

War Memorial – The Green, Castle Bromwich

World War II 1939-1945

Gunner James Herbert Cook (1911-1944) 1124098 363 Battery 91st Field Regiment, Royal Artillery died aged 33



James was born in 7th June 1911 to parents George Christopher, an engineer, and Laura Cook (née Slater) of Clipston Road, Saltley, Birmingham. The census that year shows he had two elder brothers Austin George and Eric James.

In 1939 aged 28 he married Elsie May Andrews and were living at 35 Marlborough Road, Castle Bromwich.

James joined the war effort with the Royal Regiment of Artillery, commonly referred to as the RA and colloquially known as “The Gunners”. Following the defeat of the Axis forces in North Africa, the decision was taken to move on to Italy. Thousands of Allied troops were shipped to the mainland, many landing in Salerno in September 1943. The object was to take the city of Rome, the Allies met fierce opposition from the well dug in Germans and slow progress was made through the most severe of winters.

James was killed in action during the Battle of Monte Cassino serving with his regiment on 26th January 1944 aged 32. Casualty list 1371 reported 17th February 1944 states that James died of his wounds.

The capture of Monte Cassino came at a high price. The Allies suffered around 55,000 casualties in the campaign. German casualty figures are estimated at around 20,000 killed and wounded. Total Allied casualties spanning the period of the four Cassino battles and the Anzino campaign with the subsequent capture of Rome on 5 June 1944, were over 105,000.



Battle of Monte Cassino

He is remembered at Minturno War Cemetery, Minturno Provincia de Latino, Lazio, Italy, his inscription reads “*Jimmy, husband of Elsie, Sometime, someday my darling I’ll understand*”, he is also commemorated at the war memorial at The Green, Castle Bromwich. Probate dated 15th June 1944 to Laura Cook (widow) of Greyholme, Marlborough Road, Castle Bromwich.

*Prepared by Alan Fewtrell 2019
alan.fewtrell1957@gmail.com*