

**Bournemouth East Cemetery,  
Bournemouth, Dorset  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**T/25657 DRIVER**

**W. BODKIN**

**ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS**

**31ST MAY, 1918 Age 34**

*He Giveth His Beloved Rest*

## Walter BODKIN

Walter Bodkin was born in 1883 at Islington, Greater London, England to parents Arthur & Mary Bodkin (nee Cooker).

The 1891 England Census recorded Walter Bodkin as an 8 year old, Scholar living with his family at 16 Frederick St, Islington South West, London, England. His parents were listed as Arthur Bodkin (Carman, aged 32, born Clerkenwell, London) & Mary Bodkin (aged 31, born Maidstone, Kent). Walter was one of five children listed on this Census – Caroline Bodkin (Scholar, aged 12, born Strood, Kent), Arthur J. Bodkin (Scholar, aged 11, born New Cross, London), then Walter, William Bodkin (aged 4, born Islington, London) & Edward Bodkin (aged 2, born Islington, London. [16 Frederick Street consisted of four households – Reeve family, Kefford family, Bodkin family & Ashton family.]

Caroline Bodkin, sister of Walter Bodkin, died in 1896 at Islington, London, England.

Mary Ann Bodkin, mother of Walter Bodkin, died in 1899 at Islington, London, England.

*[Note: there are a few entries relating to Islington Workhouse & for City Road Workhouse, Holborn for a "Walter Bodkin, aged 15" but no other information to prove if it was this Walter Bodkin.]*

*[Note: A "Walter Bodkin", born 13th October, 1883 at King's Cross, London with occupation as Houseboy joined the Royal Navy on 18th December, 1900. He had signed on till the age of 23. He was issued a number of 359031 & was 5ft 1 inches tall with brown hair, brown eyes & a dark complexion. He was sent to Pembroke from 18th December, 1900 & his rating listed as "Dom 3C (under 18)".*

*The 1901 England Census, taken on the night of Sunday, 31st March, 1901, recorded "Walter Bodkin", aged 17 (born London, Middlesex), as Crew - Domestic 3rd Class on Pembroke which was docked at Chatham, Dockyard, Kent, England.*

*On 4th May, 1901 "Walter Bodkin" he was transferred to Anson until 12th May, 1901 when he was listed as "Run" (meaning deserted).*

*At the bottom of Seaman Walter Bodkin's Seaman Sheet "21.1.02 Recovered from desertion but is not to be claimed for further service having joined the Army." There is no further information to correctly identify if this is this Walter Bodkin.....however.....*

*A "Walter Bodkin" (born Islington, London, Middlesex), aged 17 years & 9 months, enlisted in British Army at Stratford on 5th July, 1901. He resided at 2 Cardale St, Kings Cross, London, Middlesex & had worked at Brewery, Culedonian Rd, Kings Cross as a General Labourer.*

*Private "Walter Bodkin" was 5 feet 2 inches with brown hair, brown eyes & a fresh complexion. He was posted to 7th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers with a Regimental number of 1926 from 5th July, 1901 until 22nd August, 1901. He was transferred to The Royal Horse and Field Artillery on 23rd August, 1901.*

*New Attestation Papers were completed on 23rd August, 1901 at Stratford for "Walter Bodkin" who was born at Kings Cross, London, Middlesex & was a General Labourer, aged 18. He stated he had previously served with 7th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers.*

*"Walter Bodkin" was posted to The Royal Horse and Field Artillery (R.H. & R.F.A.) with a Regimental number of 18616. He was 5 feet 2 ¼ inches with brown hair, brown eyes & a fresh complexion. His next of kin was listed as*

- *Brother Arthur elder 50,305 Pvt M.S. Corps S. Africa*
- *Brother William younger }32 Brunswick Avenue, New Southgate Mx.*
- *Brother Edward younger }*
- *Brother Samuel younger }*
- *Brother George younger }*

**\*\*The listing of the 5 brothers as next of kin proves that this is the correct "Walter Bodkin".]**

The 1901 England Census recorded Walter's Family living at 14 Langhedge Rd, Tottenham, Middlesex. Walter was not listed in the household. Those listed: Arthur Bodkin (Cab Driver, aged 42) & his wife Agnes Bodkin (aged 26). Children – William Bodkin (aged 15), Edward Bodkin (aged 12), Samuel Bodkin (aged 10, born London) & George Bodkin (aged 7, born London).

