



## Gunner Godfrey William Snelling

983020 Gunner, 11<sup>th</sup> (Honourable Artillery Company), Royal Horse Artillery

It is unclear on the exact date of death other than he died in Egypt somewhere between 31<sup>st</sup> October 1942 and 14<sup>th</sup> November 1942, aged 25

Godfrey is commemorated on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt.

Godfrey was born in the middle of the first world war, Nov 1916 to be precise, to John and Rosa Snelling nee Hubbard, a couple who spent most of their married life out in Dickleburgh. John had a steady job, working as a Roadman for the Norfolk County Council, but money was tight. In 1911 the Snellings and five of Godfrey's 6 older siblings (one for every two years of their parent's twelve-year marriage) were crammed into a three-room cottage in Dickleburgh



During the interwar period, not only was free education available and compulsory (as it had been for decades) but attendance was well enforced. Godfrey was obviously a bright lad and the eve of WW2 finds the 23 years old lodging up in London with a clerical job. Meantime, his parents had moved into town and were living up at Jay's Green in, what were then, the newly built council houses

*The Snelling's Home in Jay's Green*

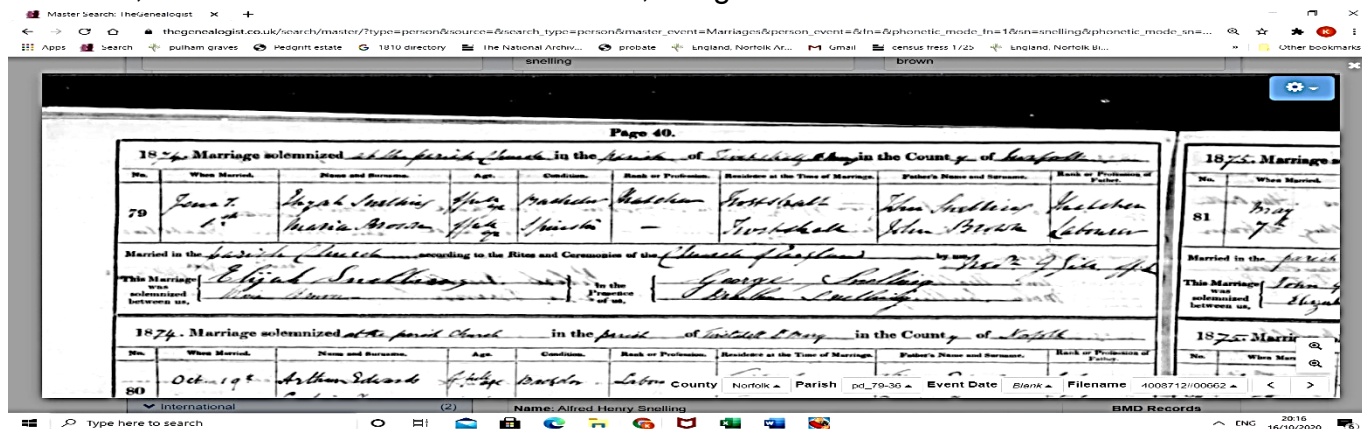
There does seem to be a bit of pattern in the rural labouring families of this period. In this time of large families, older children tended to follow their parents into manual or domestic labour; it was the younger children who reaped the benefits of having more money coming into the household and older siblings lightening the load from harassed parents. This pattern was certainly followed in the Snelling family, whilst Godfrey (10 years Sydney's junior) was away in London in a white-collar job, in 1939 his older brother, Sydney, his wife and 2 children were living in Weybread (also in a council house) and being supported by Sidney's job as a council labourer.

