

Florence Wood, née Sharrard (1868-1930),
portrait taken at photographic studio of F. Preece in Hereford



Found in January 2007 by Mike Wood, Glascoed, Gwent, amongst papers of his Grandfather - her youngest son Albert.

"With best love to you from Mum" is the inscription written on rear of the studio photo. That inscription indicates this portrait would be Albert's mother Florence (née Sharrard). She died in Lydd in 1930 at New Street home of her eldest son Alec.

Indeed the supposition was that her life had been very restricted to the Lydd area, without any knowledge that she could have been at Hereford at some period. With such a doubt, the possibility had to be considered that the portrait had been in Albert's possession because it was not of his mother but his wife's mother - indeed that did at first seem more likely as they had been married in south Wales and his wife was from that area. But even so maybe Florence had visited the area when Albert joined the army in the early 1920s?

There was, however, just one surviving photograph of Florence to which this Hereford portrait could be compared. Although the original photograph has not been seen (and its whereabouts not known) it is reproduced as an illustration in 'Old Romney Marsh in Camera' by E. Carpenter (Ashford, nd. 1984). The illustration is of a Lydd Club Day lunch (usually held at the annual 'Club Day' held in June), year not recorded. Shows the interior of a large tent full of many men and just four women. Rupert Wood was told, many years ago, by his mother May that at right edge is Mrs Roach owner of the New Inn, Lydd, and the third woman from the right (behind a man in glasses) is Florence Wood (née Sharrard). Being one amongst a very large group of people, although thankfully near the front, the image in the Club Day picture lacks some detail, (and obviously of an earlier time) but the same hair style and high collar are also seen in "Love from Mum" portrait taken in a Hereford Studio.

Even more confirmation of the identity of the portrait is from a personal memory of Dorothy Badham (née Wood). She only reached her eighth birthday in the year her Grandmother died in the Wood home in New Street, but on 11 Feb 2007 could recall "Uncle Albert's visit to us in Lydd... he bought sewing baskets from Jells [sweet shop opposite the house] and gave one to Elsie and me. Grandma Wood [Florence], I remember, in the front bedroom - she had a stroke, mother and father looked after her. This picture looks very much like her"

There are some photos of Alexander Wood (Florence's eldest son), but none are now known of his brothers and sisters except two of the last-born Albert Wood (1903-1959). The first photo of Albert is a detail from a large group photo of NCOs in the army probably around 1944-5, and the second is from a group photo on marriage of his son Douglas to Irene Spencer in Gwent, Wales in 1955. Thanks to his son Douglas and grandson Mike Wood these two pictures of Albert are amongst many family photos placed on a private Picasaweb album of the Alexander Wood family at

<http://picasaweb.google.com/WoodLooker/AlexFamilyLydd?authkey=>

[this private album requires an authority key added to get access
contact R. D. Wood for the full URL with the authoritykey]



Another portrait that has survived is that of Florence's father Owen Sharrard (1830/1-1895)

He had nine children: Harriet (1856), Ann Elizabeth (1858), Jane (1860), Mary Ellen (1861), Edward (1867), Florence Emily (1868), Minnie (1870), Harry (1871), and Horace (1876-1887).

The large portrait of Owen (presumably taken in early 1890s) passed to Harry and to his daughter Gladys (married Will Smith) and then to her son Basil Smith.

