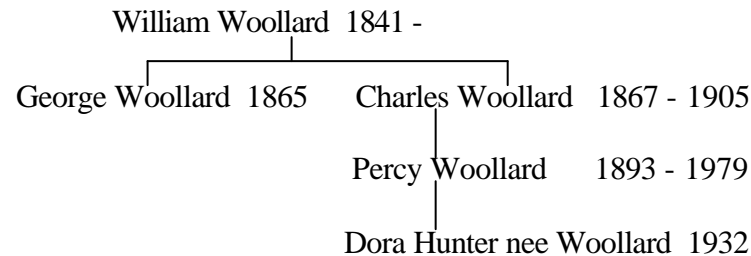


Percy Woollard
1893 - 1979
Notes on His Family and Life



Charles Woollard b. 19th October 1867 at Brantham

Started work as an under shepherd in 1880, became Horseman on Railway, died TB 4th October 1905 in Holton. On 30th December 1890 **married** in Brantham, to

Eliza Annie Wright b.1869 then moved to Mistley and in 1898 to Holton. After Charles died in 1905, Eliza Annie's two youngest, Denby Charles and Francis went away in 1906 to a National Children's Home, where Francis died in 1910, while Percy went to work at Smith and Smith (later W H Smith) on Halesworth station. Subsequently Eliza Annie married again, to Ernest Simpson, and died in 1921.

Charles and Eliza had four children

1. **Percy** b. in Mistley, Essex 1893, served in the Great War as a Sergeant in the RASC, a driver.
On 25th December 1915 he married Bessie, and their daughter Dora was born on 18th February 1932. After chauffeuring, Percy became a director of Normands Garages, Hammersmith.
2. **Dora** b. in Mistley, Essex 1895
3. **Denby Charles** b. in Mistley, Essex 4th October 1897. 1906 went to National Children's Home. POW in the Great War, subsequently Treasurer of the Civil Service Sanatorium Society and HEO in the Ministry of Power. Awarded MBE.
Married **Alice Louisa Wheatman** on 7th May 1922, and **Frances Alice** was born 23rd February 1931.
4. **Francis** b. in Holton 1899, died 1910 at National Children's Home 11 years old.

Percy's daughter, **Dora**, married **Geoffrey Charles Hunter** and their daughter Sarah married after a divorce to Neil Rowntree and they have two boys, Alexander b. 1998 and Thomas b. 2000.

Time Line

17th April 1893 Percy was born at Mistley Essex

This is on the River Stour in Constable Country and the family had been living in this area since the 1840's

22nd May 1905 Certificate of Labour to say that Percy was over 12 years old

1906 Percy went to work at Smith and Smith (later W H Smith) on Halesworth Station some 33 miles from his place of birth.

25 July 1913 Percy was working as a chauffeur.

Then Percy worked for Arthur S Jeff, Civil Servant Federal Malay States, for 5 months until he left for the East

Worked for Major A de Wilton, Inspector of General Prisons, for 3 months before he returned to Ceylon

27th August 1914 Percy was working for Major W.W. Warner who gave him a reference as a driver for the army, presumably the Territorials.

"He is an excellent driver and knows all about the mechanisms of a motor car and I can thoroughly recommend him – 27th August 1914."

2nd Sept 1914 Percy joined the reserves, "The Territorials", as a driver, The British 47th, 2nd London Division and after 156 days, in

March 1915, joined the regular army in the Royal Army Service Corp.

At the time, he was living at 149 Ravensbury Road Earlsfield London

4th May 1915, he sent a card to Miss B Wratten - "Dear B"

25th December 1915 he married Elizabeth Sarah White WRATTEN

There is a card to Elizabeth, addressed to Mrs P Woollard whom he referred to as "Dear B" at 50 Vanderbilt Road Earlsfield

After the war Arthur S Jeff then guaranteed to the army that he would employ Percy, who, in 1920, was still driving for Arthur S Jeff and received a pleasant personal letter and a gift.