Another brother, Cyril, worked on the land as a tractor driver, I hope by the time he appeared in the 1939 census he was then properly licensed! Back in 1932, he got stopped by the local police – at this time tractors had metal cleats rather than tyres on the wheels. If a tractor took to the roads, for whatever reason, 'bands' were meant to be fitted to stop the cleats chewing up the tarmac. Cyril lost patience with these bands when one flew off and hit him in the back, after which Cyril took both back bands off and continued on his merry way chewing up both the verges and the tarmac. To compound Cyril's problems, it transpired his license had expired about a year previously – in time honoured fashion Cyril blamed his wife for that one! It did not help that the number plates were also off the tractor – 10/- fine in total for Cyril and the same for his employer! I am afraid to say, if the local paper in 1940 is to be believed, Cyril did not always keep control of either his temper or his

children! Apparently, when his landlady complained about the slamming of doors, his children running amok destroying the piggeries and generally anti-social behaviour, he threatened to lay her flat. Not sure the court was entirely convinced though. He may have had a bit of temper, but Cyril had a good heart too, Two-years later, Cyril and a friend managed to raise £6/12/6 for the Blind Children of Norfolk from the regulars at the King's Head, Dickleburgh.

Back in 1901, Godfrey's parents were supplementing their income by housing 2 little girls from Essex. As well as their two-year-old, 9 years old Eliza Granger and Ellen Donnelly from Essex were in the household whilst next door the Bartrams were hosting James Harper, 9 and Joseph Hitchen, 7, also both from Essex. All four children were described as having come from the West Ham Mission. This is intriguing; it is fairly well known that for a period at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, in Dickleburgh the local Rector and his wife ran homes for the 'reception of workhouse orphans'. These children mostly came from London having either lost or been abandoned by parents unable to cope with the grinding poverty rife at the time; records of Rose Cottage and Lee Cottage reveal that a number of these children did indeed come from West Ham in London and as the Cottages became full to overflowing children were boarded out in the village. The main houses were dedicated to the raising of girls, largely focussing on education and training for domestic service. 10 years later in 1911 Eliza Granger and Ellen Donnelly were both, as might be expected servants: Eliza working in a house in London; Ellen is back in the West Ham Workhouse, this time as a patient in the infirmary. It is interesting that the Snelling's neighbours were caring for boys.

Godfrey's father, John Elijah Snelling, makes a slightly confusing first entrance in the 1881 census. 7 years old, his place of birth was given as Pulham Market (not Tivetshall or Tibenham as he later claims although his 5 years old sister, Alice, was born in Tivetshall) whilst his mother was described as 'lodger's wife daughter'. I think this actually meant that John's mother, Maria Snelling, was the daughter of John Brown (head of the household) and was living there with her husband who did not appear in this census. This was confirmed when I found the marriage certificate of Elijah Snelling, Thatcher, son of a thatcher and Maria Brown, daughter of John Brown.



All fairly reasonable but I was surprised to find that 10 years later, John Brown, now widowed, was still the head of the household, Maria Snelling and her son John Elijah were still in the household but there was still no sign of Maria's husband, Elijah, in spite of the fact she was claiming to be married, not widowed. Maria and Elijah's other child, Alice, was lodging near the Half Moon in Rushall 15 years old schoolteacher. This may sound a little bizarre but at the time teenagers would

TIVETSHALL, NORFOLK.  
**E**LLIOTT & PIKE have received instructions from the Executors of Mr. William Ayton, deceased, to Sell by Auction at the Ram Inn, Tivetshall, on *Monday, 4th September, 1882*, at 5 for 6 o'clock in the evening, the following eligible Property in two lots.

**IN TIVETSHALL ST. MARY.**

**Lot 1.**—A stud and tiled Cottage and Garden, in the occupation of Elijah Snelling. Also a substantial stud and tiled Messuage, formerly in two tenements, with outbuildings, and a piece of very productive Arable Land, orchard and garden ground, in the tenure of John Lawes, the whole containing three roods more or less.

be 'apprentice teachers' and learn on the job, initially as the equivalent of today's teachers' assistants but taking on more responsibility as their skills progressed.

Perhaps Elijah just happened to be working away on both the census nights, perhaps he had abandoned his family, perhaps he was in prison. So, time for some investigations: it turns out that on the night of the 1881 census Elijah was visiting his parents, who also lived in the village; a year later it seems the couple had set up home in their own right. All well and good then?

Not really, much later it transpired that Elijah and his father in law really did not get on well, presumably this precipitated the move to another cottage. As it turned out this was not a happy establishment.

in 1883 Elijah attacked his wife with a 'lambsfoot knife', essentially a folding pocket knife, causing injuries to her throat and extensive bleeding. When the case first came to court the full horror of the events unfolded.

