

10: Thomas Campion

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Thomas Campion
 Rank: Private
 Battalion / Regiment: Royal Naval Reserve Shown on CWGC as being a Deck Hand H.M.S. "Vivid"
 Service Number: 22066/DA Date of Death: 9 October 1918 Age at Death: ?
 Buried / Commemorated at: St Mary & St Helen Churchyard, Neston
 Additional information given by CWGC: None

Fisherman William Campion, Thomas's father, married Emma Walker at All Saints Church, Hoole, Chester in early 1892 following the death of his first wife, Mary, in September 1882; Mary was buried at Neston Parish Church on 2 October 1882 aged 24. William had married Mary Taylor, a daughter of mason Joseph and Nancy Taylor of Little Neston, in Liverpool in April / June 1879 and she gave birth to three boys, James (baptised 4 September 1880), Joseph (baptised 1 April 1881 - on census night, 3 April, he was recorded as being 10 days old and so would have been born 24 March) and William before she died. William was baptised at Neston on 18 February 1882 but was buried, aged 12 days, on 25 February.

Emma Campion, William's second wife, gave birth to four sons: William (baptised 3 March 1893) ; John (baptised 25 May 1894 but died, aged 3 months, and buried 4 September 1894) ; John (baptised 17 January 1896 but died, aged 9 months, and buried at Neston 26 October 1896) ; Thomas (baptised 18 May 1900, believed to have been born 7 May).

By the time of the 1901 census, therefore, there were four sons living with William and Emma in Parkgate:

William Campion	Head	M	42	Fisherman	born Little Neston
Emma Do	Wife	M	43		born Chester
James Do	Son	L	21	Fisherman	born Parkgate
Joseph Do	Son	L	20		born Parkgate
William Do	Son		3		born Parkgate
Thomas Do	Son		10 months		born Parkgate

1901 census (extract) – Parkgate

William Campion	42	fisherman	born Little Neston
Emma	43		born Chester
James	21	fisherman	born Parkgate
Joseph	20		born Parkgate
William	3		born Parkgate
Thomas	10 months		born Parkgate

William's age has been mis-recorded – he would have been aged 8 at this time.

Thomas Campion is shown by the CWGC as being a Deck Hand on HMS *Vivid* and it is recorded that his death was from an illness (or disease) rather than enemy action or an accident. [<http://www.naval-history.net/>]

HMS *Vivid* was an RN Barracks/Base, at Devonport (Plymouth Dock), Devon. Several ships, and shore bases, were used as barracks and accounting bases and it is likely that Thomas Campion was actually on HMS *Vivid 2*. On the day he died 4 other men died of illness at this base although there is no indication of the nature of the illnesses/disease. However, there is some evidence that Thomas died in hospital and that he succumbed to double pneumonia. His death was recorded, aged 18, at East Stonehouse, Plymouth. The family headstone, in Neston parish churchyard, records that he died, aged 18, on 9 October (although some other accounts state 8 October) 1918.

Somewhat unusually, no account of Thomas Campion's death has been found in local or national newspapers.

Of Thomas's brothers:

- James Campion, in the 1939 Register, was living at 6 Dawson Houses, Brooklands Road, Parkgate. Recorded as an inshore fisherman, born 21 June 1880, James was living with wife Sarah (born 28 February 1880) and unmarried son Christopher (born 7 October 1912, Phell-Broakes oilworks [nothing is known of this establishment]).

James died 7 February 1949 aged 68 and Sarah died 29 June 1968 aged 88; both are buried at Neston Cemetery.

- Joseph Campion, in the 1939 Register, was a general labourer (born 12 March 1881) living at 18 George Road, Hoylake. Agnes, Joseph's wife, had died aged 39, in mid-1924 and was buried at Woodchurch. In the same house as Joseph was his married son, Frederick P. (born 9 September 1912, 'fisherman, not deep sea trawlerman') and Frederick's wife Dorothy M. (born 12 March 1907). Joseph Campion died in July / September 1957 aged 76.
- William Campion married Alice Parker at Holy Trinity Church, Birkenhead, in mid-1914 - no children of the marriage have been found. In the 1939 Register William, living at 3 Station Road, Parkgate (born 18 February 1893, deep sea fisherman [boat owner]) is recorded with Alice (born 21 February 1894).



In June 1915 William, together with two members of the Fewtrell family, rescued Algernon Grenfell, the headmaster of Mostyn House School, when a small boat Mr Grenfell was trying out at Parkgate sank in one of the tidal channels!

William Campion died in early 1955 aged 62. Alice died in the Birkenhead area in late 1980.



The Campion family grave at Neston parish church

MARY, wife of WILLIAM CAMPION, who departed this life Sept. 29th 1882 aged 24 years.

Also THOMAS CAMPION who departed this life October 9th 1918 – aged 18 years, who gave his life for his country.

Also of the above WILLIAM CAMPION died 2nd April 1933, aged 75 years.

Also EMMA CAMPION, beloved wife of the above, died 1st December 1937, aged 83 years.