

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



WALTER HAGGAS

SCOTS GUARDS

KILLED IN ACTION 11TH NOVEMBER 1914

BORN IN 1893 AT SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN, THE SON OF
CHARLES AND ANNIE HAGGAS AND BROTHER OF
WILLIAM GORDON HAGGAS WHO ALSO SERVED AND
DIED DURING THE GREAT WAR

Haggas Family History

- **1891 census** shows Charles, his wife Annie and their 7 children living at New Market, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Charles (Head)	38	Labourer at bobbin mill	Sutton-in-Craven	1853
Annie (wife)	33	Housewife	Llanymynech, Wales	1858
Lizzie	13	Worsted spinner	Sutton-in-Craven	1878
Susannah	12	Worsted spinner	Sutton-in-Craven	1879
Luther	7		Sutton-in-Craven	1884
Charles Herbert	5		Sutton-in-Craven	1886
John Leonard	2		Sutton-in-Craven	1889
William Gordon	1		Sutton-in-Craven	1890 - 1918
Martha	Baby		Sutton-in-Craven	1891



New Market, Sutton-in-Craven
(source: Rachel Simpson & Richard Whiteoak from the Glyn Whiteoak collection)



High Street, Sutton-in-Craven
(source: *Sutton-in-Craven, the old community* 1973 Edited by Alec Wood)

- **1901 census** shows Charles, his wife Annie and 7 of their children now living at 23, High Street, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Charles (Head)	48	Wood sawyer at bobbin mill	Sutton-in-Craven	1853
Annie (wife)	43	Housewife	Penyvoil, Wales	1858
Luther	17	Twister in a silk factory	Sutton-in-Craven	1884
Charles Herbert	15	Plasterer	Sutton-in-Craven	1886
John Leonard	12	Spinner in a worsted mill	Sutton-in-Craven	1889
Martha	10		Sutton-in-Craven	1891
Walter	8		Sutton-in-Craven	1893 - 1914
Raymond	5		Sutton-in-Craven	1896
Edith May	4		Sutton-in-Craven	1897

- **1911 census** shows that Charles and Annie had been married for 34 years and that of their 12 children born alive, 2 had since died. It also shows the Haggas family now living at 23, Daisy Croft, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Charles (Head)	58	Wood sawyer	Sutton-in-Craven	1853
Annie (wife)	54	Housewife	Montgomeryshire, Wales	1858
William Gordon	21	Plasterer	Sutton-in-Craven	1890 - 1918
Martha Annie	20	Weaver	Sutton-in-Craven	1891
Walter	18	Labourer, sawyer's	Sutton-in-Craven	1893 - 1914
Raymond	15	Worsted doffer	Sutton-in-Craven	1896
Edith May	14	Worsted spinner	Sutton-in-Craven	1897



Daisy Croft, Sutton-in-Craven
(photos taken by Barbara & Allen Chapman)

During the Great War the Haggas family were now recorded as having migrated to the USA two years earlier. Their home address was now Clark Mills, Oneida County, New York, USA.



Clark Mills, N.Y. USA
(source: postcard dated 12 July 1912)

World War 1



It had been **99 years** since Britain was last involved in a major European conflict following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815



The official announcement by Germany of the war (Berlin, August 2nd 1914)



People waiting for news on Parliament Square in London on August 3rd 1914, the day before war was declared

August 4th 1914

Britain declares war on Germany



'Jubilant' scenes outside Buckingham Palace on August 4th 1914, the day that war was declared

Prior to WW1 the Haggas family had migrated to the USA and were living in Oneida County, New York. However Walter Haggas chose not to migrate to the United States with the rest of his family.

Instead, he enlisted into the British army as a profession soldier in 1911, serving with the 1st Battalion of the Scots Guards until 1914. After his discharge from the army he joined the police force and started working as a police constable at Bootle.

However, as a regular army reservist Pte Walter Haggas immediately re-enlisted for active service with the 1st Battalion of the Scots Guards at the outbreak of war.

He retained his regimental number of 7918 and his rank of Private from his prior service with the Scots Guards.

The Scots Guards form part of the Guards Division of the British Army, whose origins lie in the personal bodyguard of King Charles I of England and Scotland. Its lineage can be traced as far back as 1642.

The Scots Guards is ranked as the third regiment of Foot Guards and as such, Scots Guardsmen can be recognised by having the buttons on their tunics spaced in threes.

During the Great War, the Scots Guards maintained their three battalions; the 1st, 2nd and 3rd (Reserve).