In 1923, he was living at 74 Idlecombe Road Tooting and wrote to Arthur S Jeff and asked for an open reference which he got.

Arthur S Jeff answered from the Junior Carlton Club (disbanded in 1977)

After chauffeuring, Percy became a director of Normand Garages, Hammersmith. At it would be reasonable to assume that during this time he and Elizabeth moved to West Ewell.

Their daughter Dora Bessie Woollard was born on 18 Feb 1932

Percy and his wife retired at 42 Derek Avenue West Ewell

02 Nov 1976, his wife Elizabeth died at the age of 85 at this address

Dec 1979, Percy died at the age of 86, presumably at home.

Comment

The slightest exploration of this family, triggers exciting and romantic notions. Family records show that the first confirmed ancestor William Woollard was born in 1814 in Brantham.

Note:

This fits in with the early family history and the census records however it is interesting to note that a William Woollard was christened a few miles north in Kirtling in Aug 1814 and his mothers name was Martha

In 1841 census there were 2 Martha Woollards in Kirtling b. 1776 married to William Woollard with a youngster William age 5 b. 1836 and another b. 1781 married to William Woollard.

This is a little confused or confusing.

In 1941 there was a Martha Woollard was working in Brantham as a servant and there was another Woollard family in Brantham, Thomas, Lucy, with children Lucy and Sarah

William Woollard and his wife Mary Anne cannot be found in the 1841 census

It will take some detailed study to sort out all the William Woollards in the area of Suffolk and Cambridge.

Derivation of the Name – Woollard

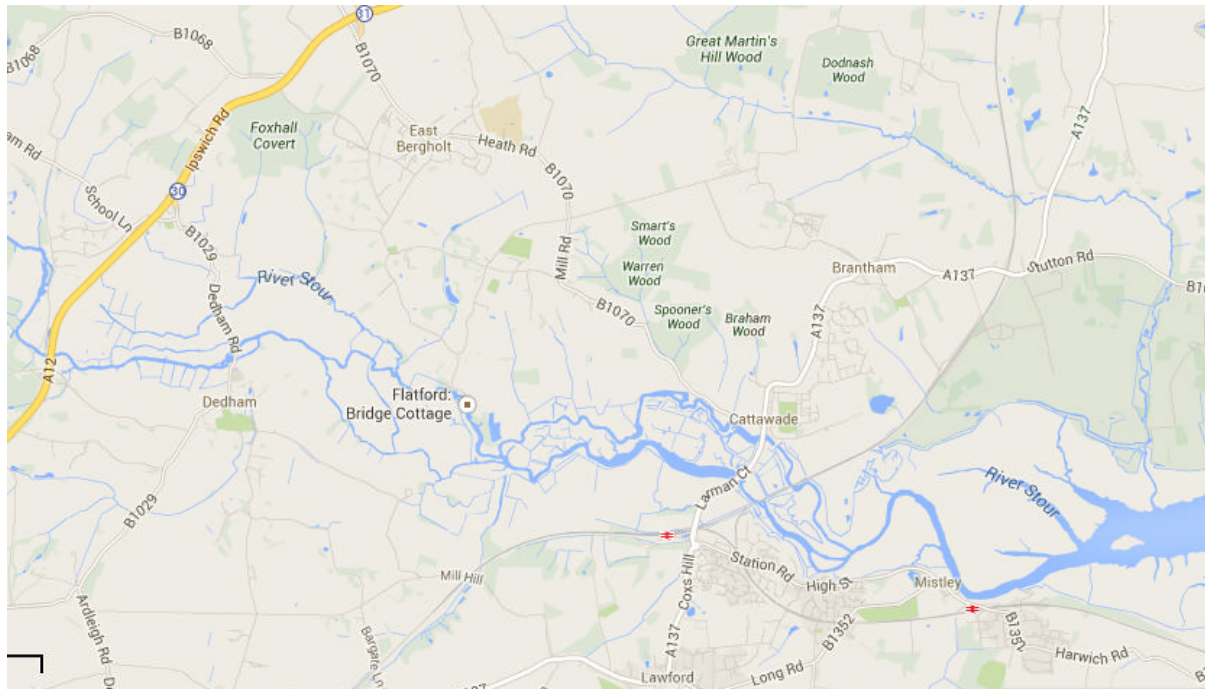
This interesting name has two possible origins, both of which are Anglo-Saxon. The first possible source is from the Old English pre 7th Century personal name "Wulfweard", composed of the elements "wulf", wolf and "weard", guardian, protector. The given name is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as "Wluuard" and "Vluuard", and was still used in its Middle English form of "Wol(f)ward" up until the 13th Century. The second origin for the modern surname, found as Wool(l)ard, Woolatt, Wollard, Woolward, Wolfarth, Wolford, Wolforth, Woolford(e) and Woolfoot, is from the locational surname "Wolford", deriving from the place so called in Warwickshire. The place name is recorded as "Wolwarde" in the Domesday Book and is named with the same elements as the personal name "Wulf" and "Weard", to mean "enclosure to protect flock from wolves". One Anne Woolard married Thomas Gourlay on April 1st 1690 at St. James, Dukes Place, London. The first recorded spelling of the family name is shown to be that of Martin Wlward, which was dated 1199, The Cambridgeshire Fines Court Records, during the reign of King Richard I, "The Lionheart", 1189 - 1199. Surnames became necessary when governments introduced personal taxation. In England this was known as Poll Tax. Throughout the centuries, surnames in every country have continued to "develop" often leading to astonishing variants of the original spelling.

