

Kenneth Norman Murch
Private in the 1/4th Battalion Hampshire Regiment
Regimental number 14406876
Age 20

Kenneth N W Murch was born in early 1924, son of Dorothy Ada White. Dorothy was born in 1902 at Scotland Heath near Corfe Castle.

Kenneth aged 18 married Freda Rose Diffey aged 23 at Corfe Castle on 24th October 1942. At that time he was living at Osborne Villa, Langton Matravers, with his grandmother, Dorothy's mother. They had been evacuated from their home on Scotland Heath to Langton Matravers. He listed his occupation as a soldier. Freda was living at Norden Farm Cottages at the time of their marriage. Their son was born in July 1944.

The advance northwards through Italy continued and by 3rd September the 5th battalion had reached Ponte Rosso. The other two Hampshire battalions were brought up by transport and, although exhausted after ten days' continuous fighting, were ordered into battle once more. The 2nd Hampshire crossed the River Conca under heavy fire on 4th September and dug in on the slopes below San Clemente. From here they fought their way up the ridge and on to Monte Annibolina. The 1/4th Battalion followed up, passed through the 2nd Battalion and attacked and captured Monte Gallera. At midnight the 5th Battalion assaulted Clemente and Castelleale and was soon engaged in furious fighting. German resistance, however, proved too stiff and the battalion were pulled back, suffering heavy casualties in the process.

Kenneth died of wounds on 4th September 1944 aged 20, and is buried at Montecchio War Cemetery, Italy. Grave reference II. E. 18.

Freda never remarried and died in 1971.

Commemorated on the memorial at Corfe Castle