

A Complete Portrait of Arthur Jeffress 1905-1961

1905-1931 The Jeffress and Rosenfeld families



Stella Adelaide Jeffress c 1900, Albert Gustavus Jeffress c 1920,
Jeffress Family Archive



Arthur Jeffress passport photo 1929,
Southampton City Archives

Arthur Tilden Jeffress was born in 1905 in the London suburb of Acton to American parents who moved from New York when Albert Gustavus Jeffress took up a new post in British American Tobacco. Arthur's mother Stella Rosenfeld, from a lower social class than her Virginian husband, was of German-Jewish origin. The family lived, briefly, a lavish Edwardian life, travelling widely including to the far east during World War One, before Arthur attended Harrow school.

His father's sudden death in 1925 made Jeffress a very wealthy young man. He left Cambridge University without a degree in 1926 and took part in avant-garde theatre. Jeffress became part of the circle of bright young things, still often associated with the 1930s but 'the reign was over by the end of 1931; and we can give a day - 21 November 1931 - the day on which Arthur Jeffress, later a successful dealer in paintings, gave his famous red-and-white party'.

He was also called as a witness during the notorious Elvira Barney murder trial in 1936.



Jeffress acting at Cambridge
Southampton City Archive



With friends at Kenton Grange, Middlesex
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Red & White party, 1931
Collection Gill Hedley