

Arthur George DODGE

Born Middlewood, Jan-Mar 1893
Gunner 865132

Died Baghdad, 28 Decemeber 1917, aged 24
Royal Field Artillery, 1086th Battery, 215th Brigade

Arthur George Dodge was the son of Walter and Anne Dodge and the grand-son of John and Elizabeth Dodge. John (1822-) was born in Kenton and Elizabeth (1821-) was born in Spreyton. They were living in Middlewood (Cofton parish) in 1871 and John had died by the next census in 1881.

Walter Henry Dodge (1858-1916) was born in Cofton and Annie Paddon (1865-1942) came from Iddesleigh. They married in the June quarter of 1890 (GRO ref N.A. vol 5b, p221). In 1891 they had their first child, Edith Mary (1891-), and Walter's widowed mother Elizabeth was living with them.

In 1901 they were living at Middlewood Cottages and Walter Henry Dodge was a market gardener. They had four children, born in Cofton:

Edith Mary (1891-)

Arthur George (1893-1917)

P. A. Elizabeth (1898-)

Walter P. Valentine (1899-)

A niece, Dorcas Dodge, (1878-) was living with them as "Mother's help", and a brother-in-law, Bertie Paddon (1889-) was also listed in the household.

The family had grown by 1911 when they are shown to have had six children, one of whom had died by the date of the census and that must have been P.A.Elizabeth, because the five survivors are listed in the household of Walter and Anne at Middlewood as:

Edith Mary Dodge (1891-) single

Arthur George Dodge (1893-1917) single, working as market gardener

Walter Percival Valentine Dodge (1899-) scholar

Lionel John Dodge (1902-) "

Leonard Edward Dodge (1903-) "

A niece, Mary Dodge (1890 -) is shown as a domestic servant, and Bertie Paddon, brother-in-law is now working in the market garden with Ralph Brooks (1891-) who appears to be from a local (Cofton) family.

Enlistment records do not survive for **Arthur George Dodge** but it may be assumed that he was conscripted into the Royal Field Artillery. The 1086th Battery was one of the units of the 215th (CCXV) Brigade which was engaged in actions in Mesopotamia, as part of the Indian Army. Various actions of The Mesopotamian campaign include:

Advance to the Hai and capture of the Khudaira Bend, Capture of the Hai Salient, Capture of Sannaiyat, Second Battle of Kut, Passage of the Tigris, Fall of Baghdad (11 March 1917), Passage of the 'Adhaim, Action of the Shatt al Adhaim, Second action of Jabal Hamrin, Third action of Jabal Hamrin, Battle of Tikrit (5 November 1917)

Once British interests in the oilfields had been secured, it was decided to consolidate our position by moving along the river banks to Baghdad which ultimately fell in March 1917 but not without bloodshed. The Germans tried to foster a Jihad or holy war against the British forces and Turkey itself offered strong resistance to these incursions into its Empire.

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In the Mesopotamia campaign more died of sickness than were killed in action. The manner of Dodge's death is not known. The Army Register of Soldiers' Effects often indicates the cause but none is shown here. The register entry shows (in Documents) a distribution of Death Benefit to:

Mother, Anne

Sister, Edith Mary

Brother, Lionel John

Brother, Leonard Edward

Brother, Walter Percival P

The War Gratuity was paid only to his mother Anne.

Cofton church memorial inscription: ROY. FIELD ART. DECEMBER 28TH 1917

Commonwealth War Graves entry: GEORGE DODGE

Gunner Service No: 865132 Royal Field Artillery 1086th Bty. 215th Bde.

Date of Death: 28/12/1917 Age: 24

Cemetery: [BAGHDAD \(NORTH GATE\) WAR CEMETERY](#) Grave Reference: II. B. 7.

Additional Information: Son of Mr. W. and Mrs. A. Dodge, of Middlewood, Starcross, Devon.

Last known address: Middlewood, Starcross (Cofton)

Next of kin: Mother, Annie Dodge

His father, Walter Henry Dodge died on 8th August, 1916 and left £3,593 – 9s – 1d. To his widow.

References:

Free Birth, marriage, death refs

Capture of Tikrit - <http://www.firstworldwar.com/battles/tikrit.htm>

Mesopotamia campaign - <http://www.1914-1918.net/mespot.htm>

Refs via subscription website:

Census data