

Sutton Veny

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War I



M2/201339 PRIVATE

F. SNELGROVE

ARMY SERVICE CORPS

21ST JULY, 1917 AGE 31

Gone From Us

But Not Forgotten

Never Shall His

Memory Fade

Frank SNELGROVE

Frank Snelgrove was born at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire to parents Charles & Maria Snelgrove (nee Gray). His birth was registered in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire in the March quarter of 1886. His parents had married in 1874 at All Saints Church, Norton Bavant, Wiltshire.

The 1891 England Census recorded Frank Snelgrove as a 5 year old living with his family at 1 Coopers Bottom, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire. His parents were listed as Charles Snelgrove (Agricultural Labourer, aged 42, born St. John's Wood, London) & Maria Snelgrove (aged 43, born Mere, Wiltshire). Frank was the youngest of 5 children listed on this Census – James C. (Agricultural Labourer, aged 16, born Norton Bavant), Tom (Agricultural Labourer, aged 13, born Sutton Veny), Annie (Scholar, aged 10, born Sutton Veny), Charles (Scholar, aged 7, born Sutton Veny) then Frank.

The 1901 England Census recorded Frank Snelgrove as a 15 year old Carter for a Grocer's Shop living at 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge with his sister & her family. Frank's sister was listed as Winifred S. Andrews (aged 24, born Sutton Veny) & her husband was William Andrews (Carter at a Grocer's Shop, aged 27). Winifred & William Andrews had 2 children listed on this Census – Wilfred C (aged 3, born Sutton Veny) & Hilda M. (aged 6 months, born Trowbridge).

Frank Snelgrove married Florence Emm at Bratton on 12th October, 1909. Florence Annie Snelgrove was born on 2nd October, 1910 at Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

The 1911 England Census recorded Frank Snelgrove as a 25 year old, married Grocer's Vanman, living with his wife & daughter at 26 Dursley Road, Trowbridge which was a 5 roomed dwelling. Frank & his wife – Florence (aged 23, born Bratton, Wilts) had been married for 1 year & only had 1 child - Florence Annie (aged 6 months, born Bratton) at the time of the Census.

(The 1911 Census recorded Frank's mother as Maria Snelgrove (Widow, aged 62) living at Cross Roads, Sutton Veny in a 4 roomed Dwelling. She had been married for 18 years & had 8 children, all still living at the time of the Census. Also living with Maria Snelgrove was Sam Dixon, a Boarder (Farm Labourer, aged 44).

Frank Snelgrove's Service Record file still exists – many service record files were destroyed or burnt during the German attacks in WW2. Frank Snelgrove's Service record file is one of the Burnt Files – it contains 10 pages. Frank Snelgrove was a 30 year old, married Grocer's Vanman living at 12 Alma Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire when he attested at Trowbridge with the Army Service Corps. He was given the rank of Private & a service number of M2/201339. Pte Snelgrove was medically checked on 7th December, 1915 & found to be "flat footed – not able for much walking".

Pte Frank Snelgrove was mobilized at 7th August, 1916 & joined Grove Park on 8th August, 1916. Pte Snelgrove was on Home Service until 24th September, 1916.

Pte Frank Snelgrove entered a Theatre of War at Mesopotamia (spares) on 25th September, 1916.

Private Frank Snelgrove was admitted at 2.30 p.m. on 21st July, 1917 to No. 23 British Stationary Hospital suffering from heatstroke. He was unconscious at the time & his temperature was 106.4. In spite of active treatment he died at 8 p.m. Details from Medical report show that Pte Frank Snelgrove was attached to A.S.C MT 783 Coy.

Private Frank Snelgrove died of Heatstroke at Basra, Persian Gulf at 8 p.m. on 21st July, 1917. He was aged 31 years.

Private Frank Snelgrove was buried in Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq – Grave No. XV. A. 5. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frank Snelgrove, M2/201339, Advanced M. T. Workshop, Army Service Corps as being the son of Charles and Maria Snelgrove; husband of Florence Snelgrove of 12 Alma St, Trowbridge, Wilts. Born at Sutton Veny, Warminster.