*A lambsfoot knife similar to the one Snelling attacked his wife with.*



The couple had been sleeping when Elijah awoke his wife and asked her to come to the window with him as people were there to shoot him. Maria put a shawl around her shoulders and went to the window to try to reassure her husband; Elijah reacted by stabbing at her body, Maria fended off the attack, Elijah silently swapped the knife to his other hand, raised his arm around her neck and plunged the knife into her throat.

Somehow the woman escaped to a neighbour's house, and woke the inhabitants Mr and Mrs Lawes. They came down stairs and found her in a blood soaked night dress and shawl with her hand to her throat 'when she got inside she took her hand away from her neck and more blood came out'. With great presence of mind, Maria had wrapped the shawl around her throat and it was almost certainly doing this which saved her life. Shortly after Snelling came to the Lawes' door and when asked by Mr Lawes 'Who did it?', Snelling clearly stated he had. Not too surprisingly Lawes asked Snelling to leave. The doctor who attended Maria Snelling stated she had been in danger of losing her life, it being a week before he could feel confident she would not die. The toughness of this woman is incredible; just about dawn she had been stabbed in the throat, lost a huge amount of blood, made it down the stairs and out of her cottage to her neighbours' and still managed to fight off any potential infection. Further evidence revealed that on previous occasions when Snelling had been drinking

he had abused his wife and physically attacked her, on one occasion leaving her bed ridden for several weeks. Oddly enough (or perhaps not) it was only ever his wife he seemed to abuse.

About 1 o'clock Snelling, drunk and excitable, knocked on the door of the Pulham Market Police Station and said 'I have struck my wife with my lambsfoot knife; I don't know if she is dead or alive'. Not too surprisingly he was put into a cell but later on that evening attempted to kill himself by beating his head against the walls of his cell, resulting in a police officer being stationed in his cell.

**PETTY SESSIONS—WEDNESDAY.**

[Before the Revs. C. R. Manning and H. Brandreth.]  
Elijah Snelling, laborer, Tivetshall, was brought up in custody from Pulham Market Police-station and charged by Superintendent Grimes with unlawfully wounding his wife, Maria Snelling, on Sunday, the 5th inst. Superintendent Grimes stated that on the above day at one o'clock in the afternoon, the prisoner came to the Police-station at Pulham Market and told witness that he had struck his (Snelling's) wife with a lamb's-foot knife. Snelling was taken into custody and locked up, and witness went to the prisoner's house, where he saw Mrs. Snelling with her throat bandaged, and blood all about the floor and stairs. The woman was not able to make any statement beyond a few words, and she was still in a weak and dangerous state. Witness asked for a remand, which the Bench granted till Wednesday next, and prisoner was removed to Norwich Castle.

When the case came to court, his defence claimed that Snelling had been 'on the drink for some days'. The defence boiled down to the logic that if Snelling had actually wanted to kill his wife he could have done so when she was sleeping and almost inferred that his wife had brought the assault upon herself as 'she adopted the wrong course when she was awakened, for she tried to reason with her husband . . . instead of humouring him and feigning to protect him.' Hmm, the past is indeed a foreign country and they certainly do

things differently there!

I am glad to say the Chairman was most unimpressed by this logic, the Rector of the Parish described Snelling as an industrious hard-working man when not under the influence of drink when he got into a state of furious frenzy and vented his violence on his inoffensive wife.

He was given a sentence of 12 months – at the same sessions a 34 years old shoemaker was given 9 months for stealing a pair of shooting boots and a mackintosh. Translating into modern money that must mean a wife is worth about £400, and that assuming it was a decent quality pair of boots and mac that had been stolen!

Elijah returned home to Tivetshall, one would hope a little wiser as well as a little older although he did not entirely stay out of pubs, being thumped by James West at the Half Moon Rushall in 1888. He also did not entirely stay out of other trouble being convicted of stealing some wood.

I would not think Elijah was a totally reformed character and I would dread to think what happened behind closed doors in the Snelling's cottage and what young John Elijah witnessed and as it later transpired what John Elijah and his sister also suffered.

Nowadays it is difficult to imagine a scenario when a man is released from prison to return to the wife, he tried to kill just over a year previously; also, hard to imagine that man continuing to beat both wife and children with impunity and the general knowledge of the village.

