

## THOMAS, JOHN (1886 - 1933), chemist

**Name:** John Thomas  
**Date of birth:** 1886  
**Date of death:** 1933  
**Spouse:** Olive Thomas (née Morgan)  
**Parent:** Elizabeth Thomas (née Morris)  
**Parent:** Richard Thomas  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** chemist  
**Area of activity:** Science and Mathematics  
**Author:** Thomas Campbell James

Born 2 April 1886 at Whitford, Flintshire, son of Richard Thomas, blacksmith, and Elizabeth (Morris), his wife. The family moved to Harlech, where the son was educated at the local board school; later he went to Barmouth county school. He entered University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1904 as **Sir Alfred Jones** scholar, and graduated in 1907 with 1st class honours in chemistry. A year of research under Professor J. J. Sudborough gained for him the M.Sc. degree and an '1851 Exhibition' research scholarship which enabled him to proceed to Trinity College, Cambridge, and to further research under Professor Sir William Pope. In 1911 he was appointed to the National Physical Laboratory as research chemist in the aeronautical section. In 1912 he transferred to Nobel's Explosives Company at Ardeer, Scotland, where he carried out important research on explosives which was accepted for the D.Sc. degree of the University of Wales. In 1918 he became chief chemist to Solway Dyes, Ltd., Carlisle (later Scottish Dyes, Ltd.), of which later he became managing director. To good business ability he added great scientific acumen and brilliant intuition. He made outstanding contributions to the development of the British dyestuffs industry, particularly in connection with the manufacture of fast dyes of the indanthrone group. His part in the discovery of Caledon Jade Green and subsequent work on the blue dyes of the same series placed him among the foremost discoverers of the industry. On the absorption of his company into Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., in 1926, Dr. Thomas became joint managing director of the Dyestuffs Group, a position which he retained until his death on 18 January 1933.

### Author

**Emeritus Professor Thomas Campbell James**

### Sources

*Journal of the Chemical Society*, 1907-12

*The Journal of the Society of Chemical Industry*, 1921-5

### Further reading

Dr. **John Thomas**, Colorants Industry History website, accessed 30 March 2020

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20821177](#)

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