From The Internet Surname Database.

I return to the Woollard family in the area of Brantham and for those that do not know the area it is near the River Stour within a mile or so of Constable Country. The villages of Brantham, Mistley, East Bergholt all are places of residence of the family who all worked on the land as labourers or shepherds.

Reference to the name Woollard on the website www.gravestonephotos.com will show a list of over 100 gravestones in the area with the name Woollard.

A glance of the map of the area confirms the beauty of the place with the River Stour spreading out through the countryside. Note that the River Stour acts as the border between Suffolk and Essex



One can envisage with a romantic eye three generations of Woollards working on the land in this beautiful countryside until one is confronted by the premature death in 1905 of Charles Woollard at the age of 38 of Tuberculosis leaving a wife and 4 children. Charles was born in 1867 at Cattawade near the River Stour and married at the age of 23 to 21 year old Eliza Annie Wright who was born in Wandsworth.

In 1898 Charles had moved with his wife and 3 children to Holton some 33 miles north of Mistley where the family had originally settled. By 1901 Charles was working as a shunter on the Railway presumably based at Halesworth.

It is worth noting that, at that time, his brother George was working as a railway guard at the time, living in Deptford at Chubbworthy St, in what seems like railway housing with his family.

George went on to be a Railway inspector and not only that, was obviously a poet.

We have the benefit of his expressed sadness at the death of his brother Charles of TB.

Not Dead - But Sleeping.

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
Not lost but gone before
Safe in his Saviour's keeping
And presence evermore*

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
Safe in the Hand of Bliss
Then why should we be weeping
When peace and joy are his.*

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
At rest - in Heaven – his home
With rapture now repeating
Thy will, Oh Lord be done*

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
His mission here is done
All pain and death defeating
Through Christ the victory won.*

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
Then let us all decide
To meet him with a greeting
When called beyond the tide.*

*He is not dead, he's sleeping
All Stations he has passed
Oh, what a glorious meeting
When Heaven we reach at last.*

*In loving memory
Of my dear brother Charles.*

G.Woollard

Charles Woollard, the Grandfather of Dora Hunter nee Woollard died 4th Oct 1905 in Holton of Tuberculosis, 38 years old.