Then, 7 years after Elijah Snelling attempted to murder his wife, he actually succeeded in murdering his mother-in-law, kicking her to death and leaving her body in a ditch

### **THE MURDER AT PULHAM.**

The excitement in the district round Pulham St. Mary, where Mrs. Brown was so brutally murdered by her son-in-law, Elijah Snelling, on Wednesday morning, has in no way abated. Indeed, as the prisoner's antecedents are discussed, and his vicious habits depicted, the feeling against the man is intensified. He was, it is said, addicted to periodical drinking bouts, and at times would unmercifully beat his wife and two children. He is of an exceedingly callous disposition, and after his apprehension on the charge of murder betrayed no emotion. The apathy to his terrible position was strikingly demonstrated when he appeared before the magistrates on Friday morning. His demeanour was rather that of a spectator than a prisoner, and during the hearing he beckoned to some of his acquaintances. After his committal for trial he was removed direct to the railway station, where a large crowd witnessed his departure for Norwich Prison, where he will remain till the Assizes.

*Norwich Mercury Norfolk, England*

*15 Jan 1890*

The press coverage reveals Snelling to have been more or less universally disliked in the village because of his savage temper and violent conduct, although he did have number of drinking pals; bar stool mates are notoriously non-judgemental.

So, in brief, in 1890 Elijah Snelling was no longer working as a thatcher, perhaps his drinking habits had put paid to that, Instead, he had the much lowlier profession (and income) of a mole catcher. It appears he hated his wife and, even more so, hated his mother-in-law, so far as one can tell for no more reason than they were women, they existed and probably did not appreciate his drunken behaviour

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1890, Snelling breakfasted on tea and beer at the Ram, Tivetshall. He then continued with the beer, but no tea, until leaving the pub about noon. Quite a lot of booze on an empty stomach, rather early in the day and according to evidence later given at court this had been part of a general habit of alcohol abuse; the landlord offered him food, but this was refused. Instead, Snelling was very restless and, much like 7 years previously, he was having delusions about people being out to shoot him. He was also muttering about his wife and generally being rather odd but apparently no more so than on other occasions when, as he often was, he was in drink.

Tragically for Maria Brown, the two met upon the road as she was taking her husband his lunch in a basket. The two had an altercation and Snelling viscously attacked his mother-in-law, kicking her on the ground with his heavy boots. In the subsequent court hearing Maria was described as undersized and the post mortem revealed that whilst she had actually died of a fractured skull, she had also had serious wounds and bruising to her face, a broken collar bone, fractured ribs and a lung pierced by one of those ribs.

By today's standards there were a surprising number of folks out and about in the area. A young girl, Laura Hardy found the blood-stained basket on the road, saw blood stains on the grass and looking over a broken-down fence saw a body with the head immersed in a ditch. She recognised Mrs Brown by her dress; this was in a time when a working woman would consider herself to be very lucky to own two dresses, possibly a third one for Sundays only.

Roughly speaking, Laura found the body, Laura's mother bumped into Elijah on her way to check out her daughter's story, Elijah basically wished his mother-in-law to hell, skittered around a bit and continued on his way, Laura's mother then chanced on a chap called Robert Brown who, having picked up George Snelling on his way, went to the body and with George's help removed it from the ditch and wrapped it in the shawl she was wearing. John Brown, having failed to get his lunch delivered by his wife went in search of his wife and food and came across the murder scene.

Meanwhile Elijah spent some time muttering away to himself, throwing stones in a ditch, trying to hitch a lift and generally acting in a slightly odd way until eventually winding up in the Blacksmith's workshop where he was arrested.

The crux of the case came down to, not whether Snelling was in his right mind or not when he attacked his mother-in-law, (it was generally agreed he was acting in an odd way due to alcohol abuse over an extended period), but whether this self-inflicted delirium should excuse his behaviour. There was also a bit of argy bargy about whether he had a sustained enmity to his mother-in-law or not, but at the end of the day he was found guilty. The judge clearly stated that drinking to a point of indiscretion was not a just excuse and passed the sentence of death, this fair complexioned man of middle height showed no emotion beyond a slight heightening of his colour. Actually, whilst the court reporter described him as being of middle height, another reporter (at the time of Snelling's arrest described him thus:-

Prisoner wore a sealskin cap and was dressed in a mixed tweed suit. He had a black and white scarf around his neck and his feet were encased in a pair of heavy boots. He is of slim build, a little over 5ft. in height, and fair with moustache and slight beard. He appeared but dimly conscious of his position . . . His face was pale but firm set and his arms hung limp beside him.

