

CORPORAL JAMES FREDERICK ALLEN

Service Number: 5889196

Enlisted: 2nd Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment

Born: Smockington

Died: Wednesday 24th May 1944, Aged 24

Memorials: Beachy Head War Cemetery, Anzio, Italy

Burbage St Catherine's Church

Burbage War Memorial



James known to his family as Jim, was the youngest son of Tom and Emily Allen. His father worked for the Cooperative Farm who owned much of the land in the Wolvey area. The family living in a tied cottage at Smockington on the A5, Watling Street. It was here that Jim was born and grew up with his brothers and sisters. Across the fields was the village of Wolvey where Jim attended the small village school.



A5 Watling Street

On leaving school, he was employed by the Hinckley Urban District Council in the Highway Department as a General Labourer working on road maintenance.

In 1940, Jim joined the army and was posted to the Northamptonshire Regiment. He married Frances a girl from Nuneaton and moved to 14 Strutt Road, Burbage.

After various postings, Jim returned home in the summer of 1943 to spend some time with his wife and new baby daughter Barbara. In the autumn, Jim was posted overseas and his wife returned to live near her family in Nuneaton.

On 3rd September 1943, the allies invaded the Italian mainland, the invasion coinciding with an armistice with the Italians who then re-entered the war on the allied side. It was about this time that Jim and his regiment, 2nd Battalion Northampton Regiment were posted overseas.

Progress of the allied troops was rapid, but by the end of October, the allies faced the German winter defensive known as the Gustav Line, which stretched from the river Garigliano in the West to the Sangro in the East. Initial attempts were unsuccessful and in January 1944, troops landed behind the German lines at Anzio but a breakthrough was not achieved until May. It was here under the fierce fighting that Jim was killed on Wednesday 24th May 1944; he was just 24 years of age.



Tied Cottages, Smockington

Jim's grave is at the Beach Head War Cemetery at Anzio. The site of the Cemetery originally lay close to a casualty clearing station. Burials were made directly from the battlefield after the landings at Anzio, and later after the Army moved forward; many graves were brought in from the surrounding country.

After the war, the cemetery was laid out. His wife chose the inscription on his commonwealth war grave:

Roses May Wither
Leaves May die
Friends will forget you
But never will I

Many of the Allen Family have visited Anzio over the years, and his daughter is the proud owner of her father medals, which include the Italian Star.



*Jim Allen's wedding to his wife Frances
Jim with some of his comrades*



Beachy Head War Cemetery Anzio

Burbage Corporal Killed in Action



Corporal J. Allen

Cpl. Jim Allen, whose wife and baby daughter live at 67, Earls Road, Nuneaton, has been reported killed in action with the Central Mediterranean Forces.

Cpl. Allen, who was 24, was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Allen, of Smockington, and before joining the Army four years ago resided in Lutterworth Road, Burbage. He was an employee of the Hinckley Urban District Council. Cpl. Allen left this country for overseas service about eight months ago.

Much sympathy is felt for his young wife and his parents in their bereavement.