No other battalions, Territorial or New Armies, were formed



Scots Guards cap badge, WW1

The battalions of the regular army were naturally the first to go to war and they formed the bedrock for the later expansion of Kitchener's 'volunteer' army

Before WW1 however, the British army was very small in comparison with those of its European neighbours. The army's main role since the South African Boer War (1899-1902) was the policing of the British Empire. Britain's traditional armed strength lay in the Royal Navy and there was no pre-conceived intention to commit a large army to a Continental war.

However, army planning in the crisis years leading up to 1914 had provided for a small **Expeditionary Force** of 6 Infantry Divisions, equipped as a mobile force that could be deployed anywhere.



British Expeditionary Force 'The Old Contemptibles', 1914

In the last days of peace, the Government committed 4 Infantry Divisions consisting of pre-war regulars and reservists to the **British Expeditionary Force** going to France.

These soldiers were known as the '**Old Contemptibles**', a phrase used by the German Kaiser to describe this small but efficient fighting force of the British army. These pre-war regulars and reservists were professional soldiers trained to fight, obey orders and not ask questions.

The British Expeditionary Force of 1914 is remembered because of its battle honours and the suffering it endured. This culminated in the bloody attritional fighting around Ypres in Oct and Nov 1914.

Pte Walter Haggas was part of the British Expeditionary Force with the 1st battalion of the Scots Guards. They landed at Le Havre in France on the 13th August 1914, just 9 days after Britain had declared war on Germany and prepared for the Battle of the Mons.



British Expeditionary Force troops lined up for inspection at Le Havre in France, 1914
(source: www.gwpda.org/photos)

Campaign: <i>B.R.F 1914</i>		(A) Where decoration was earned.															
		(B) Present situation.															
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Roll on which included (if any)													
(A) <i>HAGGAS</i>	<i>Scots Bde</i>	<i>Pte</i>	<i>4918</i>	<i>S.S./1/10th Scots Bde</i>													
(B) <i>WALTER</i>																	
Action taken		<i>Died 11-11-14</i>															
<i>Class/2/2638</i>		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>MEDAL</td> <td>NO</td> <td>PT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VICTORY</td> <td><i>SS/104 B4</i></td> <td><i>512</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>BRITISH</td> <td><i>— NO —</i></td> <td><i>NO</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 STAR</td> <td><i>66/1</i></td> <td><i>104</i></td> </tr> </table>				MEDAL	NO	PT	VICTORY	<i>SS/104 B4</i>	<i>512</i>	BRITISH	<i>— NO —</i>	<i>NO</i>	14 STAR	<i>66/1</i>	<i>104</i>
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DISEMBARKATION DATE.		<i>13-8-14</i>															
(G 34 46) W234—HP5590 500,000 4/19 HWV(P240) KG08		<i>0 NW/2/26610</i> [OVER]															

MEDAL INDEX CARD for Walter Haggas (source: *The National Archives*)

Mobilisation and embarkation for France proceeded faultlessly with all men and equipment moved across the Channel as planned. They moved swiftly into position before encountering the enemy for the first time at Mons on the 23rd August 1914, thus signifying the first engagement between British and German forces on the Western Front.

Pte Walter Haggas qualified for the Mons Clasp **5th Aug – 22nd Nov 1914** to be attached to the ribbon of his 1914 Star medal.



The Mons clasp was awarded to soldiers who had served in France and Belgium between the 5th Aug and 22nd Nov 1914 **AND** who had been 'under fire' during that period.

The Battle of the Mons on the 23rd August 1914 was the start of many battles to come throughout 1914. These included the Battle of the Marne 7th -10th September; Battle of the Aisne 12th -15th September; the First Battle of Ypres 19th October - 22nd November and the **Battle of Nonne Bosschen 11th November 1914**



A view of the battlefield during attack, WW1

The Battle of Nonne Bosschen

11th November 1914

By the middle of November both the British and German armies were exhausted with the British line in front of Ypres remaining relatively unchanged.

The **Battle of Nonne Bosschen** was part of the wider First Battle of Ypres and was the final German attempt to break through the British lines and capture Ypres before the onset of winter proper.

The main German threat on the 11th November 1914 would come from two fresh divisions, the 4th Division and the Prussian Guards. These two Divisions, with 10,000 men in twelve fresh battalions, would attack eleven tired British battalions, reduced in strength to around 4,000 men after three months of fighting

On the 11th November 1914 the German divisions attacked on a nine mile front between Messines in the south and Reutel in the centre. Launched at 9.00am on a cold mist-sodden morning, the assault followed the most intense artillery barrage as yet experienced by the British on the Western Front.

