

Shoeing-Smith WALTER WILLIAM PITTMAN

11643, 147th Royal Field Artillery Regiment
who was drowned aged 30 on 17 April 1915.

Son of William & Julia A. Pittman, Post Office Alley, Tewkesbury.
Remembered with honour at *Helles Memorial, Turkey*; panel 21 & 22.
Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey.

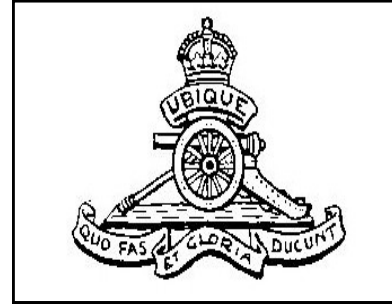


Helles Memorial. Turkey



SHOEING-SMITH W. T.
PITTMAN,
R.F.A., drowned in Turkish
attack on transport Manitou
in Aegean Sea. Eldest son of
Mr. and Mrs. Pitman, Post
Office-alley, Tewkesbury.

*W.W. Pittman
(Graphic 01/05/1915)*



Royal Field Artillery Regt.

Walter William Pittman [there is an error with the Graphic's initials and surname] was born in Tewkesbury in 1885, the eldest son of William Pittman and his wife Julia Annie (formerly Wilkins). William was born in Tewkesbury, his wife in Fiddington; William worked as a hay-trusser and general labourer. He and his family lived at various times in Well Alley, Scotts Court and Post Office Alley. Walter Pittman worked as a shoeing-smith and, in 1906, married Edith Amelia Chandler, living in 1911 at 1 Castle Villas, Lower Quay Street, Gloucester. By 1914 they had three children.

Walter Pittman volunteered and enlisted at Gloucester joining the *147th Brigade, Ammunition Column* of the *Royal Field Artillery Regiment* - in which horses drew mobile cannon. He was, therefore, allocated to a unit which could use his pre-war skill. He arrived in the "Egyptian" Theatre on 1 April 1915, on his way to fight in the *Gallipoli Campaign*. However, he never arrived as he was drowned in the Aegean Sea on 17 April 1915 following a Turkish attack on the transport ship, *Manitou*. This was a former transatlantic liner and, shortly before the Gallipoli campaign was unleashed, *Manitou* was attacked by the Turkish torpedo boat *Demir Hissar*. "The attack does not seem to have been very well carried out, for both of the torpedoes fired missed and torpedo boat was subsequently beached by her crew. The rest of the division safely reached shore: the only unit to suffer loss being the **147th Brigade R.F.A.** as the result of a sensational incident. The brigade embarked on the 15th on the *Manitou*, a vessel of some 7,000 tons. The guns were stowed in the hold, and the small ammunition was in the magazine. So great was the confidence that the seas had been swept of hostile craft other than submarines, which had not yet appeared in the Mediterranean, that no preparations had been made to meet an attack. ...Somewhat inconsistently, the Captain thereupon fired a torpedo...., which missed. Meanwhile boats were being lowered, and men were going over the side in large numbers. **In one case the davits were strained to breaking point, and with a crash the occupants of the boat were hurled into the sea. What might have been the destruction of an entire brigade of artillery resulted in a regrettable but comparatively small number of casualties by drowning and bruises.**"

Shoeing-Smith Pittman was one of those "regrettable casualties" and, because his body was not recovered, his name only is commemorated at the *Helles Memorial, Turkey*. He was awarded the *1915 Star*.

His youngest brother, Arthur, was gassed during the final advance in October 1918 but he survived.

Draft Only

Researched by Derek Benson, with additional research from www.geocities.com .