We have also a dramatic poem by George about the sinking of the S.S.Berlin in 1907, and a cute little hymn about the car to heaven.



After Charles died in 1905, Eliza Annie's two youngest, Denby Charles and Francis went away in 1906 to a National Children's Home, where Francis died in 1910, while Percy went to work at Smith and Smith (later W H Smith) on Halesworth station.

Subsequently Eliza Annie married again, to Ernest Simpson, and died in 1921.

Percy was 12 years old when he went to work at Halesworth Station which was probably where his father had been working as a shunter but Percy worked in the book shop Smith and Smith (W.H.Smith)

Percy and his brother, Denby Charles

The story fades now however, there are some documents and photographs that give some interesting insights into the early live of Percy Woollard.

By the age of 20 he was obviously an experienced chauffeur working for Stanley Luigle at Park View House Wimbledon and in 25 July 1913 he had a reference from his employer to say that he had been driving a Darracq Laudaulette for him for a year in London and the Country. He needed a new job because his employer was leaving the neighbourhood

During 1913 and 1914 Percy worked for Arthur S Jeff, Civil Servant Federal Malay States, for 5 months until he left for the East and then for Major A de Wilton, Inspector of General Prisons, for 3 months before he returned to Ceylon



27th August 1914 Percy was working for Major W.W. Warner who gave him a reference as a driver for the army, presumably the Territorials.

“He is an excellent driver and knows all about the mechanisms of a motor car and I can thoroughly recommend him – 27th August 1914.”

At each change of job he got good references and the change was necessary only because of the moving of his employers. The letters by employers at that time give interesting insights. See appendices.

It would seem that Percy joined up voluntarily at the beginning of the war which started in 4th Aug 1914 however the issue about the territorials and then his transfer to the regular army is not clear. There are documents relating to Percy’s transfer to the Royal Army Corp in March 1915



Because the Army Service Corp services many fighting divisions of the army it may be that although he transferred into the Regular Army – ASC – he continued to be part of the 47th London Division.
The move may have been in effect a change of job with financial implications.

The Early history of 47th (2nd London) Division from www.1914-1918.net

The 2nd London Division* was a formation of the Territorial Force. It was formed as a result of the reforms of the army carried out in 1908 under the Secretary of State for War, Richard Burdon Haldane and was one of 14 Divisions of the peacetime TF.

* Not to be confused. This was a "First Line" TF Division. It has "2nd" in its title simply because there were two in London. The other was the 56th (1st London) Division.

1914

The units of the Division had just arrived for annual summer camp on Salisbury Plain when emergency orders recalled them to the home base. All units were mobilised for full time war service on 5 August 1914 and moved to concentrate in the St Albans area by mid August 1914. In October the Division was warned that it would go on overseas service. Many units were detached from the Division and sent independently to France as sorely-needed reinforcements for the BEF.

1915

Units began to cross to France on 8-9 March. 5th London Brigade was ordered to Cassel, and the rest concentrated near Bethune by 22 March. 5th London Brigade then rejoined. The 2nd London was the second TF Division to arrive complete in France. The Division then remained in France and Flanders and took part in many engagements.

from www.1914-1918.net

The Army Service Corps of 1914-1918

This section of the Long, Long Trail will be helpful for anyone wishing to find out about the history of the units of the Army Service Corps. Note that the ASC is the same as the RASC: it received the Royal prefix in late 1918.

The unsung heroes of the British army in the Great War - the ASC, *Ally Sloper's Cavalry*. Soldiers can not fight without food, equipment and ammunition. In the Great War, the vast majority of this tonnage, supplying a vast army on many fronts, was supplied from Britain. Using horsed and motor vehicles, railways and waterways, the ASC performed prodigious feats of logistics and were one of the great strengths of organisation by which the war was won.

Who or what was [Ally Sloper](#)?

