



Percy Darwin Lucas

20 Statham Street

Percy Lucas was born in Derby in 1890, the son of Charles and Mary Lucas. By 1911 the family had lost two of their three children so they were not unacquainted with sadness and bereavement. Charles, a Fruiterer, and his wife Mary both came from Northamptonshire. They were living in Derby by 1890 but finally settled in Statham Street in about 1913.

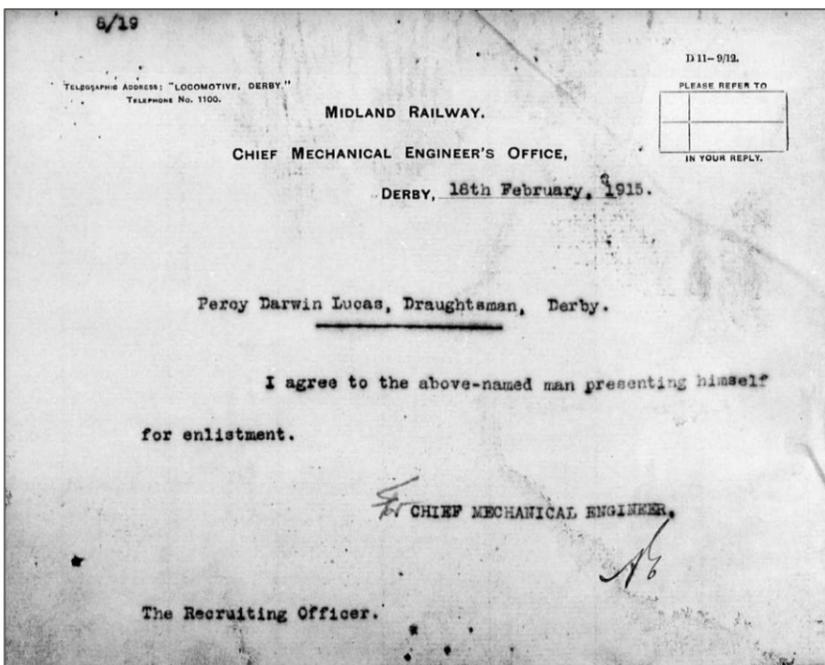
Royal Engineers but - as his record notes the "*Corps closed for Draughtsmen*" - he was posted with the 31st Signal Company. This company was attached to the 31st Division, part of the Fifth New Army formed in December 1914. It was mainly comprised of locally raised units known as the "pals" battalions.

He was mobilised to France in July 1915 and would have seen action at the Battle of the Somme in 1916. In April 1917 he was appointed temporary Lieutenant in the Railway Operating Division (ROD). This division of the Royal Engineers was formed in 1915 to operate railways transporting troops and supplies in the war zones. It was largely composed of railway employees.

Percy returned to Statham Street in 1919, living there until his marriage to Alice S. Greenfield in 1927, when they moved to Darley Abbey. He returned to work with Midland Railway, and in his spare time was the Vicar's Warden at St Alkmund's Church. Percy and Alice had one daughter, Mary, born in 1932.

In World War 2 Percy served as Second Lieutenant in the Army Cadet Force, preparing boys for military service prior to their 18th birthday.

Percy's death was registered in Ashbourne in 1984 – he was aged 93.



Percy's letter from his employer releasing him for military service (© The National Archives)

At the outbreak of war Percy was working as a skilled Draughtsman with the Midland Railway, having started as an apprentice there in 1906. He signed his Short Service attestation in March 1915, aged 24, with some previous service in the local Territorial Force. Percy had to get a letter of release from the Midland Railway to enlist. He had hoped to become a Draughtsman with the