

## **Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby M.C.©**

**Regimental number:** —

**T Battery, XIV Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery**

**born: 11 January 1898–died: 29 July 1917**

Although the life of Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby would be eclipsed by that of his father, Field Marshal Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby, this should not distract from his sacrifice.

Horace Michael Hynman (appears to have been known as Michael) was born on 11 January 1898 in Salisbury, Wiltshire, child of Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby and his wife, the former Adelaide Mabel Chapman (known either as Adelaide or Mabel).<sup>1</sup> He was baptized on 9 February in the parish church at Donhead St Andrew in Wiltshire.<sup>2</sup>

Edmund Allenby was a military man who had a long and eventful career, serving in the Boer wars and the First World War, where he achieved fame for his service in the Middle East. He was born in 1861 in Southwell, Nottinghamshire<sup>3</sup> and was educated at Haileybury College in Hertfordshire.<sup>4</sup> By the age of 19, he had chosen a military career and was enrolled at Sandhurst Military College in Camberley, Surrey.<sup>5</sup> He was commissioned as a lieutenant with the 6th Inniskillin Dragoons in 1882 to serve in South Africa. He returned to England after the Bechuanaland Expedition, only to return to South Africa in 1888. In 1891, he was in the Cavalry Barracks in Preston, Brighton.<sup>6</sup>

During his military service, he married Adelaide Mabel Chapman in a society wedding<sup>7</sup> on 30 December 1896 in the parish church of Donhead St Andrew. Their son was born thirteen months later. In 1901, at age 3, young Michael was staying with his maternal grandparents, Horace and Adelaide Chapman in Donhead<sup>8</sup>—his mother was away in London.<sup>9</sup> At the age of 13, Michael was a pupil at Wellington House, Westgate on Sea in Kent.<sup>10</sup>

Between the Boer War and the Great War, Michael's father rose rapidly through the senior army ranks. He achieved the substantive rank of lieutenant-colonel in 1902, then became a colonel in 1905, a major-general in 1909 and the Inspector-General of Cavalry in 1910. He was made a temporary lieutenant-general in 1914 then, as war broke out, appointed to lead the Cavalry Division—one of the high command positions of the British Expeditionary Force.

Michael enlisted on 27 October 1915 as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Horse Artillery (RHA), was posted to the 14th Brigade in France and Flanders on 15 January 1916,<sup>11</sup> and served with the T Battery. His brigade had joined the Western Front in Belgium in October 1914 and was with the 7th Division until February 1917, when it became the XIV Army Brigade, RHA.<sup>12</sup> Michael was a few months shy of his 18th birthday when he enlisted and was just 4 days past that birthday when he went overseas.<sup>13</sup> He was one of the almost 250,000 underage boys to serve in the Great War.<sup>14</sup>

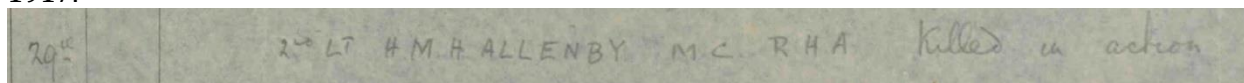
In September 1916, Horace is mentioned in the war diaries of the 14th Brigade. As the liaison officer from his brigade to the 2nd Gordon Highlanders, he was asked to see what was holding up the infantry and, if required, direct artillery fire to remove any obstructions faced by the Highlanders. He continued to report on the situation throughout the day. Later that day, a wounded officer with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment told Michael about the German methods of sniping: "2 men lay out and do the shooting while a 3rd man near them signaled the results of their shots with a small piece of stick."<sup>15</sup>

In February 1917, Michael was awarded the Military Cross.<sup>16</sup> It is not known what actions led to this award, but perhaps they were related to the activities outlined in the brigade's war diary.

