his LLB from Adelaide University in 1951. Cedric married Miss Rosemary Sandford Morgan, of Crafers, the daughter of Dr. Elma Sandford Morgan and the late Major H. Morgan. The couple lived at Unley Park and had at least two children (daughters, born on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1953 and 30 August 1954). Cedric died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2005 and his ashes are interred at Centennial Park, his last abode was a Melrose Park, SA.

Harry's widow, Edith, died 24 April 1956 and her ashes were interred at Centennial Park, her last abode was at Unley Park, Adelaide, SA.



Captain Thomson's medal set, L-R: Military Cross, British War Medal, Victory Medal.



## **Sources**

The AIF Project <https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/>

RSL Virtual War Memorial <https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/>

The National Archives of Australia <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>

Australian War Memorial <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/>

The Adelaide University <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/records/archives/>

The National Library of Australia <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

(Trove Newspaper articles tagged – Harry Thomson)

SA Genealogy <https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/online-databases.html>

Ancestry.com.au

<http://unleyww1.weebly.com/t.html>

<https://www.centennialpark.org/memorial-search/>

<https://www.archives.sa.gov.au/> State Records of SA GRG 26/5/4/2226

State Library of South Australia <http://www.catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au/>

The SLSA holds the following:

Papers of Major Harry Thomson, MC, comprising war diary in France, 1916, ten menus (1913-1920) and copy of brigade commendation, April 1918.