

Tisbury Roll of Honour
THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918

There are over 2134 First World War casualties commemorated in Vermelles British Cemetery. Of those, 198 are unidentified and special memorials are erected to six soldiers from the United Kingdom, known to be buried among them



JOHN WOODS
of Tisbury, Wiltshire

Vermelles British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

Date/Place of birth	1886 Tisbury	2
Birth registered	March Q 1886 Tisbury Reg District 5a 220 (John Jestis Woods)	5
Baptised		
Father	Frederick George Woods of Tisbury. Married June Q 1877 Tisbury Reg District 5a 379	5
Mother	Cecily (nee Blandford) of Tisbury	5
Siblings	Louisa, Ellen, Frederick, Flora, Frank, Lily E	2
1891 Census	Hindon Lane, West Tisbury. Age 5, at school. Father's occupation Agricultural Labourer	2
1901 Census	40 Malt House, West Tisbury. Age 18, occupation Agricultural Labourer	2
1911 Census	50 Hanbury Street, Pengam, Glamorgan. Age 26, single, occupation Collier. Boarding with John Merefield & family	2
Wife	Lucy (nee Waddington). Married Sept Q 1912 Merthy Tydfil Reg District 11a 1490	5
Children	Alfred, Lucy	5

Rank	Sapper	3
Regiment	Royal Engineers, 253 rd Tunnel Company	3
Enlisted	Hengoed, Glamorgan	6
Service Number	157791	3
Medals	British War / Victory	4
Date of Death/Age	3 rd June 1916 age 32	3
Cause	Killed in Action	3
Burial/Memorial	Vermelles British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. Ref 111.F.1	3



Name.	Woods	Corps.	A.E.	Rank.	Spr	Regt. No.	157791
Medal	John	Roll.		Page.		Remarks.	
VICTORY	RE/101/208		51063				
ENTRANCE	20		20				

John Woods moved to Wales in his early 20's where he became a miner. He joined the army in mid-1915 when the Royal Engineers were recruiting miners to the Tunnelling Companies which, since their formation in early 1915, were proving a successful innovation on the Western Front.



£3 War Gratuity paid to Lucy Woods (wife)

The Tunnelling Companies fought a most terrifying war. They dug explosive packed tunnels and listening galleries deep beneath No Man's Land, detonating mines up to 100 feet below ground whilst being on the alert for German tunnellers digging the other way. Carbon monoxide poisoning was a constant threat as were the ever present dangers of being detected and blown up or buried alive by the enemy or by the premature explosion of their own mines.

253rd Tunnelling Company was deployed near to the 1915 Loos battlefield north of the Vermelles to Hulluch Road in January 1916; each month the company war diary records a daily round of mining, blowing of their own mines and losses of men and material to the enemy's explosives and to accidents. At 3.15 in the afternoon of 3rd June 1916, John Woods was in a party of men extending a shaft to tempt the enemy into prematurely blowing their mine. Unfortunately, the shaft went too far and the enemy reacted earlier than hoped for, blowing their mine and wrecking 14 feet of shaft.

Sapper John Woods and one of his comrades lost their lives in the explosion.

Commemorated: Newport Monmouthshire Roll of Honour

WOODS, Spr. John, 157791. 253rd Coy. Royal Engineers. Killed in action 3rd June, 1916. Age 32. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Fredrick Woods, of Tisbury, Wilts; husband of Mrs. J. Woods, of 20, Glass Works Cottages, Crindau, Newport, Mon. III. F. I.