During the actual trial as opposed to the committal, it became apparent that whilst drink had played a part in the crime, he was mentally unstable. At which point, a degree of the hatred and bitterness against him suddenly got a bit wobbly, letters were written, and a ballad composed, two of the verses from which are included below

IN a condemned cell at Norwich, a wretched man is lying,  
At the last Assizes for murder he was tried,  
His crime was most cruel, there is no denying,  
When we read in the manner how the old woman died...  
Young and old should take warning against evil passion,  
For often it causes much misery and strife,  
And think of the tale of Elijah Snelling,  
Who through it for murder must soon pay his life.

The case of the convict Elijah Snelling, sentenced to death by Mr. Justice Dunman at the late Norfolk Assizes, shows the increasing weakness of what we may term the capital punishment system. There is always some weakening in the public resolve to carry out the extreme penalty of the law upon a convict condemned to death; and outside public opinion counts for something in a matter of this kind, as Home Secretaries generally exhibit a good deal of readiness to give way in a case where the life of a criminal is trembling in the balance. The whole course of capital punishment business may be summed up as follows:—When a murder is committed, especially if it is at all of an atrocious character, a thrill of horror goes through the public, and no language is too strong to express its condemnation of the brutality of the murderer. This feeling exhausts itself a little as time goes on, but it remains tolerably strong until the Judge has assumed the black cap and passed sentence of death. Then an almost entire change takes place—a change worked up and accentuated by those who have a standing objection to capital punishment. On all sides one now hears such words applied to the condemned as, “Poor dear man, a pity to hang him;” “Some mitigating circumstances;” “Grandfather exhibited symptoms of insanity, and father always considered weak in his head,” &c. The upshot of the matter is that the convict’s life is spared, and he escapes with a sentence of penal servitude for life. This being the case, the grave question presents itself whether it would not be well to dispense for good and all with capital punishment.

A few weeks after his conviction Snellings sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life, expert evidence having been given that there was some evidence he might be insane, much to the disgust of some of the local worthies. He started his imprisonment down in Hampshire on Portsea Island appearing there in 1891, by 1901 he was in Portland Prison, Dorset.

**THE PULHAM MURDER.**

TO THE EDITOR.

Respected Friend,—Although I have ever been an advocate for the abolition of capital punishment I confess that I was so staggered by the report of the apparently brutal murder that was committed at Pulham Market by Elijah Snelling that I could not see my way to move therein until my attention was drawn thereto by two paragraphs in the article on “Local Topics” by “C.I.T.” in the *Daily Press* of Saturday last. He therein shows, by a statement by Frederick Snelling, of Dickleburgh, “that Eliiah Snelling was always considered to be of weak intellect, and that his uncle and his aunt were both insane, the latter being for 20 years an inmate of a lunatic asylum.” He also gives evidence of George Snelling of the hallucination under which Elijah was labouring the night previous to the murder, “that some one was going to shoot him, and that he dared not go back alone, and when he reached home he dared not go to bed, and during the night went outside four or five times to see if there was not somebody after him to shoot him.” Now, I have known Frederick Snelling, and employed him for more than 20 years, and I hold a very high opinion of his integrity and veracity, believing he would not state anything knowing it to be untrue. Had these facts been brought before the Court in his defence, I think they would have at least led to a recommendation for mercy. I therefore hope that the effort to spare the life of Elijah Snelling may prove successful, and that he may be placed under suitable care during the remainder of his life. There is a petition lying at the *Norfolk News* office to that effect, which I hope will be speedily and largely signed and forwarded to the proper quarter.

Thine sincerely,

FRANCIS DIX.

1, Essex Street, Norwich,  
March 16th, 1890.

