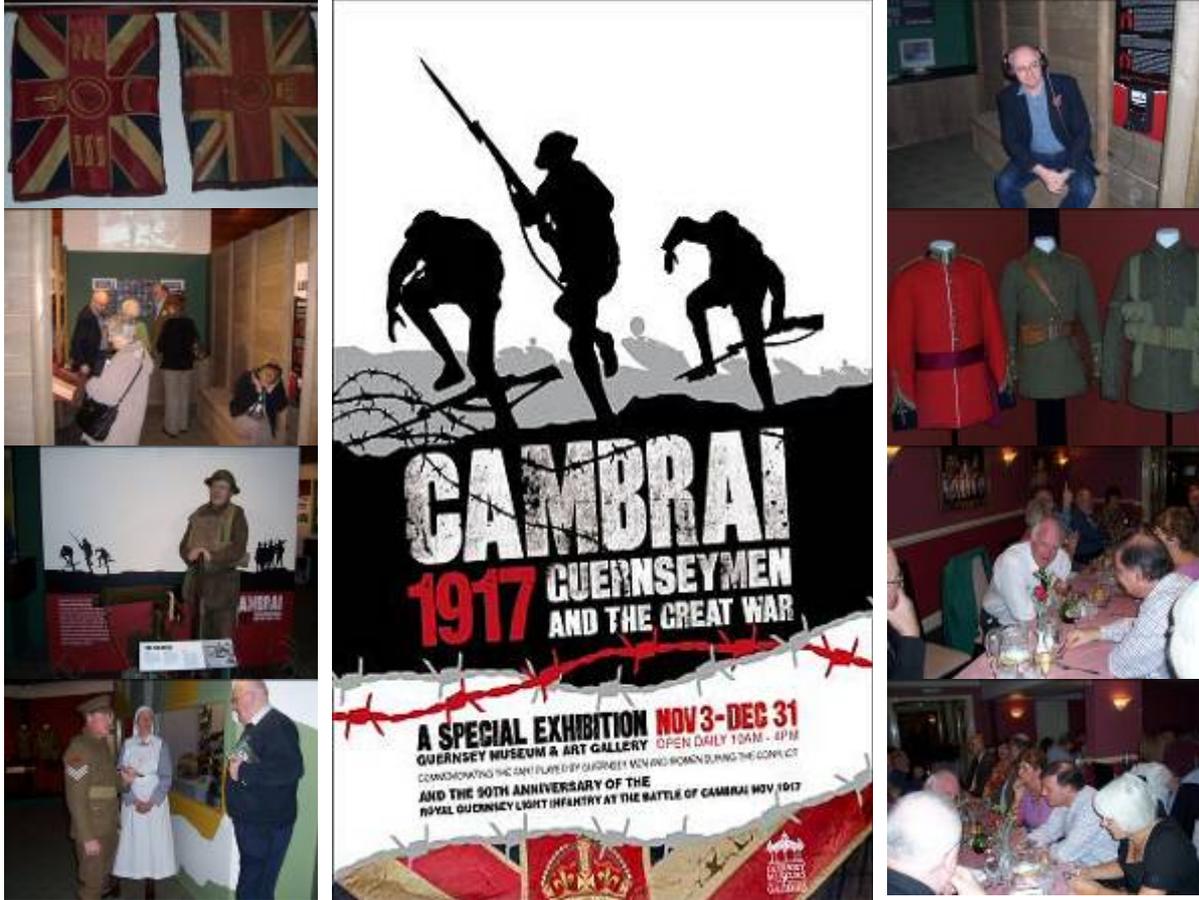


# CHANNEL ISLANDS GREAT WAR STUDY GROUP



## Commemorating Cambrai 1917-2007

## JOURNAL 17 DECEMBER 2007

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Hello All

First of all, I wish you Season's Greetings with the hope that your Christmas break is joyful and that the New Year will be a peaceful one for you, and your families and friends.

My last ten years in employment, before I decided to retire early, was spent working for a large US defence corporation, and it may be no surprise to you if I said that I picked up one or two American phrases along the way. One that can sound particularly disgusting is to "drink your own bathwater", which if I can loosely translate means believing your own PR, feeling smug when praise is lavished, and thinking that everything in the garden is rosy! So, with that phrase well in mind, I'd like to look back over the last year.