At peak, the ASC numbered an incredible 10,547 officers and 315,334 men. In addition were tens of thousands of Indian, Egyptian, Chinese and other native labourers, carriers and stores men, under orders of the ASC. Yet this vast, sprawling organisation - so vital to enabling the army to fight - merits just four mentions in the Official History of the war.

The organisation of the ASC

The ASC was organised into Companies, each fulfilling a specific role. Some were under orders of or attached to the Divisions of the army; the rest were under direct orders of the higher formations of Corps, Army or the GHQ of the army in each theatre of war.

Base Depots

Horse Transport Companies (including Companies in Divisional Trains, Reserve Parks and Small Arms Ammunition (SAA) Trains)

Mechanical Transport Companies (including Companies in Divisional Supply Columns and Ammunition Parks, Companies attached to the heavy artillery, Omnibus Companies, Motor Ambulance Convoys, Bridging and Pontoon units and Workshops)

The Army Remounts Service (Companies involved in the provision of horses)

The ASC Labour Companies

The organisation of the Lines of Communication

"Lines of Communication" was an army term used to describe what today we might call the army's logistics: the supply lines from port to front line, and the camps, stores, dumps, workshops of the rear areas.

It is difficult to comprehend just what supply to an army that in France alone built up to more than 2 million men actually means.

The ASC HT Companies in the Divisional Trains

Each Division of the army had a certain amount of transport under its own command, known as the Divisional Train. It was the 'workhorse' of the Division in terms of carrying stores and supplies, providing the main supply line to the transport of the brigades of infantry and artillery and other attached units. It initially comprised 26 officers and 402 other ranks of the Army Service Corps, looking after 378 horses, 17 carts, 125 wagons and 30 bicycles. These comprised a headquarters and 4 Hosed Transport Companies (one for each infantry Brigade and one for Divisional HQ and other troops). The Train moved with the Division. In all, there were 364 ASC Companies of this type.

Taken from www.1914-1918.net

From the photographs it is obvious that Percy worked in the transport corp. probably driving any number of types of vehicle and no doubt being responsible for maintenance.

A parallel can be drawn with Colin Rowntree in the first two years of WW1 who while in Friends Ambulance was driving cars and ambulances and doing all the necessary repairs, frequently.

There are many photographs relation to Percy's time in the RASC on the website see: www.guise.me.uk/album.index.htm



Percy Woollard RASC WW1

The documents relation to Percy in WW1 offer some insight into the his activities particularly this example of "orders"



The first inkling we have of his love life is from a card to Miss B. Wratten of Putney on 4th May 1915.



Cpl Woodland
 You will proceed to H.13. B. 5.5. where guide will meet Louis at Road junction ^{at 9.0^{pm}} to convey gas projectiles to H.4. B. 8.4 for 14 Cops Gas Officer
 13
 4/17
 + Louis leave at 4.0^{pm} sharp for O.C. 47 D.S.C. C.M. Clements

4/15/15
 Dear B.
 Hope you are quite well, as it leaves me the same at present. Letter following love P.
 Miss B. Wratten
 64 Howards Lane
 Putney
 London
 England. S.W.

Hope you are quite well, as it leaves me the same at present. Letter following love P.

Coincidentally, Putney is just round the river from Hammersmith and the Rowntree families.

Percy married Elizabeth Sarah White Wratten, Bessie, on 25th Dec 1915 at St. Andrews church in Earlsfield which is about a mile from Putney Bridge and Howards Lane off the Upper Richmond Road.