Allenby would no doubt have been very proud of his son, although he was reportedly not a man of great emotion:

Many of Allenby's officers believed that he was incapable of any emotion except rage, but he was in fact a loving father and husband who was intensely concerned about his only child, Michael, who was serving at the front. Before Allenby went to bed every night, Allenby would enter the office of the officer who took the daily casualty returns, ask "Have you any news of my little boy today?" and after the officer replied "No news sir", Allenby would then go to bed a reassured man.<sup>17</sup>

However, eventually Michael's luck would change. At the beginning of July 1917, the 14th Brigade was resting in La Motte-au-Bois, near the French-Belgian border. On 8 July, the brigade left and, over the next few days, marched along the border about 60 kilometres to Ghyvelde, just a few kilometres from the coast of the North Sea. During the night of 10/11 July the batteries moved into action. The brigade war diary indicates that enemy artillery had been very active during the month but casualties were less than might have been expected. In July the brigade lost one officer and two Other Ranks (non-officers). Sadly, the officer was Michael. The diary states that he died on 29 July 1917.<sup>18</sup>



#### Extract of XIV Brigade War Diary for 29 July 1917

Source: 14th Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, 7th Division war diary

Records from No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station<sup>19</sup> indicate that he was admitted there with a compound fracture of the skull and died there on 29 July<sup>20</sup>—one of 477 soldiers admitted that day.<sup>21</sup>

Michael was buried in Coxyde Military Cemetery on 31 July (Plot II, Row D, Grave 1). The cemetery is near Coxyde (now known as Koksijde) on the Belgian coast of the North Sea. French troops established the cemetery and, when Commonwealth forces relieved the French forces in June 1917, it became the most important Commonwealth cemetery on the Belgian coast.

In addition to the Military Cross, Michael was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).<sup>22</sup> These two medals were sent on to his father, who was by then Governor of Egypt.

**His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to confer the Military Cross on the undermentioned Officers and Warrant Officers in recognition of their gallantry and devotion to duty in the Field:—**

**2nd Lt. Horace Michael Hynman Allenby, R.H.A.**

For conspicuous gallantry in action. He ran out communications to the two forward companies and sent back very useful reports on the situation. Later, he rescued a wounded man under heavy fire. He displayed marked courage and determination throughout the operations.

**Military Cross citation for 2nd Lt. Horace Michael Hynman Allenby**

*Source: The London Gazette*



**Gravestones of Lieutenant Allenby**

*Source: FindaGrave*



The Commonwealth War Graves Commission replaced Michael's initial grave marker with a permanent stone marker in 1919.<sup>23</sup> His parents had the following inscription, from the poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" by Walt Whitman,<sup>24</sup> placed on his gravestone.

HOW SHALL I DECK MY SONG  
FOR THE LARGE SWEET SOUL  
THAT HAS GONE  
AND WHAT SHALL MY PERFUME BE  
FOR THE GRAVE OF HIM I LOVE<sup>25</sup>

General Allenby was in Palestine fighting the Ottoman, German Empire and Austro-Hungarian Empires when he learned of the death of his son:

Allenby arrived [in Palestine] on 27 June 1917. On 31 July 1917, he received a telegram from his wife saying that Horace Allenby had been killed in action, leading to Allenby's breaking down in tears in public while he recited a poem by Rupert Brooke. Afterwards, Allenby kept his grief to himself and his wife, and instead threw himself into his work with icy determination, working very long hours without a break. Wavell recalled: "He went on with his work and asked no sympathy. Only those who stood close to him knew how heavy the blow had been, how nearly it had broken him, and what courage it had taken to withstand it".<sup>26</sup>

Allenby's attention was quickly taken up with the British forces in Palestine. After the fall of Jerusalem on 9 December 1917,<sup>27</sup> he remained in the Middle East to complete the conquest of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans capitulated in October 1918.

Allenby was appointed Governor of Egypt in 1919. After Michael's death Allenby had obtained permission for his wife to join him in Cairo, where she "took a part in the direction of Red Cross work, in finding occupations and interests for convalescents and for officers and men on leave, and



with his wife," *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>: accessed 16 December 2023), *The Sketch*, 25 December 1918

Allenby retired in 1925 and afterwards he and his wife undertook a number of trips, including at least three trips to Canada—in 1926,<sup>31</sup> 1928<sup>32</sup> and 1934.<sup>33</sup> At one point, he was rumoured to be the replacement for Lord Byng as Governor General in 1926,<sup>34</sup> but this did not happen.

