

SMITHFIELD HONOUR ROLL

COKER, Allan Oswald

Allan's father was born in Wickham-Bishops, Essex England in 1836. William's father was also William and was born 4th July 1800 in Wickham-Bishops. William senior married Sarah Hopgood (b.1808) and the whole family came to South Australia on the *Rajasthan* in 1838. William senior died in 1869 and is buried in Salisbury.

William junior became a farmer, mason and dairyman. They lived at Salisbury, Para Plains and he married Hannah Martin on 13 November 1857 at Gawler Town. Hannah's father was George Martin of Gawler. William and Hannah had 13 children, all born at Gawler Plains.

1. William b. 23 Oct 1858
2. James b. 21 Jan 1860
3. Hedley James b. 19 June 1861
4. Frederick William b. 20 May 1863
5. Albert Edward b. 8 June 1865
6. Martha b. 21 June 1867
7. Letita b. 16 May 1869
8. Alfred Ernest b. 3 July 1871
9. Lilian b. 4 April 1873
10. Sarah May b. 1 June 1875
11. Arthur Herbert b. 7 Dec 1877
12. Allan Oswald b. 20 Dec 1879
13. Elliott Lindon b. 7 Dec 1884

William died in 1910 and Hannah in 1912 in Salisbury.

Allan attended the Salisbury Primary School. He was a farmer.

He enlisted on 29th February 1916 when he was 35. He became a private in the 5th Pioneer Battalion , Reinforcement 2. He embarked from Adelaide on board HMAT A60 "Aeneas" on 11 April 1916. He arrived at Suez on 15 May 1916. Then he embarked on the "Ivernia" on 21 June 1916 at Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force. He disembarked at Marseilles, France 29 June 1916. He arrived in Etaples, northern France in 31 August 1916 for active service. He went to hospital with mumps but was said to have influenza on 13 September 1916. He was discharged back to his unit 13 October 1916. He spent the next two years fighting on the Western Front and he was killed in action on 3 August 1918 at Morlancourt, France at the age of 39. He is buried at Beacon Cemetery, Saily-Laurette, France.

His effects were passed on to his sister Martha Blake. They were: from the field – wallet, photos, cards, two diaries, dictionary, watch, silk handkerchief and note case; from his kitbag in storage- 1 razor, soap, hair brush and gloves.

His brother Hedley James had no objections to his sister Martha having Allan’s medals (British War Medal, Victory Medal) as he was a commercial traveller and away from home a great deal of the time. In his will Allan had left his real and personal estate to his brother Hedley and to Edwin John Marrett of Prospect in trust for his sister Sarah May Coker. If she predeceased him then all was to be divided equally between all of his nieces and nephews.

His name is also on the Salisbury reserve at the corner of Memorial Avenue and Orange Avenue.



LATE PTE. A. O. COKER.
 Pte. Allan Oswald Coker was killed in action in France on July 29. The deceased soldier, who was a native of the Salisbury district, was the youngest surviving son of the late Mr. William Coker, one of the pioneer landowners. He enlisted in December, 1915, and left for the front on April 13, 1916. After his arrival in France, excepting short periods of furlough, he was on continual service until his death. He was endowed with a charming manner, and was the possessor of musical ability which was freely given to assist objects for the public good. The deceased was closely associated with the local Congregational Church, and was connected with the literary society and rifle and cricket clubs. He was held in high esteem by his many friends.

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