



**Thomas Christopher John Sinton**, Edinburgh University and Edinburgh Northern, 5 caps, cap number 140

Thomas Christopher John Sinton was born at The Manse, Dores, Invernesshire on 4th May 1906 at The Manse, Dores, Invernesshire to Rev Thomas Sinton and his wife Catherine (nee MacFarlane). In both the 1911 and 1921 Census returns, Thomas was living at the Manse, Dores.

Christopher's hockey talent was recognised from an early age and he first appeared in an Inter District game on 15th December 1923 while still at Inverness Academy. He continued to play hockey when he went to Edinburgh University.

Christopher's first cap came against England at Birmingham on 31st March 1928 after A.C. Anderson of Western called off with a chill. He was reported as playing "fairly well" and it was noted that he was playing out of position. He was also capped against England in 1929 replacing Mackay at centre half after the team had lost at home to Wales. The replacement of the experienced Mackay with over 20 caps by a youngster was criticised in the press. However they had to eat their words when Scotland came out 3-0 winners, only the third time in twenty two games that the Scots had been victorious. Sinton was noted as splendid in defence and was even better in constructive work.

On graduating from University Christopher went to play for Edinburgh Northern, his first appearance being on the 5th October 1931 in a 3-2 victory over Glasgow Nomads.

Sinton gained five caps in total. His final cap was late in his career, while playing for Edinburgh Northern. He was named in an "experimental" Scotland side for the first international of the 1936 season versus Wales at Neath. The side that day featured three Scots who would lose their lives in WW2, Sinton, W.R. Evers (Edinburgh Northern) and J.W.H. James (Royal Artillery). Sadly Wales were totally dominant in a 8-1 win.

Christopher continued to play club hockey at Northern and continued to be praised in the press even in 1938.

Off the hockey pitch, Christopher had gained his MA, and even before graduating he had been appointed as a probationer at Dunkeld in September 1930. After

graduation he was an assistant at St Margaret's Church, Edinburgh. He was inducted to Stanley Tower Parish Church on 1st March 1933.

Christopher held a commission as a chaplain in the Territorial Army Reserve , so when war was declared in September 1939, he was called up for active service. He was mobilised on 10 October 1939 and posted to 7th Black Watch, 9th Division, Orkney and Shetland Defences. He was then attached to the 7/10th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. They sailed for the Middle East on 15th June 1942. Christopher served with the Battalion through the rest of the North African campaign. Sadly he died on 23rd October 1943 from a combination of wounds and malaria contracted while serving in Sicily. He is buried at El Alia Cemetery, Tunisia, where he had been being treated in hospital.

In his obituary, he was described as “quiet and retiring, shy almost to a fault, his friends might say, but such was the rich quality of his life that his reverent ministry made a deep impression on thoughtful people and led them to the source from which he himself derived his peace, his equanimity and his power”.

The congregation at Stanley Tower Church dedicated a lectern and brass plaque to his memory in 1947. He is remembered on the family headstone at Dores and Edinburgh University's Roll of Honour. His name appears on the Royal Army Chaplains' Department War Memorial 1939 – 1945 which is now located at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre, Beckett House, Shrivenham.

#### Acknowledgements:

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#### Sources:

Scotland's People

British Newspaper Archive

Dundee Courier 15th March 1929

Perthshire advertiser 4th March 1933

Evening Telegraph (Dundee) Sat 6 Nov 1943 p6

Ancestry

Scottish Hockey Records

Commonwealth War Graves Commission