Private Frank Snelgrove of Army Service Corps was entitled to the British War & Victory Medals.

Army Service Corps

The Army Service Corps (ASC) was a corps of the British Army responsible for land, coastal and lake transport, air despatch, barracks administration, the Army Fire Service, staffing headquarters' units, supply of food, water, fuel and domestic materials such as clothing, furniture and stationery and the supply of technical and military equipment.

The ASC subsequently absorbed some transport elements of the Royal Engineers. In 1918, the corps received the "Royal" prefix for its service in the First World War and became the Royal Army Service Corps. It was divided into Transport and Supply Branches.

M.T.

The ASC Mechanical Transport Depot Companies filled a variety of administrative, recruitment, induction, training and re-supply roles. The Base Depots were based in the United Kingdom or at the port of entry to a theatre of war. Advanced Depots were located further up the lines of communication.

The No. 1 Reserve MT Depot was located at Grove Park as part of the Army Service Corps Mechanical Transport.



Frank Snelgrove is remembered on the 1914 -1919 Roll of Honour located inside St. John the Evangelist Church at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.

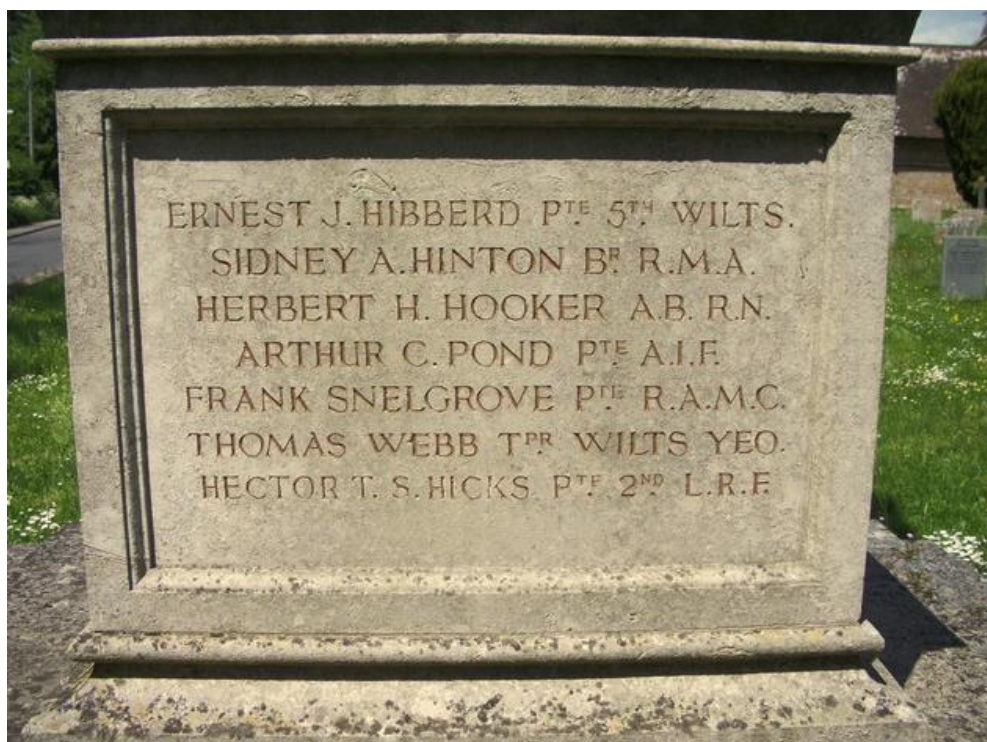


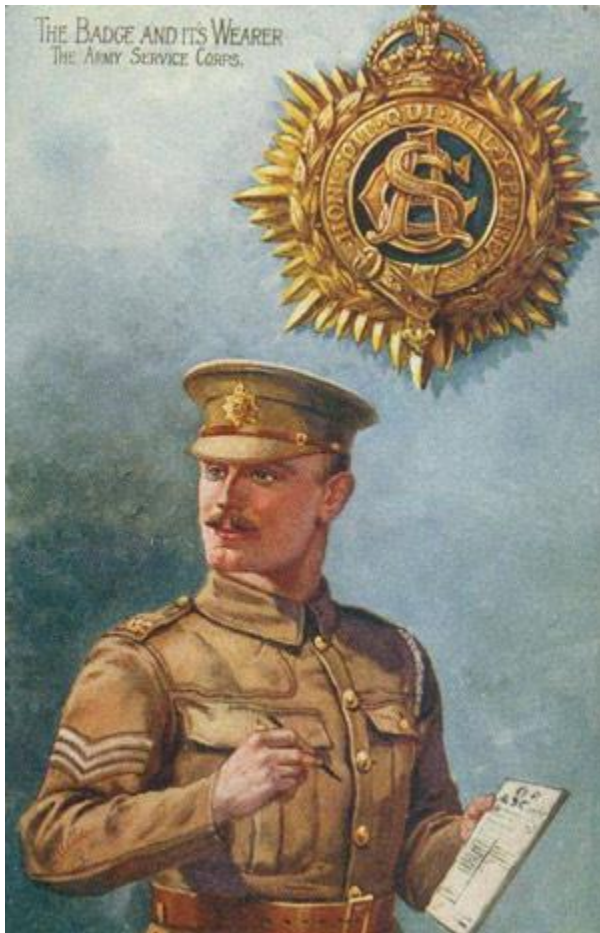
F. Snelgrove is also honoured in the Casualties of World War 1 Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book for the parish of Sutton Veny.

Frank Snelgove is also remembered on the Sutton Veny War Memorial located in the foreground of St. John the Evangelist churchyard. He is listed on the War Memorial as being part of R.A.M.C. (Royal Army Medical Corps) but there is no mention of this in his Service Record file only that he was attached to A.S.C. (Army Service Corp) & more specifically the M.T. (Motor Transport).



Sutton Veny War Memorial (Photos courtesy of Andrea Charlesworth)





