

Company Quartermaster Sergeant John Woodward

Regimental number: 65895

11th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps

born: about 1883 - died: 10 September 1918

Company Quartermaster Sergeant John Woodward was born in about 1883,¹ the son of John and Isabella Woodward.² His father, John, was born in about 1855 in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire and his mother, the former Isabella Patterson, was born in about 1858 in Northumberland.³ Isabella was the daughter of James and Isabella Patterson.⁴ John and Isabella had at least ten children: Isabella (born in about 1877),⁵ Agnes (born in about 1879),⁶ William (born in 1880),⁷ John, Jane (born in about 1885),⁸ Benjamin (born in about 1887),⁹ Lille (born in about 1889),¹⁰ Josephine (born in about 1892),¹¹ Edith (born in about 1896),¹² and Francis (born in about 1900).¹³

In 1881, the family was living at 24 Blake Street in Barrow-in-Furness, where John's father was a steel work labour.¹⁴ By 1891, they had moved to 3 Hawke Street.¹⁵ Sometime between 1892 and 1896, the family moved to Dundee in Scotland, where the last two children were born. In 1901, the family was living at 28 Annfield Row, near Dundee, where John's father was an iron moulder and John was an apprentice plumber.¹⁶

Six years later, John married Margaret Murray Bonnar¹⁷ (born in about 1885 in Dundee).¹⁸ In 1911, they were living at 179A Blackness Road, Dundee where John as an iron dresser.¹⁹ They had one child – a son, John, born in 1908.

It was in Dundee that John enlisted in the Machine Gun Corps.²⁰ At the beginning of the war, the tactical potential of machine guns was not sufficiently appreciated by the British Military.²¹ There were just two machine guns in infantry battalion and cavalry regiment. After a year on the Western Front, it was realised that the army could be more effective with machine guns in larger units, crewed by specially trained men. As a result the Machine Gun Corps was formed in October 1915.

John was wounded on 10 September 1918.²² He was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his abdomen and died the same day. He was buried the same day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row H, Grave 45) with the chaplain W. F. O'Neill Fisher presiding. He was a member of the Church of England.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²³ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²⁴ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September.

No information about his next-of-kin was available at the time of his death,²⁵ but later his wife, who was still living on Blackness Road, received the monies owing to him from the army after his death.²⁶

John was awarded the Military Medal, which was given to Other Ranks for gallantry and devotion to duty when under fire in battle on land.²⁷ He was also awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).

-
- ¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 October 2015), entry for John Woodward, Registration district: Barrow-in-Furness, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 83, Page: 873
- ² "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 October 2015), entry for John Woodward, Registration district: Barrow In Furness, ED, institution, or vessel: 9, Piece: 3484, Folio: 16, Page Number: 27
- ³ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 October 2015), entry for John Woodward, Registration district: Barrow In Furness, ED, institution, or vessel: 14, Piece: 4289, Folio: 30, Page Number: 158
- ⁴ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 October 2015), entry for Isabella Patterson, Registration district: Ulverston, Sub-registration district: Dalton, ED, institution, or vessel: 19, Household schedule number: 294, Piece: 4244, Folio: 100, Page Number: 72
- ⁵ "1881 England Census," entry for John Woodward
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ "1891 England Census," entry for John Woodward
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 21 October 2015), entry for John Woodward, Registration Number: 282/1, Registration district: St Peter, ED: 31, Household schedule number: 27, LINE: 1, Roll: CSSCT1901_92
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ "1881 England Census," entry for John Woodward
- ¹⁵ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 18 October 2015), entry for John Woodward
- ¹⁶ "1901 Scotland Census," entry for John Woodward
- ¹⁷ "Statutory registers-marriages," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>; accessed 18 October 2015) entry for Woodward, John, GROS data: 282/02 0089
- ¹⁸ "1911 Scotland census," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>; accessed 18 October 2015) entry for Woodward, John, GROS data: 282/02 024/00 036
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 October 2015), entry for John Woodward
- ²¹ "Machine Gun Corps," Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Machine_Gun_Corps; accessed 19 June 2015)
- ²² "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 645
- ²³ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ²⁴ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ²⁵ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 645
- ²⁶ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 October 2015), entry for John Woodward
- ²⁷ "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 October 2015), entry for John Woodward