Walter Bodkin was posted to The Royal Horse and Field Artillery (R.H. & R.F.A.) with a Regimental number of 18616 & had signed on for Short Service (7 years with the Colours & 5 years in the Reserve). He attested at 1st Depot, R.F.A. on 23rd August, 1901 as Driver.

Driver Walter Bodkin was posted to "109" on 31st August, 1901 then posted to "90th" from 7th January, 1902. He was "Awaiting Trial" from 24th January, 1902 for 4 days.

Driver Walter Bodkin was tried & imprisoned on 28th January, 1902 for 28 days (no reason listed). He returned to duty on 25th February, 1902.

Driver Walter Bodkin was Absent without Leave on 13th April, 1903 for a period of 9 days. He rejoined on 22nd April, 1903 & was awaiting trial. On 25th April, 1903 Driver Bodkin was imprisoned by Commanding Officer. He was returned to duty on 9th May, 1903.

Driver Walter Bodkin deserted at Hilsea on 31st October, 1903. He rejoined 35th R.F.A. on 2nd May, 1904 after 183 days & was awaiting trial for 23 days. Driver Bodkin was tried & convicted on 25th May, 1904. All his prior service was forfeited on his conviction of Desertion. Driver Bodkin was imprisoned on 25th May, 1904. He was returned to duty on 11th August, 1904.

Driver Walter Bodkin deserted at Sheffield on 30th August, 1904. He rejoined on 25th April, 1905 after 228 days & was awaiting trial. Driver Bodkin was tried and convicted on 5th May, 1905. All his prior service was forfeited on his conviction of Desertion. Driver Bodkin was imprisoned on 5th May, 1905.

Driver Walter Bodkin was discharged from The Royal Horse and Field Artillery (R.H. & R.F.A.) on 17th May, 1905 "(Ignominy)" – with 12 days Service.

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Walter Bodkin joined the Royal Army Service Corps on 17th October, 1907 at Stratford, England for Short Service - a period of two years with the Colours & 10 years in the Reserve. He was aged 22 years, 5ft 2 ¼ ins with brown eyes, dark brown hair; dark complexion & had scars on his left temple & was a Plumber.

Walter Bodkin was issued a Regimental number of T/25657 with Royal Army Service Corps. Driver Bodkin attested at A.S.C. on 17th October, 1907.

Driver Walter Bodkin on 16th October, 1909 was transferred to Army Reserve, having completed his two years of Service. His occupation was a Plumber & his intended place of residence was listed as 38 Brookhill Road, Woolwich.

Walter Bodkin married Lilian Terry on 10th December, 1908 at Caversham, Oxfordshire. The marriage was registered in the district of Henley, Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire, England.

The 1911 England Census recorded Walter Bodkin as a 29 year old, married, working as an Engine Bench Commercial Car worker living at 24 Selbourne Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, England, which was a 5 roomed dwelling. His wife was listed as Lillian Bodkin (age 32, born Battersea, London). Walter & Lillian had been married for 3 years but had no children. Also listed in the household was Arthur Bodkin, father of Walter Bodkin (Labourer Commercial Motor Cars, widower, aged 53) & Walters 2 younger brothers – William Bodkin (Labourer Commercial Cars, aged 26) & George Bodkin (boy Commercial Cars, aged 15)

The 1912 England & Wales Electoral Registers for the North Ward of the borough of Luton, Bedfordshire, England recorded Walter Bodkin living at 24 Selbourne Road.

A daughter - Thelma Bodkin was born on 17th September, 1913 (as listed on Pension Form)

Driver Walter Bodkin was mobilized at Woolwich, England on Home Service from 5th August, 1914 to 21st August, 1914 as per the terms under his engagement with the British Army in 1907. He was posted to 4th Company, 4th Divisional Train, Army Service Corps.

Driver Walter Bodkin entered a Theatre of War on 22nd August, 1914 in France – B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) until 30th September, 1914. He was on Home Service from 1st October, 1914 until 8th June, 1915. Driver Bodkin returned to B.E.F. on 9th June, 1915 until 2nd October, 1915. He was on Home Service from 3rd October, 1915 until 28th March, 1916.

Driver Walter Bodkin was transferred to Transport Training School.

