Frank Kemp





Rank: - Private

Number: - 14612755

Regiment: - Essex Regiment 1st Bn.

Died: - Killed in Action 24/04/1944 Age: 20 years.

Cemetery: - Kohima War Cemetery, India 11.C.7.

Frank was born in 1924, the son of Harry and Irene Kemp nee Stanley who had married on 16 September 1922 at St. John's Church, Carlinghow. Stanley was born 1928 and Shirley 1933. In 1939 the family lived at 34, Coal Pit Lane, Carlinghow, Batley.

Frank attended Carlinghow and Healey Schools and was an enthusiastic football and cricket player and cyclist. He was a member of Cross Ban Methodist Church and Cricket Club and the Ancient Order of the Foresters' (Lodge 560). Frank was employed by Mr. George Herbert Tomlinson, painter.

Frank joined the Forces in May 1943.

The 1st Battalion formed 44 and 56 Columns of the Chindits and operated in the Japanese rear during the battles of Imphal and Kohima, two battles that turned the tide of the war against Japan in the Far East.



BATLEY SPORTSMAN KILLED IN BURMA

Pte. Frank Kemp (20), elder son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Kemp, 34, Coal Pit Lane, Cross Bank, Batley, was killed in action in Burma on April 24th.

A member of Cross Bank Methodist Church and Cricket Club, and the Ancient Order of Foresters' (Lodge 560), Pte. Kemp joined the Forces 11 months ago. He was an old boy of Carlinghow and Healey Schools and was an enthusiastic football and cricket player and cyclist. He was a former employee of the late Mr. George Herbert Tomlinson, painter.

A brother, Stanley (16), is a member of the Dewsbury and District Sea Cadet Corps.

Frank Kemp.

Batley News 3 June 1944 (photo)

The Battle of Kohima (together with the intertwined Battle of Imphal) proved the turning point of the Japanese-U-Go offensive into India in 1944.The battle took place in three stages from 4 April to 22 June 1944 around the town of Kohima, now the capital of Nagaland in northeast India. From 3 to 16 April, the Japanese attempted to capture Kohima ridge, a feature which dominated the road by which the besieged British and Indian troops of IV Corps at Imphal were supplied.

The fighting which took place on the long-wooded spur on the high ridge west of the village was perhaps the scene of the most bitter fighting in the whole Burma campaign when a small Commonwealth force held out against bitter repeated attacks by a Japanese Division. The fiercest hand to hand fighting took place in the garden of the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow, around the tennis court but the heaviest casualties on both sides occurred after relieving forces reached the Garrison and the Japanese were driven off the ridge, so opening the road to Imphal.

The Japanese defeat at Kohima and Imphal was the largest up until that time, with many of the Japanese deaths resulting from starvation, disease and exhaustion suffered during their retreat.

FOR HONOUR, LIBERTY AND TRUTH HE SACRIFICED HIS GLORIOUS YOUTH.
"AT REST"

Frank is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial and was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group