

Malcolm Fergusson recollects the experiences of his family across two World Wars.

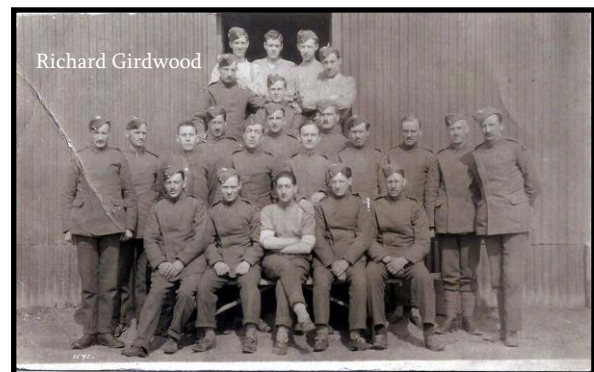
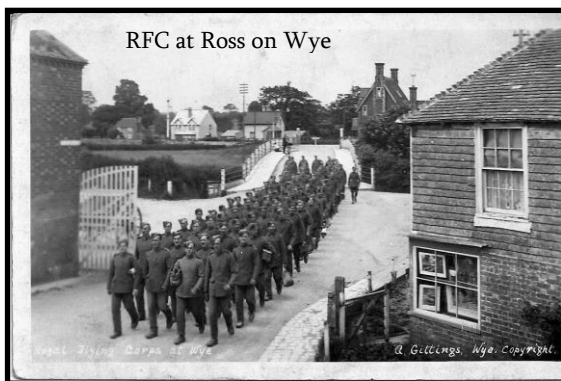
The Girdwood family



My maternal **Grandfather** was **Richard Girdwood**, and this photograph is of him aged 21.

He ran the transport section of Girdwood Dairies and was both a motor engineer and also an amateur inventor.

In the First World War he volunteered for the Royal Flying Corps because he was a trained mechanic. So he enlisted and was sent to RFC Wye to train as an aircraft engine fitter. He was in the RFC as a driver/mechanic but was trained as an armourer. He was in No 4 Sqd and when the RFC formed the RAF in April 1918 he was transferred to 1/8th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders where he became a Lewis gunner in A company.



He was at the attack on Buzancy, part of the Battle of the Soissonais, where he was almost killed. It was when I was about 11 that I discovered his legs were like the London Underground Maps. He had jumped into a shell hole which was full of barbed wire and had to drag himself out to survive. He also had a series of scars on his arm made by a saw edged bayonet.

He survived the war. The photo on left shows him with his wife, my Grandma Betsy and my Mum, Isobel, who was aged 4. After the war he became a chauffeur and mechanic.



My Grandfather Girdwood's younger brother **James Girdwood**, who is pictured below, was killed at Ypres in 1918 with 250 of his mates in 17th Royal Scots.

He is remembered at Tyne Cot.



