



In memory of

**Corporal
DOUGLAS JOHN ALLEN**

QX5873, 2nd/15th Battalion, Australian Infantry
who died age 26
on 22 September 1943

Son of Thomas and Mary Hope Allen;
Husband of Mary Stuart Allen,
of Wyandra, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
LAE WAR CEMETERY



CORPORAL

DOUGLAS JOHN ALLEN

2ND/15TH INFANTRY BATTALION
REGIMENTAL NUMBER: QX5873



Corporal Douglas John Allen the son of Thomas William Allen and Mary Hope Allen (nee Gardner) was born at Toowoomba in Queensland on 6th December 1916. Douglas Allen was educated at the Newtown State School and the Toowoomba Grammar School. At the age of 24 years and 5 months he voluntarily enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Toowoomba in Queensland on 2nd June 1940. Prior to his enlistment he was single and employed as a Farmer. He gave his next of kin as his father, Mr Thomas Allen residing at Allendale, Greenmount, Queensland. He married Mary Stuart Lauder sometime in 1940 after he had enlisted in the A.I.F. His wife, Mary Stuart Allen is shown as residing at Mooroo, Wyandra, Queensland. His physical description at the time of his

enlistment was that he had brown hair and blue eyes. He stated that he was of the Presbyterian religion.

Corporal Douglas Allen entered the Redbank Camp and was allocated to the 2nd/15th Infantry Battalion on 4th June 1940 and allotted the regimental number of QX5873. The 2nd/15th Infantry Battalion had been formed at Redbank Camp in May 1940. He embarked with the battalion on the ship "Zealandia" for service in the Northern Territory on 1st July 1940 and he disembarked at Darwin on 9th July 1940. He was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal on 27th July 1940. After a period of intense military training in the Northern Territory the battalion returned to Brisbane on the ship "Zealandia" that departed Darwin on 29th October 1940 and arrived at Hamilton Wharf in Brisbane on 7th November 1940. After arriving in Brisbane the battalion returned to the Redbank Camp.

Corporal Douglas Allen's battalion boarded a train on Christmas Day in 1940 and proceeded to Pyrmont in Sydney where it boarded the "Queen Mary" that sailed in convoy on 28th December 1940 for overseas service in the Middle East. At Tricomalee in Ceylon the battalion was transferred to the ship "Indrapoera" on 12th January 1941. The battalion disembarked from the ship at El Kantara in Egypt on 2nd February 1941. He was promoted to the rank of Acting Corporal on 22nd April 1941. Whilst serving in North Africa he was hospitalised at the 7th Australian General Hospital during the period 11th December 1941 until 3rd January 1942 suffering from an upper respiratory tract infection. Upon his discharge from hospital he joined the 20th Australian Infantry Battalion. He left the Training Battalion on 29th March 1942 and rejoined the 2nd/15th Battalion at Lattakia in Syria.

Corporal Douglas Allen was wounded in action suffering a shell wound to his buttock during the battalion's major attack on German positions known as "Operation Bulimba". He was treated at the 7th Australian General Hospital on 2nd September 1942 and transferred to No. 4 Australian Convalescent Depot on 4th September. He remained at the Convalescent Depot until 2nd November when he joined the Australian Imperial Force (Middle East Staging Camp) and on the following day he rejoined the 2nd/15th Infantry Battalion.

As a result of the Japanese threat to Australia the 2nd/15th Infantry Battalion was withdrawn from the Middle East. The battalion boarded the ship "Aquitania" on 26th January 1943 for the return journey to Australia. During the voyage Corporal Allen was admitted sick to the ship's hospital during the period 1st February until 5th February 1943. The battalion disembarked from the ship at Pyrmont in Sydney on 27th February 1943 and then travelled overland by rail transport to Brisbane where it camped at the Kalinga Staging Camp. Battalion members were granted leave. In April 1942 the Battalion moved to Kairi on the Atherton Tableland where it prepared for action against the Japanese. He attended the First Australian Army Weapon Training School during the period 16th June until 14th July 1943.