A Medical Report was completed on Driver Walter Bodkin on 15th March, 1916 at Military Hospital, Belton, Park, Grantham, England (former trade listed as Aircraft Fitter). His disability was recorded as Tubercle of Lung which had originated in October, 1915 at Baillieu, France. *“Originated in Oct 1915 at Baillieu, France & was sent home with bronchitis. Has asthmatic facies. Breath sounds harsh. Scanty T.B. in sputum. Not result of service. Permanent Presents 1/4.”* At the bottom of the form was added *“A doubtful case.”* The Officer in charge of the medical case recommended that Driver Bodkin be discharged as permanently unfit. The Medical Board agreed on 21st March, 1916 that Driver Walter Bodkin be discharged as permanently unfit.

Driver Walter Bodkin, T/25657, “B” Company, Transport Training School, Army Service Corps was discharged on 28th March, 1916 due to sickness (392(xvi) King’s Regulation – no longer physical fit for War Service). His character was listed as *“Very good. This man is willing & obliging & carried out his duties satisfactorily.”* He had served for 8 years & 164 days.

Ex- Driver Walter Bodkin was issued a Pension from 18th May, 1916 (Chelsea Number 81029 D).

Walter Bodkin was issued a Silver War Badge No. 58280 on 15th November, 1916.

### **Silver War Badge**

The Silver War Badge was issued in the United Kingdom and the British Empire to service personnel who had been honourably discharged due to wounds or sickness from military service in World War I. The badge, sometimes known as the "Discharge Badge", the "Wound Badge" or "Services Rendered Badge", was first issued in September 1916, along with an official certificate of entitlement.

The large sterling silver lapel badge was intended to be worn on civilian clothes. The decoration was introduced as an award of "King's silver" for having received wounds or injury during loyal war service to the Crown's authority. A secondary causation for its introduction was that a practice had developed in the early years of the war in the United Kingdom where some women took it upon themselves to confront and publicly embarrass men of fighting age they saw in public places who were not in military uniform, by ostentatiously presenting them with white feathers, as a suggestion of cowardice. As the war had developed substantial numbers of servicemen who had been discharged from His Majesty's Forces with wounds that rendered them unfit for war service, but which were not obvious from their outward appearance, found themselves being harassed in such a manner and the badge, to be worn on the right breast while in civilian dress, was a means of discouraging such incidents being directed at ex-forces' personnel. It was forbidden to wear the badge on a military uniform.

*(Information from Wikipedia)*



**Silver War Badge**

*[In September, 1940, as a result of a fire by an incendiary bomb at the War Office Record Store, Arnside Street, London, England approximately two thirds of 6.5 million soldiers' documents for World War 1 UK Soldiers were destroyed. Driver Bodkin's Pension records have survived & part of his Service Record file has been duplicated with the Pension Records.]*

A Medical review for the Pension was completed & the Board found on 14th September, 1916 that Walter Bodkin was half incapacitated in regards to work & his Pension was continued.

A Medical review for the Pension was completed & the Board found on 4th October, 1916 that a child's allowance be made.

A Medical review for the Pension was completed & the Board found on 17th January, 1917 that Walter Bodkin had "total incapacity at present T.B. present". He had no earnings & the Pension was increased.

A Medical review for the Pension was completed & the Board found on 8th August, 1917 "Presents 100% T. B. Present." His Pension was increased.

A further review was completed & the Medical Board found on 6th March, 1918 that Walter Bodkin had "Total incapacity T. B. present." His Pension was continued.

Ex-Driver Walter Bodkin died on 31st May, 1918 from Tuberculosis (as listed on World War 1 Widow's Pension Card.) (Note: The Australian War Memorial Commemorative Roll has recorded that he died from wounds - Gas)

A death for Walter Bodkin, aged 34, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Christchurch, Hampshire, England.

Driver Walter Bodkin was buried in Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England – Plot number E. 2. 218 and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Driver Walter Bodkin was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Driver Walter Bodkin – service number T/25657, aged 34, of 4th Bde., Ammunition Col., Army Service Corps. He was the son of Arthur & Mary Bodkin, of London; husband of Lilian Bodkin, of Corner of Tilba & Dudley St, Lidcombe, Sydney, New South Wales.

