

Private Francis Hughes
Regimental number: 12097
13th Battalion, King's Liverpool Regiment

born: about 1895 - died: 4 July 1918

Private Francis (Frank) Hughes was born in about 1895¹ in the parish of Kirkdale, near Liverpool, Lancashire.² He was the son of Moses and Fanny Hughes.³ His father, Moses was born in Manchester in 1857/8⁴ and his mother, Fanny (the former Fanny Verdin)⁵ was born in 1858 in Chester, Cheshire. Moses and Fanny married on 18 December 1880 in St Cleopes Church in Toxteth Park, near Liverpool.⁶ In the months following their marriage, Moses and Fanny were living with Fanny's parents, John and Mary Verdin at 11 Rosalind Street in Kirkdale.⁷ Moses was a railway foreman.

Frank was one of ten children born to the couple: Fanny (born about 1881), John Henry (born about 1883), Robert Frederick (born about 1886), William James (born about 1888), Margery V. (born about 1891), Samuel (born about 1893), Deborah (born about 1895), Frank, Lucy (born about 1898) and George (born in the first quarter of 1901).⁸ Unfortunately, his mother died in the first quarter of 1901⁹ – possibly while giving birth to their last child.

In 1891, the family was living at 51 Arthur Street in Walton-on-the-Hill near Liverpool, where Moses was a steam ship stoker.¹⁰ Ten years later, the family was living on Boundary Road, Kirkdale and Moses was a ship's foreman.¹¹ By 1911, the family appears to have dispersed. Frank's mother had died in 1901. Frank was living with his aunt, Deborah Holdsworth, his father's sister, at 35 Langfield Road, in Litherland, Lancashire.¹² At the time, Frank was an apprentice painter. His father was still living – he probably only died in 1930.¹³ Frank's sister, Fanny, had married Thomas Cairns in 1903¹⁴ but their whereabouts afterwards are not known. His brothers, Robert and Samuel, may have been living with his aunt after the war.¹⁵ The whereabouts of his other siblings are not known and they are not identified on the declaration of living relatives made after Frank's death.



Frank Hughes in Pernes cemetery
(Source: Author, July 2015)

Frank enlisted as a Private in the King's Liverpool Regiment on 14 August 1914 when he was just 19 years old.¹⁶ The Regiment was one of the oldest infantry regiments in the British Army and, unlike most regiments that represented a county, this regiment represented a city.¹⁷ When he died, Frank was serving with the 9th Service Battalion. When he enlisted, he was identified as a general labourer. He was 5' 3³/₄" tall, had a sallow complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair and was identified as being a member of the Church of England. He was considered fit for the Army.

Frank went to France on 19 May 1915. He had a furlough back in England in October 1917. He had a number of disciplinary events in his army record, including being absent from tattoo, overstaying a pass, being absent from Reveille, breaking out of barracks and being drunk in the billets. For these offences, he suffered a range of punishments from forfeiting pay to being confined to barracks or to the camp.

His Regiment took part in the German spring offensive of 1918.¹⁸ On 2 July 1918 he was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing

Station with a bullet wound to his neck. He died there two days later and was buried the next day in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row D, Grave No. 30) with the chaplain R. K. Lambert presiding. In the chaplain's record, Frank was identified as a Wesleyan. The day Frank was admitted to the 1st CCCS, he was one of 87 patients admitted that day and, when he died, he was one of 39 to die at the unit in the month of July.¹⁹

Frank's aunt, Deborah Holdsworth, was sent a letter notifying her of his death. She also received the monies owing to him after the war²⁰ and his possessions were returned to her.²¹ These included, among other things, photographs, religious books, cigarette case, cards, 9-carat gold ring, cap badges, horseshoe souvenirs, cigarette holder, purse and a wallet.²²

Frank was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²³

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¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 April 2015), entry for Francis Hughes, Registration district: Liverpool, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 8b, Page: 19

² "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 April 2015), entry for Francis Hughes

³ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 April 2015), entry for Frank Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, Sub-registration district: Kirkdale, ED, institution, or vessel: 35, Piece: 3470, Folio: 118, Page Number: 10, Household schedule number: 50

⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 April 2015), entry for Moses Hughes, Registration district: Warrington, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 107

⁵ "Liverpool, England, Marriages and Banns, 1813-1921," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 April 2015), entry Fanny Verdon, Reference Number: 283 CLP/3/1

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 April 2015), entry for Moses Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, Sub-registration district: Kirkdale, ED, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 3678, Folio: 65, Page Number: 3

⁸ "1901 England Census," entry for Frank Hughes; "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 April 2015), entry for Francis Hughes

⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 April 2015), entry for Fanny Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 8b, Page: 313

¹⁰ The census records shows Moses as John, but the record appears to be the record of Frank's mother, Fanny, and older siblings. "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2015), entry for Fanny Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, ED, institution, or vessel: 34, Piece: 2976, Folio: 61, Page Number: 22

¹¹ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2015), entry for Frank Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, Sub-registration district: Kirkdale, ED, institution, or vessel: 35, Piece: 3470, Folio: 118, Page Number: 10, Household schedule number: 50

¹² "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 April 2015), entry for Gedge James Holdsworth, Registration district: West Derby, Registration District Number: 455, Sub-registration district: Litherland, ED, institution, or vessel: 11, Piece: 22341

¹³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 April 2015), entry for Moses Hughes, Registration district: West Derby, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 8b, Page: 509

¹⁴ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 26 April 2015), entry for Fanny Hughes, District: West Derby, County: Lancashire, Volume: 8B, Page: 574

¹⁵ "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920," entry for Francis Hughes

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ "The King's Regiment (Liverpool)," Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King's_Regiment_\(Liverpool\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King's_Regiment_(Liverpool))); accessed 26 April 2015)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G)

²⁰ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 19 January 2015), entry for Francis Hughes

²¹ "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920," entry for Francis Hughes

²² "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920," entry for Francis Hughes

²³ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 26 November 2015), entry for Francis Hughes