I think that collectively, some very good advances have been made with regard to our aim to improve the understanding and knowledge of the Great War in relation to the Channel Islands. The cornerstone of this has been the website, which has attracted praise from its visitors both focused on a particular CI aspect or just from looking at what we've done. The journal flourishes thanks to the many contributors, and some of the articles are arousing interest, even to Jersey's Lieutenant-Governor being aware of some actions in hand resulting from our research efforts. Along with this, there has been a widespread recognition that we can contribute in the actions of others.

The foremost example has been the Guernsey Museum Service's first-class exhibition on the Battle of Cambrai and Guernsey's part in it. It is obvious in an exhibition such as this that the Museum would "lead" the effort, but they have enjoyed the excellent support of a number of Group members and the addition of a terminal whereby our website can be accessed has proved a benefit to both parties, where new data and contacts have emerged from Guernsey's "woodwork". While the exhibition only runs to the end of December, it is hoped that it can be subsumed into the Militia Museum which should be reopening in 2008. The complementary book is also excellent, aimed at 13-14 year olds as a general starter on Guernsey and the Great War, and, again, there are references to the website. The re-enactment group have also made a considerable impression with their accuracy in turn-out and the enthusiasm that they show.

At the schools level, it was pleasing to note that Elizabeth College staged RC Sherriff's "Journey's End" with it being a sell-out. Meanwhile the Guernsey Ladies' College were successful in winning a competition organised by the Imperial War Museum that took a party to Canada and Belgium to further their GW research and knowledge.

Efforts in adding Guernsey material to the website has obviously been the priority this year with the exhibition in mind. Unfortunately, in comparative terms much less has been applied to Jersey, and it is a great shame that that Jersey's Museums have no plans for an equivalent display before 2014! However, I understand that Victoria College will be undertaking a number of events in 2008, in connection with their Victoria Cross winners and hopefully there will be more detail on this in the next Journal. It may be that they will also be staging "Journey's End" next year.

While it has been low key, we appear to have enjoyed a good press from the Jersey Evening Post, with an article on the Unknown Jerseyman, and another article that was subscribed on the Cambrai exhibition. Furthermore, one member appeared in the JEP's regular "Private Passions" feature. I even wound up talking on BBC Guernsey, but I cannot see radio as providing me with a future career! With publicity, there has been a steady trickle of material, and hopefully it has been or will be effectively presented in either the Journal or the website. Questions have also arisen, which if we haven't been sufficiently able to answer ourselves, we hopefully have pointed the enquirer in the right direction.

Along with more general interest, I am glad to say that we have steadily welcomed new members this year. But, with this growth, I am becoming of the opinion that we have look at different ways how we can relate to each other more fully. I think that two methods might help:

- A discussion forum on the website. We had looked at this some time ago, but were concerned at the effort in moderating comments that might be posted. Perhaps there needs to be another look. It would help those who are at a distance from the CI to stay in touch.
- Occasional meetings/coffee mornings. Membership within the CI has grown, and it maybe that members could get together for a chat and exchange or discuss information over a coffee on a Saturday or Sunday every couple of months at somewhere like the café in the Candie Museum or the Pier Road equivalent in Jersey. This has been suggested previously.

With regards to the second point, can somebody in Guernsey and Jersey look to take the "lead" in organising a few gatherings as a test?

Looking ahead, it almost goes without saying that 2008 sees the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Armistice. Hopefully, there will be a measure of additional commemoration beyond the Remembrance Sunday services, though I confess that I currently see little intent of it in Jersey particularly (but discounting Victoria College as mentioned earlier).

One idea that my local WFA Branch has come up with is to launch an "Armistice Prize" starting in 2008 and continuing thereafter in future years. Working in conjunction with the local press and the education authorities, prizes would be awarded for young peoples' efforts in producing a piece of work on the Great War. With regards to the Branch, no details have yet been established with regards to the value and number of prizes, age groups, size of the work in terms of word count and so on, as it is work in progress. The idea is sound and there can be a direct read-across with commercial sponsorship as a possible way forward? In many ways it would be easier because of the better defined boundaries.

Perhaps another "leadership" task for someone in Guernsey and Jersey?

Anyway, with those thoughts I'll leave you to get on with the rest of the Journal which is, again, quite a large one with the many contributions most appreciated as ever. Meanwhile I am heading off to see that I haven't emptied the bath!