*Theford & Watton Times*  
22 Mar 1890

The family must have struggled to pick up the pieces of their lives; as mentioned above, in 1891 Maria Snelling was living with her widowed father and her son whilst Alice was lodging out in nearby Rushall. Alice Jane never married, and having witnessed and experienced what she did, I really don't think we can blame her. Evidence was given that it was not only Maria but also her children who were beaten when Elijah was in one of his towering rages. A slightly restless lady, in 1891 Alice was a pupil teacher, by 1901 she had changed professions and was part of Henry Dade's drapery establishment in the Thoroughfare and was working as a dress maker, by 1911 this lady was working as a cook in a private house in Hampstead North London. Alice came home eventually and was buried in the village of Dickleburgh in 1957 at the respectable age of 78 years.

| BURIALS in the Parish of <i>Dickleburgh</i> |                    |                                   |                            |                                     |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| in the County of <i>Norfolk</i>             |                    |                                   | in the Year <i>18 1957</i> |                                     |
| Name.                                       | Abode.             | When buried.                      | Age.                       | By whom the Ceremony was performed. |
| <i>Alice Jane Snelling</i>                  | <i>Dickleburgh</i> | <i>August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1957</i> | <i>78</i>                  | <i>M. Keacock<br/>Rector.</i>       |

No. 1049

However, John Elijah, bravely risked marriage, I suppose he would be far more in control of his wife than Alice could have hoped to be in control of a potential husband. John's wife, Rosa Hubbard, was from Shimpling but was working as a 15 years old domestic servant to a married pair of School Teachers in 1891. These teachers were almost certainly working for the children's home so maybe it is not too surprising that when the young Snellings set up home in Dickleburgh, we found them fostering two girls in 1901.

1898. Marriage solemnized at All Saints in the Parish of Dickleburgh in the County of Norfolk

| No. | When Married. | Name and Surname.    | Age. | Condition. | Rank or Profession. | Residence at the Time of Marriage. | Father's Name and Surname. | Rank or Profession of Father. |
|-----|---------------|----------------------|------|------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 310 | May 5 1898    | John Elijah Snelling | 24   | Bachelor   | Roadman             | Dickleburgh                        | Elijah Snelling            | Thatcher                      |
|     |               | Rosa Hubbard         | 22   | Spinster   |                     | Dickleburgh                        | John Hubbard               | Woodman                       |

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church of the Par. by me, Henry Brandt

This Marriage was solemnized between us, John Elijah Snelling } in the Presence of us, Eliya Boughton  
Rosa Hubbard } Fredrick Boughton

**BAPTISMS** solemnized in the Parish of Dickleburgh in the County of Norfolk in the Year 1892

| When Baptised.      | Child's Christian Name. | Parent's Name. |          | Abode.      | Quality, Trade, or Profession. | By whom the Ceremony was performed. |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                     |                         | Christian.     | Surname. |             |                                |                                     |
| 1892<br>July 27     | Ada                     | Elijah         | Snelling | Dickleburgh | Labourer                       | Henry Brandt                        |
| No. 1249<br>1892.13 | Maud                    | Maria          | L. Brown |             |                                |                                     |

I am glad to say life seems to eventually work out happily for Maria; after 16 years of marital abuse, it appears she was pregnant when Elijah was locked up; little Ada Maud was born in July

1890 although it took almost two years for her mother to baptise her! Maria finally had a chance to raise a child not surrounded with fear and violence. Rather nicely, in 1901 Maria and her daughter were, like her son, also living in Dickleburgh, next to the King's Head; even more nicely, in Maria's household were another 2 little foster girls, also being given a safe home.



In 1911, John Elijah and Rose nee Hubbard's house was full to bursting with 5 of their children as well as the parents in a 3-room house, yes that is three rooms not three bedrooms! Not too surprisingly their oldest daughter Daisy Gladys was living down the road in Grandma Maria's house! In this and in previous censuses, Maria describes herself as married although I struggled to locate Elijah, I think we can assume he was still alive somewhere in 1911. In early 1929, Elijah Snelling, aged 77 was buried at Redenhall Church, well he was certainly a chap in the right area, with the right name and the right age – had he returned to Harleston having been released from prison or

was his body released to his family after his death in prison?

