

Connected to Codford



Lest we Forget

World War I



535255 PRIVATE

H. R. BOWDEN

P.W.O. CIVIL SERVICE RIFLES

29TH OCTOBER, 1918 AGE 20

Sleep On Beloved

Till He Come

Harold Roy BOWDEN

Harold Roy Bowden was born at Codford St. Mary in 1898 to parents Frederick & Ada Elizabeth Bowden (nee Seymour). His birth was registered in the June quarter, 1898 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire. Frederick & Ada Elizabeth had married in the June quarter, 1897 in the district of Clutton, Somerset.

The 1901 Census recorded Harold Roy Bowden as a 3 year old living with his family at Main Road, Codford St. Mary in a 4 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Fredk. Bowden (Railway Signalman, aged 30, born Corsham) & Ada Eliz. Bowden (aged 28, born Radstock, Somerset). No other children were listed.

The 1911 Census recorded Harold Roy Bowden as a 13 year old Baker's Errand Boy living with his family & sister at Parkside, The Folly, Chippenham, Wiltshire which was a 6 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Frederick Bowden (aged 40, Signalman, Great Western Railway) & Ada Elizabeth Bowden (aged 38). Frederick & Ada had been married for 13 years & had 2 children only. Harold's younger sister was listed as Hilda Mary Bowden (aged 9, At School, born Codford).

Harold Roy Bowden enlisted with the British Army on 8th June, 1916 at Chippenham, Wiltshire. He was aged 18 years & resided at Park Side, The Folly, Chippenham. He was employed as a Clerk & his father – Frederick Bowden was listed as his next-of-kin. He was sent to Army Reserve on 9th June, 1916.

Private Harold Roy Bowden was mobilised on 26th February, 1917. He was posted to 15th Reserve Battalion, London Regiment on 26th February, 1917 & then posted to 1/15th Battalion on 22nd May, 1917.

Private Harold Roy Bowden was listed as on active service in France from 22nd May, 1917 where he was posted at Base Depot, Havre. He joined his Battalion in the Field on 18th June, 1917.

Private Harold Roy Bowden was reported as missing on 23rd March, 1918 & was recorded as a Prisoner of War the same day.

Private Harold Roy Bowden died on 29th October, 1918 of dysentery, whilst a Prisoner of War. He had served a total 2 years & 144 days, 221 days were as a prisoner of war.

(18 pages of Private Harold Roy Bowden's Service Record file are available)

Private Harold Roy Bowden was buried in Hautmont Communal Cemetery, France - Plot IV. B. 5. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Harold Roy Bowden, 535255, of 1st/15th Bn, London Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles) as the son of Frederick & Ada E. Bowden of "Park Side", The Folly, Chippenham, Wilts.

Probate details – "Bowden, Harold Roy, of Park-side The Folly, Chippenham, Wiltshire, died 29th October, 1918 in France. Administration - Salisbury 13 April, 1920 to Frederick Bowden, railway signalman. Effects £106 16s. 9d."

1st/15th Bn, London Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles)

15th (Prince of Wales's Own Civil Service Rifles) Battalion, The London Regiment, a Territorial unit and had their headquarters at Somerset House, Westminster. When war broke out in August 1914, they were serving as part of 4th London Brigade, 2nd London Division. The Division had just arrived for their annual summer camp on Salisbury Plain when war was declared in August 1914, they were at once recalled to their home base and mobilised for war service.



Memorial of 15th London Regiment, Somerset House, London (Photo by Hydeblake)

Private Harold Roy Bowden was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. His Medal Index Card does not show a date or place that he first entered a Theatre of War.



British War Medal & Victory Medal

Newspaper Notices:

BOWDEN - In ever loving memory of our dear son and brother Pte H. R. Bowden who died October 29th 1918 at Haumont, France, prisoner in German hands.

*We pictured him safe returning,
We longed to clasp his hand,
But God has postponed the meeting
It will be in a better land.*

*His loving ways and smiling face
A pleasure to recall.
Though there is nothing left to answer
But his photo on the wall.
A good life is often too short but a good name will forever live.*

*Still sadly missed and ever remembered by his sorrowing Mother, Father and Sister.
Parkside, The Folly, Chippenham.*

(Wiltshire Times – 24 May 1919) (Newspaper courtesy of [John Belcher](#))

H. R. Bowden is commemorated on the Hardenhuish Church Memorial, Hardenhuish, Wiltshire.



Hardenhuish Church Memorial (Photo courtesy of [John Belcher](#))



Private Harold Roy Bowden

*Note

Both of Harold Roy Bowden's parents are listed as World War 2 Civilian Deaths.

- Ada Elizabeth Bowden – age 69; of Firlands, The Folly, Chippenham Without, Wife of Frederick Bowden. 25 April, 1942 at Firlands, The Folly.
- Frederick Bowden – aged 71; of Firlands, The Folly, Chippenham Without, Husband of Ada Elizabeth Bowden. 25 April, 1942 at Firlands, The Folly.

Commemorated in the Calne and Chippenham Rural Section of the Civilian War Dead Register, Westminster Abbey, London.



Hautmont Communal Cemetery, France

Hautmont is a town in the Department of the Nord, 5 kilometres south-west of Maubeuge, in the valley of the Sambre.

Hautmont was captured by the Germans in the early days of the First World War, and it remained in their hands until retaken by the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division on 8 November 1918. The communal cemetery was used by the German troops for the burial of their dead, and the Allied prisoners who died in the local German hospitals were buried there by the authorities of the town. A war plot was formed outside the south-east part of the cemetery, which was later extended to enclose it. The Commonwealth graves are in two groups: in the south-west part of the cemetery are graves of 1918 and of 1914, and in the south-east part are those soldiers who died after the recapture of the town.

Hautmont Communal Cemetery contains 246 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. Seven of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to three casualties believed to be buried among them. The cemetery also contains 55 French, 100 Russian and 1 Belgian burial.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Hautmont Communal Cemetery

Photo of Private H. R. Bowden's CWGC Headstone in Hautmont Communal Cemetery, France.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)

