



[Login](#) | [Register](#)

[About Thomas Home](#)

[Thomas Timeline](#)



With Thomas & Friends, there is a rich world to discover and explore. Through the adventures of Thomas and his friends, your child will learn important life lessons about the value of friendship, fair play, team work and what it means to be a Really Useful Engine. Thomas & Friends will inspire your child to believe that little engineers – like little engines – can do big things.

ADVERTISEMENT

Letter to Christopher

Dear Christopher,

Here is your friend Thomas the Tank Engine. He wanted to come out of his station yard and see the world. These stories tell you how he did it. I hope you will like them because you helped me to make them.

Your Loving Daddy

The Story of Thomas & Friends



Our story begins in 1917 in the sleepy village of Box in Wiltshire, England. A young boy lies awake in his bed, listening to steam engines huffing and puffing along the nearby Great Western Railway. To the little boy tucked up in bed, listening to the engines, it sounds very much like the trains are talking to each other. The young boy is Wilbert Awdry – later to become the Reverend W. Awdry, the creator of "The Railway Series" and the most famous tank engine in the world --Thomas.

Many years later in 1940, when Wilbert was married, he found himself passing on his love of railways to his own son, Christopher Awdry. In 1943, when Christopher was confined to his bed with measles, Wilbert amused his son by improvising stories about the steam engines from his own childhood. And so began the adventures of Edward and two other engines, Gordon and Henry. These original stories were told over and over again until, pressed by Christopher to be more consistent with the details, the Rev. W. Awdry finally scribbled the stories on scraps of paper.



It was only due to the persistence of his wife, Margaret, that the Rev. Awdry eventually offered his scribbles to a publisher, and his first book, "The Three Railway Engines" was published by Edmund Ward in 1945. At Christmas of that year, the Rev. Awdry made his son Christopher a simple wooden toy engine that was later christened "Thomas." And so Thomas the Tank Engine was born. At Christopher's urging, his father began to make up stories about Thomas too. "Thomas the Tank Engine" was published the following year and steamed onwards. The Rev. W. Awdry invented a fictional setting for the stories – the Island of Sodor – and wrote a new book every year until his twenty sixth and final story,

Steaming Across Generations

[FOR PARENTS](#)

[WHAT'S NEW](#)

[EVENTS](#)

[TV](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[NEWSLETTERS](#)

[SHOP](#)



© 2010 Gullane (Thomas) Limited. The Thomas name and character and the Thomas & Friends logo are trademarks of Gullane (Thomas) Limited and its affiliates and are registered in many jurisdictions throughout the world.

[Contact Us](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms & Conditions](#)