## This Issue's Cover

No real surprise, a photographic pot-pourri from the Cambrai exhibition at the beginning of November, consisting of a number of the displays, and members in various discussions and at the Cobo Hotel dinner on the Saturday evening.

## Postscripts

This is a brief section to tie up some loose ends from earlier Journals and to add further material in support if appropriate.

### An Unknown Soldier of the Royal Jersey Militia (Journal 15, August 2007)

And then there were two! Following an early exchange of E-Mails with newcomers Mike and Rosemarie Thomas (see Membership News – which I've moved to the rear of this Journal incidentally), they brought to my attention the fact that another grave containing the remains of an unknown Jersey soldier can be found in grave A.8 at the Bazentin Le Petit Communal Cemetery Extension. Further information was sought from the CWGC who have just confirmed that the man was a member of the Contingent, and the trench map reference provided also placed him to the east of Guillemont and as a patrol member. Therefore, as with the first discovery, "BLP Man" as I refer to him is also one of the following:

- Sergeant Reginald Du Heaume
- Corporal Harold Carver
- Rifleman Jean Baptiste Blanchet

The task of establishing who "CG Man" might be continues. Towards that end, Ian Ronayne met up with a daughter of Corporal Harold Carver, but regrettably there was little information that would be of use in the search. Alasdair Crosby very kindly wrote an article regarding our efforts in the JEP the week preceding Remembrance Sunday. It is a long shot and it will be many months before we can dare hope for success, with many Islanders spread far and wide. I've written to a number of Irish newspapers, but the inclusion of a comparable article to that of the JEP seems to be a non-starter.

CERTIFIED COPY OF ENTRY OF DEATH  
Application Number F8001134257X  
Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Special Provisions) Act 1957

Name	Sex	Date of Birth	Age	Place of Birth	Date of Death	Place of Death	Cause of Death
BLANCHET Jean B	M	21	Jersey	9-9-1916	France	Missing Presumed Dead	

For this entry in the index of Jean B. Blanchet

CERTIFIED to be a true copy, with amendments if any entry in a Service Department Register.  
Given at the General Register Office, under the seal of the said Office, the 14th day of December 2007.

Jean Blanchet's Death Certificate

On the plus side, I recently discovered how to obtain death certificates for GW men and early in December received one for Rifleman Jean Blanchet from the Office for National Statistics in Southport. Along with data and photograph evidence from Ian and Paul Ronayne, an approach has been made to the CWGC to commemorate Jean in their Debt of Honour, and on the Thiepval Memorial also. This will, I hope, get a positive answer soon.

It may be that there are more such headstones both on the Somme and in the Ypres Salient where another sixteen and nine men from the Contingent respectively have no known graves. With the way that the CWGC data is structured, their location will require either a further chance discovery or a grave by grave search in likely cemeteries! However, what is a likely cemetery?

As back up to this, I've attached the list of names of the Jerseymen who died at Guillemont and Ginchy, plus a map of where the casualties probably occurred, and where the remains of BLP Man, CG Man and John Vibert were found.

### A Case of Mistaken Identity By Liz Walton

The Guernsey Weekly Press of 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1916 contained an article entitled *Brothers "Under Two Flags."* featuring the "three gallant sons" of M and Mme Blaise of La Ramée, St Peter Port, Guernsey. The first of these was Soldat Jean Blaise of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of French Chasseurs, who had been awarded the Croix de Guerre for saving the lives of two Zouaves under fire. In the photograph accompanying the article he is shown shaking hands with Private Frank Blaise who was at that time serving with the Royal Guernsey Militia. 98 LCpl Blaise (listed as Blaize by Parks) served with the RGLI until he was invalided to England because of illness on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1918. He then returned to France as one of fifty-one Other Ranks with Reinforcement 15 on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1918, eventually coming back to Guernsey on the *Lydia* in 1919.