Driver Walter Bodkin, T/25657, 4th Brigade Ammunition Column, Army Service Corps, British Army, is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

*[Note: It appears that Driver Walter Bodkin's name on the Commemorative Roll may be in error. There is no record of him in Australia, however Mrs Lilian Bodkin, (Housewife, aged 41), Thelma Bodkin (aged 6) & William J. Moore (aged 1) were passengers on Euripides which had departed from London, England on 25th September, 1920 bound for Australia.*

*When compiling the Commemorative Roll if a soldier's next-of-kin's address was listed as Australia it was, on occasions, assumed that the soldier concerned would be Australian or lived in Australia.*

*Lilian Bodkin was receiving a War Pension while living in Australia – Lidcombe.*

*Lilian Bodkin was listed on the Australian Electoral Rolls in Auburn, New South Wales from 1930 to 1954.*

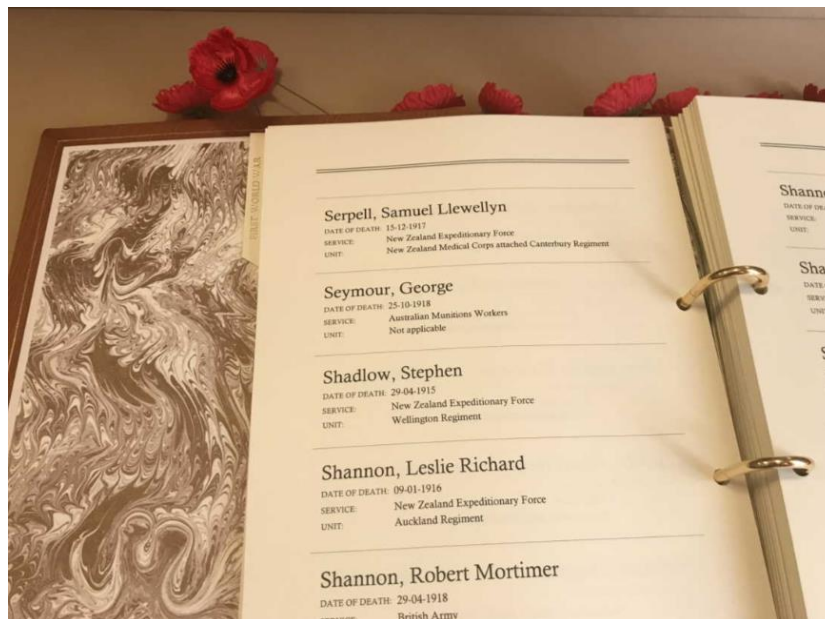
*Lilian Ethel Bodkin died on 26th September, 1955 & was buried in Rookwood General Cemetery, Xone D Section 16B Grave 1622.]*



**Commemorative Roll** (Photo from AWM)



**Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial** (Capital Photographer)



**Example of names in Commemorative Roll Book**

Walter Bodkin is remembered on St. John's Porch Memorial Tablets, St. John's Church, Christchurch Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset, England.



**St. John's Porch Memorial Tablets** (Photo from IWM – R. Coleman)

(16 pages of Driver Walter Bodkin's Pension records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives, Find My Past & Ancestry)

*Information obtained from the CWGC & Australian War Memorial (Commemorative Roll)*



## Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Driver W. Bodkin has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone with the following inscription:

*He Giveth His Beloved Rest*

## **Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England**

Some of the 120 First World War burials in this cemetery are those of soldiers who died in Bournemouth's auxiliary and private hospitals. 75 of these graves are in a special plot on the main path and include a Special Memorial to 2 soldiers drowned off Bournemouth in January 1915, whose bodies were not recovered. The plot also contains 7 of the 68 Second World War burials, the rest being scattered throughout the cemetery. One of the First World War burials is unidentified. There are 4 Foreign National war burials here.

The war plot is enclosed by a hedge, and the War Cross is on the West side of it.

*(Information from CWGC)*



**Bournemouth East Cemetery entrance** *(Photo courtesy of John R. Dymott)*





**Bournemouth East Cemetery** (*Photos from CWGC*)





**Bournemouth East Cemetery** (Photo from CWGC)



**Driver W. Bodkin's headstone** (Photo courtesy of John R. Dymott)

Photo of Driver W. Bodkin's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England.



*(Headstone photos courtesy of John R. Dymott)*

