



# Harold Kenneth Ward Allen

## 13 Bromley Street

Harold was one of many local men who served with the Sherwood Foresters (Notts & Derbyshire Regiment). We are not sure when he joined up as his military record has not survived, but from the London Gazette, which listed the names of men promoted to officers, we know he served with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. Harold was promoted to Second Lieutenant in April 1918 and then to Lieutenant on 1 November 1919.

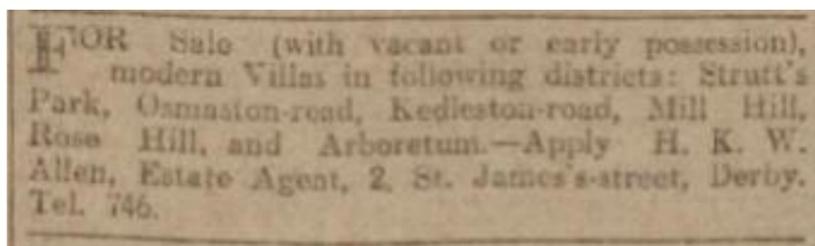


Badge of the Sherwood Foresters (via Wikipedia Commons)

The Notts & Derby 3<sup>rd</sup> reserve battalion was formed in Derby on 4 August 1914. For most of the war it was stationed in Sunderland as part of the East Coast defence force. On 16 December 1914 the seaport towns of Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby, were shelled from the sea by the German navy. The bombardment resulted in 137 fatalities and 592 casualties, many of whom were civilians, along with damage to buildings and infrastructure. People fled to the railway stations fearing a German invasion was imminent; fortification of the coast became a majority priority in the defence of the realm.

Harold was born on 27 January 1896, only child of Frederick Alfred Allen, Railway Clerk, and Gertrude Ward. The family moved to Bromley Street just before the 1911 census – on the night of the census Harold was staying as a visitor at Hole Farm, Shottle, his occupation is noted as an Art Student at a Technical College. Whatever Harold was training to do was interrupted by the war.

After he was demobilised Harold returned home to live with his mother who appears to have taken lodgers in to make ends meet, after his father died in February 1919. From newspaper adverts we know that by 1924 Harold was working as an Estate Agent with an office at 2 St James Street.



Derby Daily Telegraph, 2 April 1924

In June 1925 Harold married Margaret Cannon at St Alkmund's Parish Church. One of their witnesses was A W Farquhar and it was with Alfred Wyvil Farquhar that Harold was to form a business partnership that lasted three decades. From 1928 adverts start to appear in the Derby Daily Telegraph for Allen & Farquhar Estate Agents, Auctioneers and Valuers.



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First the business was based in Smith’s Bank Chambers on the Marketplace; later they moved to 15 & 16 Iron Gate and in the 1940s the business was at 39 Full Street, with a branch in Belper.



©Local World Ltd (image created courtesy of the British Library Board) *Derby Daily Telegraph* , 9 September 1930. This advert was placed just after the move from Marketplace to Iron Gate

The partnership was dissolved in October 1957 when Farquhar retired, but by this date Harold’s son, Frederick, and Farquhar’s son, John, had joined them in business, alongside John Taylor who joined them in 1939.

Harold appears to have been a prominent local person and frequently features in the *Derby Daily Telegraph* – in 1912 he was reported as a member of the Derby Graphic Club and League of Handicrafts, participating in a local exhibition. He went on to become a member of the Markeaton

Golf Club, a member of the Derbyshire Masonic Golfing Association, Secretary for the Women’s Hospital Extension fund in 1927 and Honorary Secretary of the Derby Sketching Club (1926). We also know that he sang in a choir, played tennis and rode a motor cycle (in a storm in 1925 stones from a wall fell through the roof of the shed where he kept his motorcycle).

In World War Two he became a Major of the 12<sup>th</sup> Derbyshire Battalion Home Guard unit and served as Company commander of “B” Company.



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Harold and Margaret are recorded as living in Allestree in 1932 and Darley Abbey (c1940 to c1976). They had two sons – Frederick (born in 1926) and Peter (born 1929). Harold died aged 80 in June 1976.