The cards from Percy to Bessie are all available on: www.guise.me.uk/album.index.htm

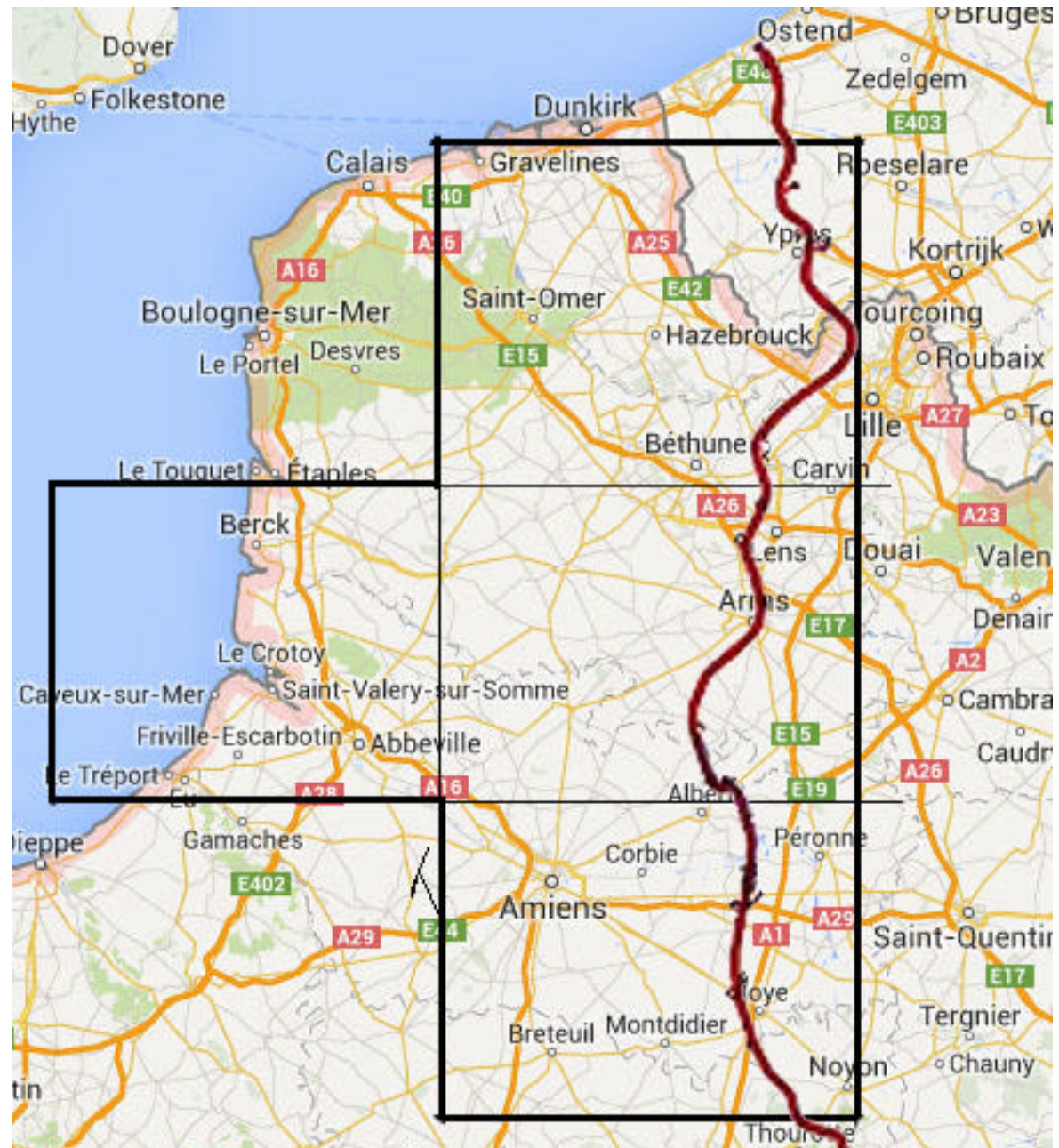
Amongst Percy belongings are 4 maps of France and Belgium. These all have the name Sgt Woollard written on them and the map alongside shows the area covered by them.

These maps were all to the scale of 1 cm to the km or about 1 inch to 1 ½ miles
The approximate position of the Front line is shown.
Large pictures of the maps are available on the website.

If these were the maps that he used, they give us some idea of the area that he covered and there can be no doubt that his driving would have demanded that he got close to the front line.