Recruitment Posters for Army Service Corps



G.  R.
WANTED FOR
A.S.C. MECHANICAL TRANSPORT
MECHANICS, FITTERS,
TURNERS, DRIVERS
and LEARNERS.

Only men who are ineligible for Infantry will be taken.

AGES 19 TO 45 YEARS.

Rate of Pay varies according to trade and experience.

Free Kit, Free Rations, Free Lodgings,
and Usual Separation Allowances.

A Mechanical Transport Officer will attend at the BARRACKS, READING, at 10 a.m., on THURSDAY, March 2nd, and on every alternate Thursday at the same time and place.

Bring References and Driving Licences.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Baghdad (North gate) War Cemetery, Iraq

Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery is located in a very sensitive area in the Waziriah Area of the Al-Russafa district of Baghdad. The main entrance to the cemetery is located opposite the College of Arts and the Institute of Administration in Baghdad University and adjacent to the Iraqi Cigarette Factory in Waziriah Area and the Press of Ministry of Defence.

In 1914, Baghdad was the headquarters of the Turkish Army in Mesopotamia. It was the ultimate objective of the Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' and the goal of the force besieged and captured at Kut in 1916. The city finally fell in March 1917, but the position was not fully consolidated until the end of April. Nevertheless, it had by that time become the Expeditionary Force's advanced base, with two stationary hospitals and three casualty clearing stations.

The North Gate Cemetery was begun In April 1917 and has been greatly enlarged since the end of the First World War by graves brought in from other burial grounds in Baghdad and northern Iraq, and from battlefields and cemeteries in Anatolia where Commonwealth prisoners of war were buried by the Turks.

At present, 4,160 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War are commemorated by name in the cemetery, many of them on special memorials. Unidentified burials from this period number 2,729.