The third brother in the left hand photograph is Emile, who served with the 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Ammunition Column. His attestation papers<sup>1</sup> show that 89317 Gunner Emile Blaise enlisted on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1915, and entered the Guernsey Artillery Contingent, 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Ammunition Column, having previously been in the Royal Guernsey Artillery and Engineers. He left for the front with the first contingent in 1916, and his age is given as 24 years 1 month. He was promoted to Bombardier at some stage in 1916 but the papers are damaged here. He came home on furlough in March 1918, but went back to France the following month and stayed there for another year. He then came back to Woolwich, and the last entry on his record is for 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1920. Commonwealth War Graves Commission records show that 89317 Gunner Emile Blaise of the Royal Field Artillery (of which the 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Ammunition Column was a section) son of Ives Blaise of La Ramée, Guernsey, died on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1920. His grave is said to be one of four First World War graves at Le Foulon Cemetery in St Peter Port

The only Blaise listed in Parks<sup>2</sup> as serving with the 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Ammunition Column is 89317 A/Bdr Y Blaise (i.e. the same number as is given for Emile, above, but a different initial). To further confuse the issue, British Army pension records<sup>3</sup> for the period contain no mention of Emile Blaise, but list 219902 Gunner Yves Blaise, who served with the Royal Garrison Artillery and not the RFA. According to these documents, Yves Blaise enlisted on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1919, aged 18 years and 6 months, which means that when the photograph of the other Blaise brothers was



taken in 1916 he would only have been 15 years of age so not old enough to be in uniform. Records show that Yves served for only 136 days, and was based mainly at Fort Wellington in Fareham before he was discharged as no longer physically fit on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1920. He was sent home from the Military Hospital at Devonport 11 days later. The diagnosis was tuberculosis of the lung contracted whilst on service in England, and sanatorium treatment was recommended. These records are over stamped "Deceased", though no date of death is given.

A visit to the Foulon cemetery revealed a family headstone, bearing the following inscription:

*In Loving Memory of Yves Blaise, late Gunner, 2<sup>nd</sup> (Heavy) Battery*

<sup>1</sup> War Office: Soldiers' Documents, *First World War 'Burnt Documents' (Microfilm Copies)*; (The National Archives Microfilm Publication WO363); Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England.

<sup>2</sup> Parks, E. (1992), *Diex Aix – God Help Us, The Guernseymen who marched away 1914 – 1918*, Guernsey Museum Monograph No. 4, Guernsey Museums and Galleries.

<sup>3</sup> Soldiers' Documents from Pension Claims, WO 364, PIN 26/1522, The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England.

*RGA, died 2 July 1920<sup>4</sup> aged 18 years and 6 months.* (the age he gave at attestation 9 months earlier). The same headstone records the burials of *Yves François Blaise, father of the above* who died in January 1926 and *Gilomie M Lanvion, widow of the above*, who died in 1944, but there is no mention of Emile.

The 1901 Channel Islands census was then checked in an attempt to clarify matters. It lists the Blaise family as consisting of Yves F Blaise, age 41, a French citizen, of Park Street, St Peter Port, his wife, Gillomie, age 40, also a French citizen, plus their children Emile, aged 12 years, Jean aged 7 years, Louise, aged 6 years and François aged 2 months. All of the children were born in St Helier, Jersey. There is no mention of Yves, because he would not have been born until after this census if the age on his headstone is correct. However if the age at attestation is correct he should also be there as a small baby, approximately the same age as François. The ages of the other three brothers would appear to match with the men in the Press photograph, with Emile being the more mature (approximately aged 28 years) while Frank (Francois) appears much younger. If Frank was 2 months old at census time in 1901 he would only have been 15 or 16 years old when the *Weekly Press* photo was taken so he either enlisted under age or there is an error in the census.

Mr John Blaise, a descendant of Emile was then consulted and he stated that it was Yves who had died of tuberculosis during the war period, whilst Emile had also died of the same disease but not until 1926. A visit to the Greffe confirmed this but also showed more discrepancies. Yves Blaise, age 18, as stated on his headstone, not 19 years and 10 months as his pension records indicate, son of Yves F and Gillon died of tuberculosis at home at La Ramée, St Peter Port on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1920, not on 2<sup>nd</sup> July as is stated on his headstone and in Parks.

2<sup>nd</sup> July is the date of death given for Emile by the CWGC. However according to the official records Emile Blaise, age 36, son of Yves François and Gillon died of tuberculosis on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1926 at Jubilee Cottage, Capelles, St Sampson, well outside the CWGC's period of commemoration. He is buried at St Sampson's but I have not yet traced his headstone. It is possible that his was one of the graves that fell into Longue Hougue Quarry in the 1960s. Incidentally, François also died of tuberculosis, in 1928.

