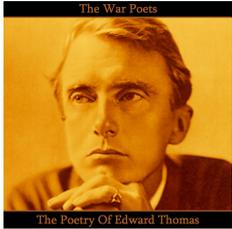


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## THE POETRY OF EDWARD THOMAS EBOOKS 2019



Author: Edward Thomas

Realese Date: Expected @@expectedReleaseDate@@

Philip Edward Thomas was born on 3rd March, 1878 at 14 Lansdowne Gardens in Stockwell, Lambeth, which was then a part of Surrey. His family had a rich Welsh heritage. Thomas was educated at Battersea Grammar School before proceeding to St Paul's School in London and then becoming a history scholar, between 1898-1900, at Lincoln College, Oxford. Whilst still studying for his degree he married Helen Berenice Noble in June, 1899, in Fulham, London. Thomas had already decided by this time to fashion a career out of literature. As a book reviewer he reviewed in the order of fifteen books a week and began to be published as both a literary critic, for the Daily Chronicle, and as a biographer. His writing talents also extended to writing on the countryside and, in 1913, a novel, *The Happy-Go-Lucky Morgans* was published. Thomas is also responsible for the shepherding and mentoring of the career of maverick tramp poet W. H. Davies during the early years of the 20th Century. Despite Davies's years of wanderlust he was encouraged to take up accommodation in a small cottage near to where Thomas, Helen and his family lived at Elses Farm, near Sevenoaks in Kent. Ironically although Thomas believed that poetry was the highest form of literature and reviewed poetry books often it was only in 1914 that he began to write poetry himself. By this time, he was living at Steep, East Hampshire, and his early poems were published under the pseudonym of 'Edward Eastaway'. The American poet Robert Frost, who was living in England at the time, went to some lengths to encourage Thomas to continue writing poetry. Their friendship became so close that they planned to reside side by side in the United States. Frost's classic poem, "The Road Not Taken", was inspired by his long walks with Thomas and the latter's indecisiveness about which route to take. Thomas wrote several revered poems. For many his lines on the now abandoned railway station at Adlestrop, written after his train made a stop at the Cotswolds station on 24th June, 1914, shortly before the outbreak of the First World War are his best. Europe was now to be engulfed in a monumental armed struggle and many writers, poets and painters heeded the call to become part of the tide of humanity to serve their countries. Thomas enlisted in the Artists Rifles in July 1915, despite being a mature married man who could have avoided enlisting without too much difficulty. He was promoted to corporal, and by November 1916 had been commissioned into the Royal Garrison Artillery as a second lieutenant. Philip Edward Thomas was killed in action soon after his arrival in France at Arras on Easter Monday, 9th April 1917. To soften the blow to his widow Helen, a fiction was concocted of a "bloodless death"; that Thomas was killed by the concussive blast wave from an exploding shell as he stood to light his pipe and that there was no mark on his body. (It was only decades later that a letter from his commanding officer, Franklin Lushington, written in 1936, was discovered stating that Thomas had been "shot clean through the chest".) W. H. Davies was devastated by the death and his commemorative poem "Killed In Action (Edward Thomas)" is a moving tribute to the loss of his friend. Thomas is buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Agny in France (Row C, Grave 43). As a poet Thomas's career was short but he has been grouped with the War Poets though his output of war poems is short in number, especially when set against those that feature the countryside. Aside from his poems and a novel Thomas wrote frequent essays and a number of travel books. On Armistice Day, 11th November, 1985, Thomas was among the 16 Great War poets commemorated on a slate stone unveiled in Westminster Abbey's Poet's Corner.

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