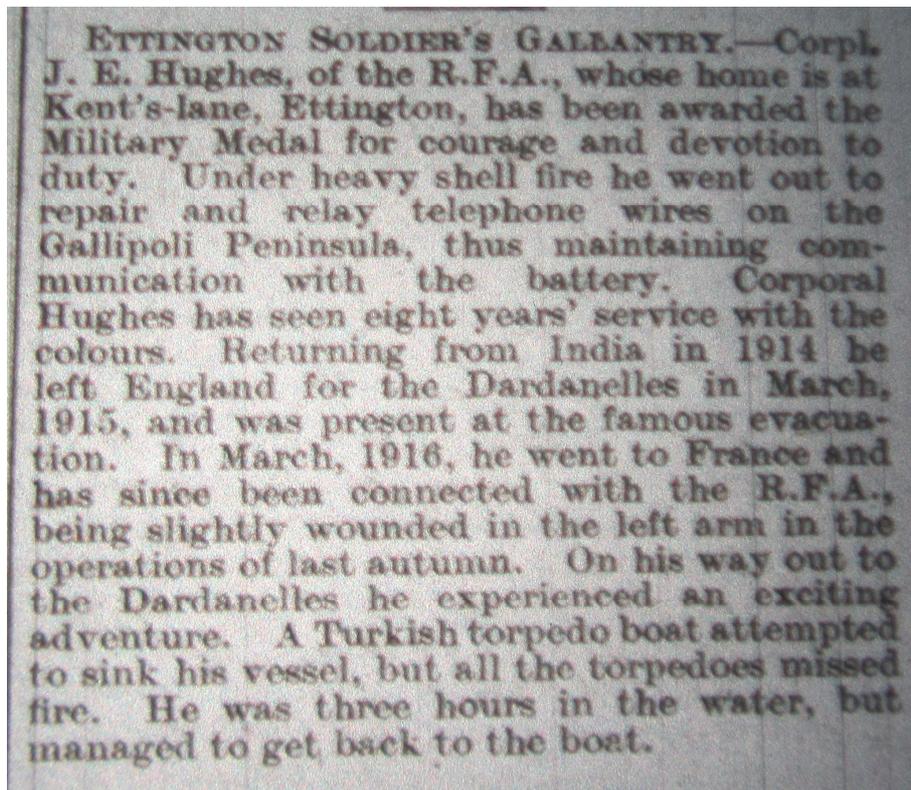


EDWIN GRANTHAM

Pride and Devastation

At the outbreak of war Edwin Grantham was a 52 year-old railway platelayer living in Kents Lane, Ettington. He was a local man having been born in Ettington in 1862, the youngest child of William Grantham and Sarah Allibone. He had been widowed in 1901 when the youngest of his five children was seven years old. By the time of the war his eldest daughter Lucy had been married for twelve years to Jack 'Gritter' Wilkins and had five children. His elder son Edwin junior was also married with at least one child. He had another son, George, and two more daughters Amy and Eliza.

Early in 1915 his middle daughter Amy married a professional soldier, a Londoner named Joseph Hughes. In 1917 the then Corporal Hughes was awarded the Military Medal for courage and devotion to duty. The following report appeared in the Stratford Herald on 23rd February:



Perhaps it is no surprise that he was later promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

No doubt Edwin Grantham would have been most proud of his son-in-law's achievement, and delighted in 1918 when, following a home leave, Amy announced that she was expecting a child.

But there was a most cruel twist in store for him right at the end of the war. Joseph Hughes had survived the war but, while still in France and only three weeks after Armistice day, he died. We have not been able to establish the cause of his death, whether he had been wounded or perhaps succumbed to the influenza pandemic. He was buried in the Etaples Military Cemetery.

Yet there was even more tragedy for Edwin, because Amy did not survive the birth of her son Joseph G. G. Hughes. His birth and Amy's death were both registered in the final quarter of 1918. And as if that were not enough, Amy's brother George died at just about the same time. His death was attributed to pneumonia.

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