

PERCY JEEVES (CRICKETER) 1888-1916

KILLED IN ACTION, BATTLE OF THE

SOMME, FRANCE AGED 28

WORLD WAR I HISTORY PROJECT

BY HANNAH WILLIAMS (5K)

"LEST WE FORGET"

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO EDWINA REES

MOSELEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Q Percy died in the battle of the Somme. Can you tell me more about the battle and why there were so many casualties?

A Poor communication, extremely wet weather and exhaustion amongst the troops resulted in the worst day in the history of the British Army. On the first day alone 1st of July 1916 there were 57,479 casualties and 19,240 soldiers died.

JEEVES, Pte. Percy, 611, 15th Bn. Royal Warwickshire Regt. 22nd July, 1916. Age 28. Son of Edwin and Nancy Jeeves, of 1A, Craven St., Ravenshorpe, Dewsbury, Yorks.

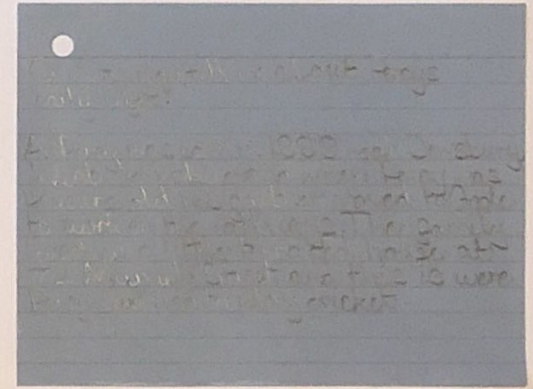
Tragedy of a Warwickshire player who inspired a literary icon

P.G. Wodehouse loved cricket and no cricket lover could resist the charms of Cheltenham and its College Ground at festival time



The real Jeeves: Tragic Warwickshire hero immortalised by a comic genius

Percy Jeeves should have played cricket for his county but instead did for a



Gloucestershire were about to start the third match of the town's annual cricket festival. Warwickshire were their opponents and something, or rather someone, that Wodehouse was to see that day would leave an indelible mark on English literature and English life.

Three years later, Wodehouse devised two new characters, a foppish toff and his immaculate manservant. Considering a name for the latter, he thought back to Cheltenham and one of Warwickshire's players - Percy Jeeves.

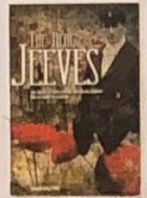
On Thursday August 14, 1913, P.G. Wodehouse woke at his parents' house at 3 Wolsley Terrace, Cheltenham. He was looking forward to the day.



"Jeeves's bowling must have impressed me." Wodehouse later confirmed in a letter which remains on display in Edgbaston museum, "for I remembered him when I was in New York starting the Jeeves and Bertie saga. It was just the name I wanted...I remember admiring his action very much."



Percy Jeeves



Private 611 Percy Jeeves 1916

Q Why did young men like Percy volunteer to join the army?

A Young men like Percy decided to volunteer to join the army because it was the moral choice and the right thing to do. There was a huge recruiting campaign with posters of Lord Kitchener imploring people to join the army.



Q Can you tell me any interesting facts about Percy Jeeves?

A Percy played cricket for Moseley Cricket Club in 1910 before he became a full professional player for Warwickshire County Cricket Club in 1912. Also in 1913 winter P.G. Wodehouse saw him play a match at Cheltenham and was so impressed he later used the name for Bertie Wooster's immaculate manservant Jeeves.