By comparison Colin Rowntree in his work in Friends Ambulance and the Royal Engineers spent most of his time in the area covered by the Hazebrouck map.

As has been mentioned the photographs give some idea of the not to difficult side of life during the war and the documents are of particular interest in so far as they give an indication of the procedures to enter the army and leave at the end of the war.



The next we know of Percy is that in December 1918, his previous employer, Arthur S Jeff, Civil Servant Federal Malay States, writes a letter to the army explaining that he would be pleased to employ Percy again as his driver.

In 1920 there is a letter from Arthur Jeff to Percy thanking him for his service and enclosing a gift.

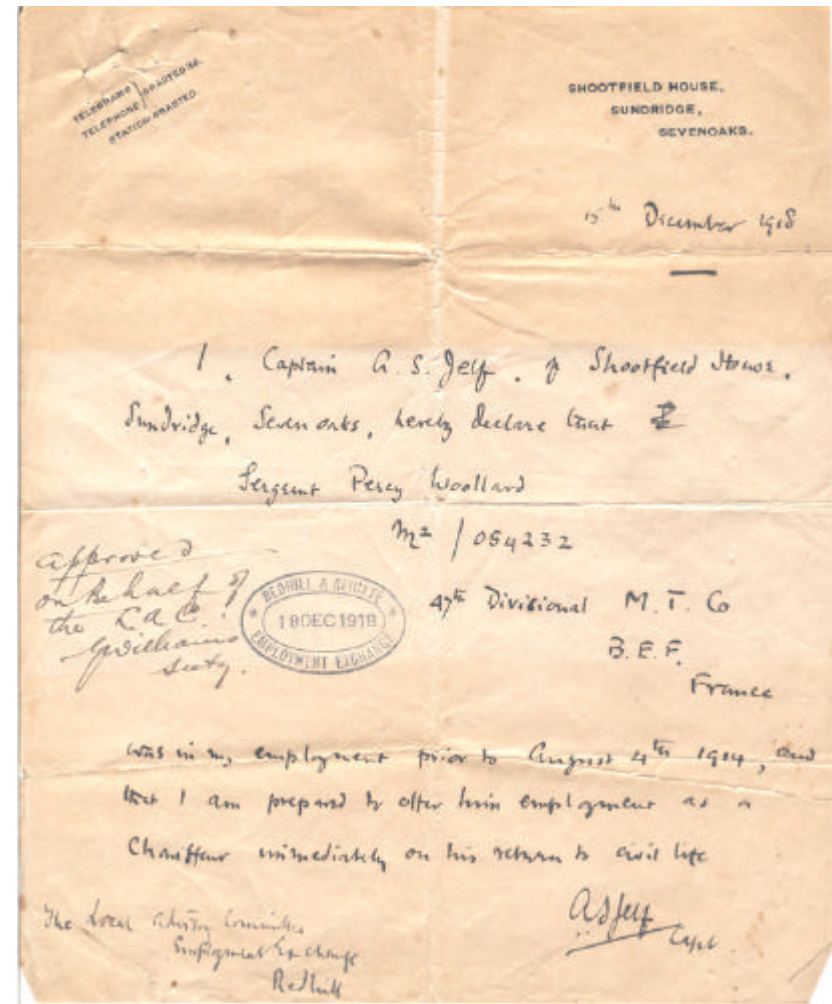
In 1923 there is a letter from Arthur Jeff to Percy with a lovely open reference in response, obviously to a letter from Percy to him.

Their daughter Dora Bessie Woollard was born on 18 Feb 1932 in the Kingston Area.

She married Geoffrey Charles Hunter in 1966 in Kingston and had her first child, Michael who sadly died at birth, in 1967 and second child Sarah in 1969.

All we can add at this stage is that Percy, later, was a director of Normands Garage in Hammersmith, and that he and Bessie settled in West Ewell.

They both died in the 1970's presumably at home.



From family documents and photographs
Raoul Guise May 2014