Dickleburgh.  
 DEATH IN CAMP.—Sincere sympathy is felt for Mr. and Mrs. George Snelling, of Dickleburgh, on the death of their son Clement. Deceased enlisted in Kitchener's Army in September last, and was in camp at Shoreham, where he contracted pneumonia, and succumbed after a fortnight's illness. He was only 18 years of age.

Sadly, one of John Elijah's cousins (George) Clement perished of pneumonia in 1915; aged only 18 he had only been enlisted a few months and was still in training camp; it does not appear he is marked on the Dickleburgh war memorial. He is not marked by a standard CWGC grave either but by a Private Memorial, at Bear Road Cemetery, Brighton which reveals his parents had moved to Shimpling by the time the memorial was erected.

*Photo added by [julia&keld](https://www.findagrave.com/)  
<https://www.findagrave.com/>*



Fortunately, John and Rosa's children were too young to be sucked into WW1 but John was conscripted into the Army Support Corps, where, presumably, the skills he had learnt as a road man came in useful. John made it through the war and subsequently joined

the British Legion.

*Diss Express  
 16 May 1913*

Maria was buried in Dickleburgh in 1925, aged 78, we can only hope she enjoyed peace amongst her children and grand children in her later years.

**NO LIGHTS.**  
**John Snelling, Dickleburgh, roadman, was charged with cycling without a light at Scole on the night of 28th April.**  
 Inspector James spoke to seeing defendant riding without a light at 8.40 p.m. Calling his attention to the omission defendant said the lamp had only just gone out. Witness found the lamp to be quite cold. Defendant said the lamp was burning when he passed Mr. Woodcock's blacksmith's shop, which was just before he saw the Inspector.  
 Fined 2/6 including costs.

By the time the second world war rolled around, the government would have been all too aware of how close Britain had come to running out of food in the first world war. Godfrey's older brothers may have been exempted war service due to the contribution their skills would have made to feeding the nation – Godfrey, whose profession was as a clerk, made no such contribution and therefore would have been conscripted. Godfrey wound up serving in the Western deserts of the middle East and disappeared during one of the engagements. It was initially assumed he had been taken Prisoner of War by the Italians, presumably from information supplied either by his putative captors or more likely from information given by his comrades. 18 months later, in early 1944, it became

apparent that the Italians did not have Godfrey and instead he was designated as 'missing', this was later revised to 'dead' but due to all the confusion it is unclear the exact date of his death, hence the two dates given above. Unless original statements are unearthed from somewhere, I don't expect we will ever know the full details of Godfrey's end, his body has never been found.

*Diss Express*  
12 Dec 1947

**LATE MR. J. E. SNELLING.**

The death has occurred at his home, 4, Council Houses, Jay's Green, of Mr. John Elijah Snelling, aged 73 years. Mr. Snelling, a native of Tivetshall, was employed by the Norfolk County Council for over forty years prior to his retirement. In the 1914-18 war he served with the A.S.C. and was a member of the Harleston and District British Legion branch. Several branch members attended with the standard at the funeral, at Dickleburgh, on Saturday, conducted by the Rev. W. H. Cowper Johnson. Miss Oriss was the organist for the hymn "Our Blessed Redeemer." The Legion Tribute was recited at the graveside by Mr. E. W. Brett.

Family present included the widow, Mr. and Mrs. S. Snelling, Mr. and Mrs. C. Snelling, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Bowman, Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Finlayson, Miss Daphne Hunt, Mr. and Mrs. Hubbard, Mrs. Bartrum, Mrs. Tonge.

Others present included Messrs. C. Bartrum and W. Chappell, former workmates. The Harleston Legion was represented by Messrs. W. Calver, (standard bearer), C. White, C. A. Beaumont, H. Henery, E. Cook, E. W. Brett, G. Staff and E. Calton.

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Godfrey's father John Snelling, was buried in Dickleburgh in late 1947, with a good turnout by not only friends, family and workmates but also by the British Legion. His wife survived him by almost 20 years and was also buried at Dickleburgh, in 1966; she had died at the Whittington Hospital in London, aged 90, presumably having been cared for by one of her children who had moved to the big city, before she was returned to share her husband's final resting place.