



Percy Archibald Hill (L20309) was just 21 years old and working as a carman when he attested in Richmond on 20th April 1915 joining the Royal Field Artillery 'A' Battery, 156th Brigade. There are no other service records for this young man, however Percy was awarded the 1914/15 Star (and also the British War & Victory Medals) which indicates that Percy began his war service sometime before 31st December 1915. Indeed, the 156th Brigade did sail for France on 12/13th December of that year. Percy is listed as a 'driver' which was equivalent to the rank of Private. Percy was a driver of horses. For a short time in 1912, he had worked as a cleaner for the railways where he might have developed an affection for horses. After some months of training, this young man would be expected to show a high level of competence in the handling of horses. In the field of war, the horses would be attached to huge 18-pounder field guns that could fire high explosive shells at a great rate of fire. It was a very skilled job.

It appears that Percy's 'A' battery took part in the Final Advance in Picardy. He was now a seasoned soldier. He must have been physically worn out after years of dedicated service to his horses, as well as mentally exhausted from months of manoeuvres, explosive noise, poor food, constant shelling and the loss of friends and horses. On 1st Nov 1918 Percy was enjoying a well-earned 24hr. rest period, before entering the fray again the next day.

The 2nd November dawned, and Percy's battery was positioned on the western outskirts of Poix-du-Nord. On this day near Valenciennes, every battery performed '*brilliant exploits*' and on '*frequent occasions the batteries had to pass through shell-storms*'....yet they '*maintained effective covering fire under the weight of enemy bombardment*'. **This was the day that Percy Hill was killed 'in the field'**.

At 9am on Monday November 11th 1918, just nine days after Percy had died, came the news that the war, that had been raging for four years, was finally over.

Percy came from a large family. His father, William (a boot/shoemaker) was born in Buckinghamshire and his mother, Elizabeth, nee Woodward, was from Bedfordshire. In 1891 the family were settled at 102 Ealing Road. By 1901 the family had moved into 16 North Street Isleworth. By then Percy (5) had an older sister Florence and four brothers James, Felix, Henry and baby Rupert. By 1911 the family had moved again to 2 South Street and Percy is recorded as a labourer. On 13th Feb the following year, Percy found a job on the railways, but left without notice on 30th September!

In his short life, Percy had also married his lady, Dorothy (M. Thatcher) in the spring of 1915 - about the same time that he had joined up. Poignantly, the Register of Soldiers' Effects records that Dorothy had given birth to a son, Percy, on 6th June 1919.

Percy is buried at Awoingt British Cemetery Ref III.a.21.

