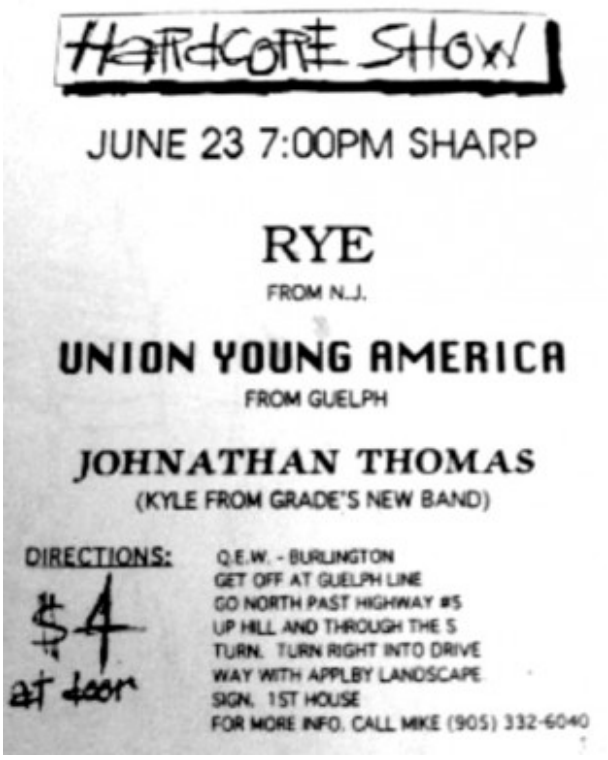
Jonathan Thomas Official Biography

Jonathan Thomas is a bit of a forgotten gem in the history of Ontario emo hardcore. In late 1994 Kyle Bishop was singing in Grade but felt that it wasn't enough, so he bought his first guitar and started writing a couple of songs. At the time he was living at the "Wheatfield House" (on Stratton Road in Burlington) with Matt Jones. Kyle had also been friends with Alexandra and Eric Lamoureux for a couple of years and always wanted to start a band with one of them on bass. So Kyle (guitar and vocals) and Eric (bass) joined up to start an emo band in the veins of Julia, Union Young America and Braid along with some Dischord Records bands. Yvan MacKinnon was brought in to play drums and backup vocals as he was the best drummer they could find.



Workshop Records concert featuring Jonathan Thomas, Union Young America and Rye,

June 23rd 1995

The origin of the band name goes back to when Eric and Kyle were watching Monty Python's "The Meaning of Life", in which "John Thomas" is often referred. Initially, the band name was "Jonathan Thomas" (with only 1 H), but show flyers almost always mislabeled them as "Johnathan Thomas" and even their CD was misspelled (which is odd considering it was designed by Kyle himself). A lot of their shows were played at the Wheatfield House basement and some at "The Church". Throughout 1995 they played at The Sound of Music, the African Centre in Toronto, one show at Who's Emma in Toronto, an outdoor show in Burlington, one show at Mike Wessel's house (Workshop Records), one show in Cobourg and bunch more in Burlington & Hamilton. They played a few times with Grade and Holocron.

In late 1995, Eric announced that he was moving to Montreal so they took their savings and went to Signal 2 Noise in December 1995 to record the 7 songs they had in their catalog. The studio session was difficult as the band were not ready to record but they managed to document their music pretty well. After Eric left, the band completely ended. Yvan went to play in Chauvez, while Kyle continued on with Grade before playing guitar again in Acrid in April 1996.



Split CD with Sprucehill, Fallen Tree Recordings, summer 1996

About six months later, someone decided it was time to release the songs. That person was friends with Jay Gordon and liked his band Sprucehill. Sprucehill had only a demo tape out at the time but quickly recorded songs for the split. A record label was started up, Fallen Tree Recordings and got everything mastered at Umbrella Sound Studio (where Sprucehill had recorded) and released the split CD in 1000 copies in July 1996. Kyle Bishop and Matt Jones did the artwork (and Jo-Anne Sanders did the photography) and took a bunch on Grade's 1996 European tour, while a few more were sold by Sprucehill before they broke up in 1997. All copies are forever sold out of this split.