



Percy Yeatman aged 15 years, (1912), Tillington Scouts

**Percy Maurice Yeatman** was born in Hackney, East London on August 23rd 1897 and he was baptised on November 21st in the same year at Christ Church, Jamaica Street in Tower Hamlets. The 1901 census shows the family living at 41 Tudor Road, Hackney, but by 1911 the family had moved out of London and were living at 520 Upperton.

It is probable that Percy spent a few short years at Tillington School before leaving at the age of 14 years in 1911. He may then have joined his father on the Leconfield Estate, but only for a short time because at some stage before 1916 he trained as a Solicitor's Clerk. Then two years into the war on June 6th 1916 Percy enlisted in the Royal Naval Air Service for 'the duration of hostilities'. His record shows that he was 5 feet 8½ inches tall, blue eyes and brown hair with a fresh complexion and an operation scar on his right side.

F 15822		F 15822	
Name: Percy Maurice Yeatman		Date of Birth: 23 Aug 1897	
Place of Birth: Hackney, London		Residence: 520 Upperton	
Date and Period of Engagement	Age	Height	Class
1 June 1916	18	5 ft 8 1/2 in	2nd Class
Ship, etc., served in	Rate	Period of Service	Rating
President II (White City)	AC II	6 June 16	11 Feb 17
Daedalus	"	12 Feb 17	20 June 17
Pres II (Crystal Palace)	"	20 July 17	21 July 17
Coudekerque	"	21 July 17	22 July 17
Dunkirk	AC I	3 August 17	24 Sep 17
Lost of effects: 27/16 August 1917			
Lost his life when the aeroplane in which he was serving was brought down by the enemy in Belgium			

As **Aircraftman 2nd Class F/15822** he joined the 'training ship' President II (an admiralty building close to Tower Bridge) and was initially trained at the White City. After further training in 1917 at Eastchurch Aerodrome (Isle of Sheppey) he became a gunner on the newly built Handley Page O/100 bomber.



Handley Page Type O/100 biplane bomber

**The Type O/100** was an early biplane bomber and the largest aircraft that had been built in the UK. Early in the war the Royal Navy's Director of the Air Department requested a 'bloody paralysers' of an aircraft. Handley Page responded with a biplane with a wingspan of 100 feet.

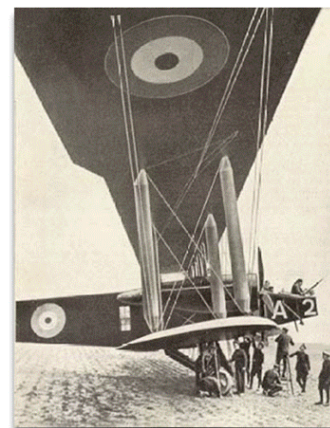
**Flown by a crew of three** - pilot, observer and gunner - it was fitted with two Rolls Royce 250 horsepower engines and carried a normal bomb load of 14 x 12 pound bombs. It was later to carry the first 1650 pound bomb.

On **July 22nd 1917** Percy was posted to 7 Squadron at Coudekerque Aerodrome in Northern France where, in early August, he was promoted to Aircraftman 1st Class and moved to RNAS Dunkirk. From here he flew bombing missions in the HP O/100 as front gunner. This comment by another front gunner illustrates just how vulnerable this position was.

*"I only once occupied the nose gun layer's cockpit.....stuck way out in front, I had a marvellous view ahead and made good use of the paired Lewis guns when we strafed the target..... I could actually see and hear the German ground gunners firing at us....and when we got back to Coudekerque I discovered six neat bullet holes in the plywood sides of my cockpit and a seventh through the right sleeve of my outer flying suit.....I'd been very lucky that time".*

**August 1917** saw No 7 Squadron escalating its nightly forays, attacking enemy airfields, railway centres and sidings. One night nine bombers, including HP3137 in which Percy Yeatman was front gunner, bombed rail targets at Thourout and St Pierre and the docks at Ghent and Bruges, dropping a total of 120 bombs to good effect.



On the night of August 25/26th seven HP's set off to attack St Denis Westrem Aerodrome dropping 80 bombs, but HP3137, crewed by Flight Lieutenant H H Booth and Gunlayers S A Canning and P M Yeatman was brought down by flak near Ghent, Belgium. Being in the exposed front gun position Aircraftman 1st Class Percy M Yeatman F/15822 was killed on impact, whilst the remaining crew survived and were taken prisoners.



The exposed front gun position on the O/100 bomber just above the A2 lettering

Roll: B.F.

Name	Rank or Rating	No.	Medals, etc., earned	How issued or
YEATMAN, Percy H.	A.C. 1	F. 15822	V.B.F.	

British War Medal      Victory Medal

Percy was 20 years old when he was killed and he now lies peacefully with many others who gave their lives during WWI in the 'Cement House' Cemetery at Langemark, north of the town of Leper (Ypres) in Belgium.



We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,

In Flanders Fields - John McCrae