The most successful German attack was made by the 1st Brigade. They advanced towards the British 1st (Guards) Brigade containing battalions from the **Scots Guards**, Cameron Highlanders and Black Watch regiments containing around 800 men. They were outnumbered three to one by the Germans.

The advancing Germans emerged from the mist and overran the British front line, in a rare bayonet attack.



German storm troopers running through the barbed wire entanglement, WW1

By 10.00am German infantry were exploiting the breach. However, enough resistance was offered to disrupt the German formations. Accurate British artillery fire then isolated the German Guards, preventing reinforcements from reaching them. Isolated British strong points combined with well aimed artillery fire then took any remaining momentum out of the German attack.

This was the last major German offensive of the First Battle of Ypres. A series of minor attacks were mounted over the next few days but the real danger was over.



Aftermath of battle, dead bodies in a trench after an attack, WW1

Pte Walter Haggas had been in France for less than 3 months when he was **Killed in Action** on the 11th November 1914 during the **Battle of Nonne Bosschen**.

He had previously been reported as **Missing in Action** from that date. He was one of the first casualties of the Great War, a war that would finally come to an end exactly 4 years later on the 11th November 1918

He was 21 years of age



Casualty Details

Name: HAGGAS, WALTER

Initials: W

Nationality: United Kingdom

Rank: Private

Regiment/Service: Scots Guards

Unit Text: 1st Bn.

Age: 21

Date of Death: 11/11/1914

Service No: 7918

Additional information: Son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haggas, of Clark's Mills, Oneida Co., New York, U.S.A.

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 11.

Memorial: YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* www.cwgc.org/)



Article Date: 22 January 1915

Mr. Lawrence Preston has received intimation from the officer commanding the 1st Battalion Scots Guards that Pte. Walter Haggas, of Sutton-in-Craven, has been reported missing from November 11th, 1914.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)

More than 3 years later, Pte Walter Haggas was still officially listed as **Missing in Action**.

When Walter's older brother William Gordon Haggas **Died of Injuries** sustained on the Western Front in France, the West Yorkshire Pioneer reported the following:



Article Date: 18 January 1918

SUTTON

DEATH OF SAPPER W. HAGGAS

It was with deep regret that the residents learned on Sunday morning last that Sapper Willie Gordon Haggas, of the Royal Engineers, had died in hospital at Newark, following a serious attack of internal haemorrhage, the result of a wrench when lifting a heavy weight in France. Sapper Haggas is the fourth son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Clark, Mills Oneda County, U.S.A. (formerly of Sutton), who went out to the United States five or six years ago. He came over to this country about a year ago on a visit and joined the Royal Engineers. His brother, Private Walter Haggas, at the outbreak of war was a reservist,

and was in the police force at Bootle. He was called up and went out with the British Expeditionary Force, and has been missing since November, 1914. He was a young man of fine physique and a fearless soldier. Two other brothers, John Leonard Haggas and Raymond Haggas (the youngest son), have recently joined the United States Army.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)

YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient.

The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge.

The Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial bears the names of 54,322 officers and men, including Pte Walter Haggas whose graves are not known.

Guardsman Walter Haggas is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial and on the tomb-stone bearing the name of his brother Sapper William Gordon Haggas in the burial ground of Sutton-in-Craven Baptist Chapel.



YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL



YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

(source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission www.cwgc.org/)

WAR MEMORIAL, SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN PARK



(source: *South Craven, the official guide*, 1950)



Sutton-in-Craven War Memorial (photo taken by Paul Wilkinson)



Tomb-stone in the Baptist Chapel burial ground
(photo taken by Josie Walsh)

Guardsman Walter Haggas was posthumously awarded the 1914 Star + MONS CLASP, British War Medal & Victory Medal



Original trio of WW1 medals, obverse



Original trio of WW1 medals, reverse (star unnamed original)
(source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

A Memorial Plaque inscribed with the soldiers name was also given to the family of those who were killed during WW1



Original WW1 Memorial Plaque (name digitally altered)
Also referred to as a Death Plaque or Dead Man's Penny
(source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

FOR THE FALLEN

*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE
LEFT GROW OLD*

*AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM, NOR THE YEARS
CONDEMN*

*AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE
MORNING*

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

LAURENCE BINYON, 1869-1943



(Information compiled by Andrew Monkhouse 2011)