During the Second World War, Baghdad was again an objective of Commonwealth forces. The 20th Indian Infantry Brigade reached the city from Shaiba by the Euphrates route on 12 June 1941 and the 21st Indian Infantry Brigade, part of the 13th Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers, together with the 157th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, arrived on 19 June via the Tigris. An advanced base was established later near the city and

remained in use until 1946.

Most of the 296 Commonwealth servicemen of the Second World War buried in the cemetery died of illness or by accident when serving with PAIFORCE. Again, a number of the graves were brought in from other burial grounds.

Within the cemetery is the Baghdad (North Gate) (Khanaqin) Memorial, commemorating 104 Commonwealth servicemen, 437 Polish soldiers and 3 Arab Legionnaires of the Second World War buried in Khanaqin War Cemetery which, owing to difficulty of access, could not be properly maintained.

The North Gate Cemetery also contains 127 war graves of other nationalities from both wars, 100 of them Turkish, and 41 non-war graves. *(Information from CWGC)*



(Photos kindly supplied by Sean McLachlan)



The Baghdad North Gate War Cemetery

([Osprey Blogs](#) – by Sean McLachlan)

In a lonely part of Baghdad in a poor part of town, stands a cemetery to the British Empire's war dead.

Most of the headstones date to the Mesopotamian Campaign of World War One, a gruelling trek across the desert fighting a stubborn Ottoman foe. While the Turks were a danger, disease and heat exhaustion took even more lives. On 20 July 1917, for example, the temperature in Baghdad was 123° F (50.6°C).

The cemetery is poorly maintained. While there is a guard, plastic bags and wrappers from the nearby road blow amidst the headstones and at night it's a popular place for sneaking a drink. Broken beer and whiskey bottles are scattered in the less visible corners of the cemetery.

Despite this, it's still a moving place, where one can read the names of those who served.

The highest-ranking soldier to die in the Mesopotamian campaign was Lt.-Gen. Sir Stanley Maude, who succumbed to cholera on 18 November 1917 after drinking tainted milk.

Many of the troops in the campaign came from India. This is a monument to the Sikh and Hindu soldiers who gave their lives. There's a similar one for Muslim troops.

In a remarkable display of good sportsmanship, there's even a monument to the Turkish troops who died fighting the British army.

Some burials are for later conflicts, especially the numerous revolts against the British Mandate in Iraq, which lasted until 1932.



(Baghdad North Gate War Cemetery – 2012)





(Photos kindly supplied by Sean McLachlan)

Peace in Iraq offers hope for Baghdad's British War Graves

The Telegraph – By Colin Freeman, Baghdad 7 April, 2013

For nearly a century they have stood in a parched, sun-baked corner of Baghdad, reminders of a long-forgotten conflict fought by long-forgotten regiments.

In the city's North Gate Cemetery are the graves of thousands of servicemen from Britain's Mesopotamian Campaign of World War One, who braved heatstroke, cholera and determined Turkish troops to seize Baghdad from the Ottoman Empire.

Bearing the names of bygone regiments like the South Wales Borderers and the Buffs, today the headstones are bleached and cracked by the same harsh climate that killed many of the men whose lives they commemorate.

Yet in the decade that has passed since the latest British military campaign in Iraq, the marble slabs have had more than just Iraq's 50C summer heat to deal with.

Thanks to the violence that has gripped the Iraqi capital since Saddam Hussein's fall, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has been unable to maintain the vast graveyard, causing it to fall into disrepair. And like the men who are buried beneath them, the headstones themselves have suffered their fair share of incoming fire.

"A big car bomb hit an embassy just outside the cemetery in 2009, which knocked many of the stones over or broke them in two," explained the cemetery's Iraqi caretaker as he took The Sunday Telegraph on a tour around the overgrown, litter-strewn plots last month. "And since then, there has also been damage from random mortar fire and rockets – this area used to see quite a bit of fighting."

Now, though, with security in Iraq gradually improving, the commission is finally hopeful of restoring the cemetery to pristine condition again, along with 12 other graveyards and memorials across the country.

