

Richard John Hancock

Named as J. Hancock on the
Neston Church Memorial plaque.



RICHARD JOHN HANCOCK was born in Melksham in 1887, the son of George and Ann (née Chivers). George was a freestone quarryman and in 1891 the family were living in a cottage in Whitley. They had four older children: brothers Joseph and Thomas and sisters Rosina (Rose) and Frances. (The 1891 census incorrectly shows the family name as Handcock.) By 1901 they had moved to Norrington Common in Broughton Gifford; George was still a freestone quarryman and they now had another son, Edward. Aged 14, John, as Richard John was known, was working as a labourer in the stone quarry.

Ann sadly died in 1906, and in 1911 George was living in Corshamside (Neston) with his daughter Rose and her family. By then John had already enlisted in the military and in 1911 he was in South Africa serving with the 1st Wiltshire Regiment. He married Elizabeth Newman in 1914 and they made their home in Box. Their son William was born just before John's death but he tragically died at the age of four.

John is not listed in *War Records of Corsham*, but records show that he was missing and presumed killed in action in France on 26th October 1914. His younger brother Edward served in the Somerset Light Infantry and was also killed in action in 1915 – he is recognised in *War Records of Corsham*. Both brothers are named on the Neston Memorial plaque.