Corporal Douglas Allen embarked with his battalion for overseas service in New Guinea on the ship "Van Heute" on 28th July 1943 and he disembarked from the ship at Milne Bay on 4th August 1943. After a period of training at Milne Bay the battalion proceeded to Finschafen to assault the Japanese forces. Douglas Allen died of wounds received at Finschafen in New Guinea and he was buried in the field. Douglas Allen was the 2nd/15th battalion's first fatality of the Finschafen campaign when he died as a result of a head wound he had sustained from a stray bullet. At the time of his death Douglas Allen was 26 years of age. His remains were buried in the field and later disinterred and reburied in the Finschafen War Cemetery on 5th April 1944. His remains were finally placed to rest in the Lae War Cemetery in New Guinea on 1st May 1946.

Corporal Douglas Allen's photo and the following obituary appeared in the local newspaper on 7 October 1943.

Sportsmen on the Downs and in Toowoomba will learn with deep regret of the death of Corporal Douglas John Allen, second son of Mr and Mrs T.W. Allen, "Allendale" Greenmount, who died on September 22nd from wounds received in action in New Guinea. He was 27 years of age. Doug, as he was popularly known, was one of Toowoomba's most promising cricketers, and at the outbreak of war had bright prospects of following in the footsteps of his brother, Tom, in securing a place in the State side. A wicket-keeper of marked ability and a sound batsman, he represented Toowoomba on many occasions in intercity fixtures in Country Week, and also played with a Queensland Colts XI against New South Wales. His quiet, unassuming nature on the sporting fields won him many friends, and his innings, although comparatively short, was full of merit. An old boy of the Toowoomba Grammar School, he played for the school in the First XI and later was an active member of the Past Grammar Cricket and Rugby Union Football Clubs. In December, 1940, Corporal Allen was married to Miss Mary Lauder, of Wyandra. Later he went overseas with the A.I.F., serving in the Middle East, including Tobruk. During the fighting in these campaigns he was wounded. After his return to Australia early this year he was posted to the New

Guinea battle area. A younger brother, Gordon, also a well-known cricketer in Toowoomba before the war, is serving with the A.I.F.

For his service during World War 2, Douglas Allen had eligibility for the award of the 1939/1945 Star, the Africa Star, the Pacific Star, the War Medal, the Defence Medal and the Australian Service Medal 1939/1945. His personal effects were returned to his wife, residing c/- V.G. Moody, "Alpha Station", Wyandra, Queensland, in May 1944. His wife received a Female Relative Badge with one star on 17th October 1941 and a Mothers & Widows Badge with one star on 20th November 1943. His mother received a Female Relative Badge with one star on 29th July 1943. Douglas Allen's name is commemorated on Panel No. 38 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, the Newtown State School Honour Stone and the Toowoomba Grammar School WW2 Honour Board.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a boarder on 27th January 1932 and that he left the School on 1st December 1934. His parent was shown as Mr Thomas William Allen, Farmer, "Allendale", Greenmount.

The following was published in the Old Boys' Register in November 1943: Of the losses which we have suffered in recent years, few have come harder than that of Sergeant D.J. Allen, of whom more has been written in these pages. Renowned in peacetime as an outstanding sportsman, in war a brave and resourceful soldier, we have lost in Doug. One of nature's gentlemen. To Mr and Mrs Allen and family, who have been such fine friends of the School and the Old Boys' Association, we can but offer our heartfelt sympathy, and assurance that, for all who knew him, the memory of Doug will be evergreen.

Note:

A comprehensive history of the 2nd/15th Battalion's service during World War 2 can be found in Ron Austin's book, "Let Enemies Beware – The history of the 2nd/15th Battalion 1940-1945", Slouch Hat Publications, McCrae, Australia. 2008. ISBN 0 646 215949. The book contains a Nominal Roll of members of the battalion and also an Honour Roll of those who died whilst serving with the Battalion.



**Australian War Memorial photograph P06207.18
Corporal Douglas John Allen is on the right.**

External Links

[View on Australian War Memorial](#)

[View Military Records](#)