Over the past year at North Gate, a team of Iraqi contractors have begun to replace some 500 damaged headstones, drawing on a stock of ready-engraved replacement slabs that actually arrived in Baghdad just after the First Gulf War in 1990.

The commission had hoped to lay them at the time, but found it impossible due to the worsening of diplomatic relations between Iraq and Britain.

Instead, the replacement slabs were left in metal containers just next to the cemetery, which were finally opened only last year.

"The stones inside the containers were completely intact and even had the original manifest still with them," said Peter Francis, a spokesman for the commission's offices in Maidenhead, Berks.

At North Gate, the gleaming new replacement headstones now stand out amid the cemetery's crumbling, greying rows, commemorating men like 7661 Private J Aitken, of the Cameron Highlanders, who died on Sept 3, 1916, and 56570 Private D Murray, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, who died on May 19, 1918.

Still awaiting repair is the cemetery's Cross of Sacrifice, which, according to the caretaker, was damaged by the 2009 car bomb. It went off outside the embassy of Britain's former foe, Turkey, which overlooks the cemetery. Today the cross stands minus its crossbar on a patch of open ground between the graves, which doubles as a football pitch for local children.

The Mesopotamian campaign that men like Ptes Murray and Aitken gave their lives for was overshadowed by the epic battles in Europe, yet was every bit as tough. It began at the outset of the war in 1914, and like the later conflict of 2003, the invasion took place around the southern port area of Basra.

However, after initially going in to secure refineries on the Shatt al Arab estuary belonging to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the British forces pressed on north to a military disaster in the city of Kut, where 12,800 of them eventually surrounded after a five-month Turkish siege. More than a third then died due to the brutal conditions they suffered as POWs.

Having suffering one of its most humiliating military defeats ever, Britain then invaded again with an Anglo-Indian army led by the Boer War veteran, Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Maude, which took Baghdad on March 11, 1917.

Maude himself then died of cholera just six months later, and has a small mausoleum in the middle of the cemetery.

Altogether North Gate has commemorates some 4,160 World War One casualties, while in total, the Commonwealth war sites around Iraq honour more than 54,000 servicemen from both World Wars. The figures dwarf the casualties of the modern Iraqi campaign, in which 4,487 American and 179 British troops were killed.

Despite the insurgencies that successive British military actions in Iraq here have provoked, the war graves have seldom been the target of vandalism or sabotage.

But at North Gate, the caretaker, whose name The Sunday Telegraph is withholding for security reasons, does tell stories of having to occasionally defend the turf from marauders. One day, not long after the fall of Saddam, he saw from his house overlooking the cemetery a group of supporters of the former president coming through a hole in the fence.

"The cemetery was very overgrown at the time, and they were carrying cans of petrol to set it all ablaze," said the caretaker, whose father and grandfather also did the same job.

"I grabbed a Kalashnikov that I keep at my house and fired several shots in their direction, and they fled. They were doing it out of hatred, they did not realise that this is a site with important heritage."

On other occasions, the cemetery has been used by drunks and tramps, and even by Iraqis practising witchcraft, for whom soil occupied by non-Muslim tombs is said to have special magical properties.

"One day I caught a woman burying a spell written on a piece of paper that she had wrapped in a piece of her hijab," the caretaker added. "She said she was having trouble conceiving, and that a witch had told her to come here."

Mr Francis, the CWGC spokesman, said that the continuing security threats in Iraq continued to place "severe limitations" on the restoration work that could be done on the country's war cemeteries, with work in the past limited to occasional maintenance projects via Iraqi contractors. But he said that planning was under way for a future "major renovations" programme.

"We are working closely with the British Embassy in Baghdad to develop a wider maintenance capacity on the ground via potential working partners," he said.

"We have not forgotten or abandoned the cemeteries in Iraq. As soon as the situation permits, we will restore them to a standard befitting the sacrifice of those buried and commemorated there."



Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery located in the Waziriah Area of the Al-Russafa district of Baghdad

Photo: Julian Simmonds for the Telegraph