Allenby died two years after his last visit to Canada, suffering a ruptured cerebral aneurysm on 14 May 1936 in Kennington, London, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His wife survived him by six years. In 1939, she was living in Sevenoaks, Kent, with Sir Herbert and Lady Hannah Cohen. She died three years later in Brockenhurst, Hampshire and was buried with her husband in Westminster Abbey.<sup>35</sup>

similar activities. Her imperturbable serenity was as effective in inspiring courage as was her husband's dynamic energy."<sup>28</sup>

In October 1919, Allenby was made Viscount Allenby of Megiddo [a major WW I victory] and of Felixstowe in the County of Suffolk.<sup>29</sup> The award was hereditary, but the announcement in the *London Gazette* foresaw that Allenby, after Michael's death, would not have descendants and noted that the title would pass to Allenby's brother and his male heirs. This is indeed what happened—on his death, the title passed to his nephew, Lt-Col. Dudley Allenby.<sup>30</sup>

*Whitehall, October 18, 1919.*

The KING has been pleased, by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to confer the dignity of a Viscount of the said United Kingdom upon Field-Marshal Sir Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., and the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten, by the name, style and title of Viscount Allenby of Megiddo and of Felixstowe in the County of Suffolk; with remainder in default of such issue male to Captain Frederick Claude Hynman Allenby, C.B.E., R.N. (Ret.) (brother of the said Sir Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby), and the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten.

**Announcement of the conferring of the dignity of a Viscount on Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby**

Source: *The London Gazette*

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<sup>1</sup> *FindaGrave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/>: accessed 23 September 2023), entry for Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby

<sup>2</sup> "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 20 September 2023), entry for Horace Michael Hynman Allenby, FHL film number: 6115289, Reference ID: item 25 p. 78

<sup>3</sup> *FindaGrave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/>: accessed 16 December 2023), entry for Edmund Henry Hynmen [sic] Allenby

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- <sup>4</sup> "Edmund Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund\\_Allenby,\\_1st\\_Viscount\\_Allenby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Allenby,_1st_Viscount_Allenby): accessed 3 January 2024). Unless otherwise noted, all information about the life and career of Viscount Allenby comes from this source.
- <sup>5</sup> "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 27 January 2023), entry for Edmund Hy. H. Allenby, Registration district: Easthampstead, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: Royal Military College, Piece: 1320, Folio: 80, Page: 6
- <sup>6</sup> "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 December 2023), entry for Edmund Hy Hynman Allenby, Registration district: Steyning, Sub-registration district: Shoreham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: Cavalry Barracks, Piece: 824, Folio: 106
- <sup>7</sup> "Donhead St Andrew," *The Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 9 January 1897, *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>: accessed 14 September 2023), entry for Edmund Allenby
- <sup>8</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 December 2023), entry for Hoover [*sic*] Michael Allenby, Registration district: Tisbury, Sub-registration district: Donhead, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 3, Piece: 1960, Folio: 28, Page: 15, Household schedule number: 100
- <sup>9</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 15 December 2023), entry for Mabel Allenby, Registration district: St Marylebone, Sub-registration district: Christchurch, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: The Hotel Great Central, Piece: 116, Folio: 161, Page: 6, Household schedule number: 1
- <sup>10</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 5 January 2023), entry for Horace Allenby, Registration district number: 63, Sub-registration district: Margate, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 04, Piece: 4486
- <sup>11</sup> "Horace Michael Hynman Allenby," *Shaftesbury Remembers The Great War* (<https://shaftesbury-remembers.goldhillmuseum.org.uk/story/horace-michael-hynman-allenby/>: accessed 24 January 2024)
- <sup>12</sup> "XIV Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XIV\\_Brigade,\\_Royal\\_Horse\\_Artillery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XIV_Brigade,_Royal_Horse_Artillery): accessed 28 January 2024)
- <sup>13</sup> When he died in July 1917, his age was noted in Commonwealth War Grave Commission records as 19; (*Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 19 September 2023), entry for Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby). He had been in France for 1½ years.
- <sup>14</sup> "Almost 250,000 Boys Under The Age Of 18 Fought In The British Army In WWI," *War History Online* (<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/the-boy-soldiers-of-wwi.html>: accessed 3 February 2024)
- <sup>15</sup> "14th Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, 7th Division," *The National Archives*, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C7352384>: accessed 1 January 2024), September 1916, Reference WO-95-1642-3\_05
- <sup>16</sup> "The London Gazette," *The Gazette* ([www.thegazette.co.uk/](http://www.thegazette.co.uk/): accessed 21 January 2024), entry for 2nd Lt. Horace Michael Hynman Allenby, R.H.A., Publication date: 13 February 1917, Supplement: 29940, Page: 1539
- <sup>17</sup> "Edmund Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby," *Wikipedia*. This quote cites information from Urban, Mark, *Generals: Ten British Commanders Who Shaped The Modern World*, London: Faber and Faber (2005). ISBN 978-0571224876 No harm in having ISBN, I guess
- <sup>18</sup> "14th Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, 7th Division," *The National Archives*, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/e9ef9b6952e34c668ff4400db109d0e5>: accessed 1 January 2024), July 1917, Reference WO 95/385/1
- <sup>19</sup> A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who did not soon die or could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital. (Casualty Clearing Station," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty\\_Clearing\\_Station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station): accessed 2 May 2020)
- <sup>20</sup> "Search Name Index," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 19 September 2023), entry for Allenby, H.M.H.

