

His travels led him not only to Italy, but to Spain and a lifelong interest in Velasquez. On his return to England he took up a teaching appointment at the Byam Shaw, a post he held until the onset of War. Afterwards he returned to the Byam Shaw as Principal.

The link between Thomas and Banbury can probably be found in Dale the architect. Dale had an interest in historic buildings, and from 1933 was a committee member of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society. The Society's journal records excursions beyond Oxford, to visit historic churches and houses in the rural hinterland, and urban centres such as Banbury. From 1933 until 1938 Dale was responsible for the Architectural Notes following these trips, published in the annual report. It is likely that at least one of these excursions included a visit to the famous cake shop in Parsons Street and was perhaps the occasion when Dale met his future client, Mr Brown.

Dale also carried out ecclesiastical commissions, including St Michael and All Angels (1954), New Marston, Oxford; and St Swithun's Church (1958), Kennington, Oxford: both new build churches he designed. He also designed a tower screen in carved oak in Stratton Audley Church. Although these projects are a little later it seems entirely possible that Dale knew Thomas through their shared interests, and consequently introduced Thomas to the project.