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<sup>21</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/war-diaries.aspx>; accessed 26 March 2023)

<sup>22</sup> "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 20 September 2023), entry for Horace Michael Hynman Allenby

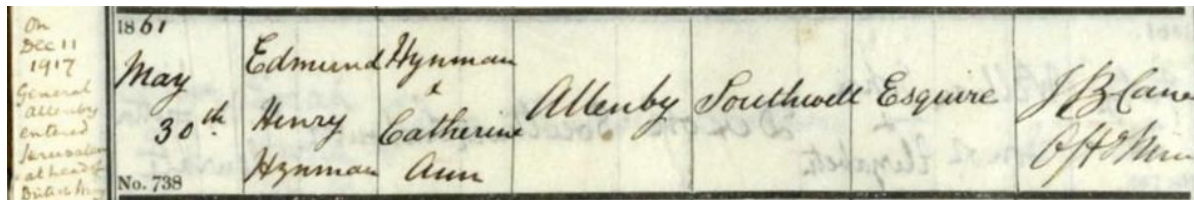
<sup>23</sup> *FindaGrave*, entry for Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby

<sup>24</sup> "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," *Poetry Foundation* (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45480/when-lilacs-last-in-the-dooryard-bloomd>; accessed 22 January 2024)

<sup>25</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, entry for Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby

<sup>26</sup> "Edmund Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby," *Wikipedia*. This article cites information and quotations from Urban, Mark, *Generals: Ten British Commanders Who Shaped The Modern World*. London: Faber and Faber (2005). ISBN 978-0571224876

<sup>27</sup> A note was added in the margin of Allenby's baptismal record to recount this momentous event. "Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1919," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 16 December 2023), entry for Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby



<sup>28</sup> "UK and Ireland, Find A Grave Index, 1300s-Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 21 January 2024), entry for Adelaide Mabel Allenby

<sup>29</sup> "The London Gazette," *The Gazette* ([www.thegazette.co.uk/](http://www.thegazette.co.uk/); accessed 21 January 2024), entry for Field-Marshal Sir Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby, Publication date: 21 October 1919, Issue: 31610, Page: 12890. Felixstowe was Allenby's home in England, and the battle of Megiddo, which took place in September 1918, was a turning point in the defeat of the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>30</sup> "Edmund Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby," *Wikipedia*

<sup>31</sup> "Will Visit Quebec," *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>; accessed 21 January 2024), *Kingston Whig-Standard*, 26 December 1925

<sup>32</sup> "Viscount Allenby Has Time to Shake Hands With Child," *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>; accessed 21 January 2024), *The Toronto Star*, 6 October 1928

<sup>33</sup> "Viscount Allenby Sent to Hospital," *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>; accessed 21 January 2024), *The Gazette*, 6 August 1934

<sup>34</sup> "Rumor Viscount Allenby May Be Canada's Next Governor-General," *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>; accessed 21 January 2024) *The Ottawa Citizen*, 23 July 1925,

<sup>35</sup> "UK and Ireland, Find A Grave Index, 1300s-Current," entry for Adelaide Mabel Allenby