The next step was to inform the Commonwealth War Graves Commission that they appeared to have commemorated the wrong brother. After some correspondence which involved sending them the documentary evidence on which this article is based, they agreed that they should in fact be listing Yves but they also wanted to check whether Emile should be on their lists as well. Details of both death certificates have now been sent to them as final proof. The sad fact is that Emile actually served at the front through most of the war, while Yves only served for 8 months at home, and was ill for most of that period but his name will now be on the list of Commonwealth War Graves whilst Emile's will be removed.

**Editor's Note:** It seems as if Emile, Jean and Francois can also be added to the Jersey Roll of Service because of their birth place. I have found Jean (John) on a passenger listing on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, presumably going on/coming off leave.

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<sup>4</sup> Note that the date given by the CWGC is 20 July 1920.

## TIMES TRAVELLING

It originally started out as an attempt to see whether the Casualty Lists in the Times of 1916 and 1917 could shed light on Jean Blanchet's lack of mention in CWGC and SDGW records since the CWGC did not consider him as 'dead' and evidence was needed to change the CWGC's stance! However, as in many other areas of research I seem to go off at odd tangents, and in this case, the Casualty Lists themselves became items of research interest.

Starting on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1916, the first day, following the known dates of first Jersey Contingent casualties resulting from the battles at Guillemont and Ginchy, it became immediately obvious that for readers the almost daily announcement of lists of yet another 200-300 Officers and 4000-5000 Other Ranks had become casualties must have been awesome. Clearly this was in the aftermath of the early days of the Somme, but would continue, undoubtedly making harrowing reading at the breakfast table for many. Of course, the Lists did not just contain those who had been killed and for the readers of the day they were very much structured in that there appeared to be a dozen categories of casualty as shown below.

Killed	Wounded	Missing believed Killed
Died of Wounds	Wounded – Shell Shock	Missing believed Drowned
Accidentally Killed		Missing believed Died
Drowned		Missing believed Wounded
Died		Missing

The military authorities added a further element of structure in that the regiments and corps were listed in the Army's order of seniority, a very helpful device to someone like me who knew that for the Royal Irish Rifles, they came after the Manchester Regiment and before the London Regiment. Incidentally, the Overseas Contingents such as the Australians or Canadians were listed separately, as were the Royal Navy and its Reserve.

With the scale of numbers being dealt with, it would be unsurprising to read that it was necessary to issue Corrections, however, the figures were probably less than 0.5% of a particular day's total, a remarkable testimony to the considerable efforts of the administrators in what was a thankless task. Of course updates would be necessary, and a man reported Wounded, might later have to be reported as Died of Wounds.

Prisoners of War would be listed separately, and a man reported Missing, would now be reported as Previously Missing, held captive by the Germans. To my knowledge, there does not appear, anywhere, to be a complete list of men taken Prisoner by Germans or the Turks, and the Times would seem to be a valuable asset in deriving one (and no, I'm not doing that!).

Looking specifically at the Jersey Contingent casualties at Guillemont and Ginchy, the time taken to notify families was surprisingly quick and, with some exceptions, probably well within a week of the death as evidenced by the date that the Evening Post made reference. Clearly, the Times' List could not pre-date a local newspaper's information and could not carry the man's fate before the Next of Kin was informed. Of the list of names, excepting Arthur Male, Walter Martin and John Vibert (in his case I may inadvertently be using his brother James's date from the EP), on average

the EP carried the news of a man's fate within a fortnight while the Times averaged seven weeks, with those reported DOW or Missing having longer times in being processed.

There may have also been insufficient information and confusion particularly at the Battalion level, since it was withdrawn from the Somme area on 10<sup>th</sup> September and may not have been able to immediately establish that individuals had been killed, a situation that might have applied to Male and Martin. No unit would intentionally delay casualty reports up the chain of command, yet they would ensure accuracy first of all to avoid distressing relatives unduly.

Meanwhile for Jean Blanchet, the object of my exercise, I have reached the end of May 1917 at the present time, and for him along with John Vibert, Reginald Du Heume and George Pearce, the loop remains open in the Times.

If members get the opportunity, they should seek out the Times of those days on microfiche or whatever. They contain a considerable wealth of information as to the conduct of the Great War, and enable us to research individuals whose names appeared on those Casualty Lists. Reading the Lists one cannot help but acknowledge the immense effort that went in to them in trying to ensure accuracy.

**Trench Art**  
**Peter Tabb looks at unusual by-products of the Western Front**



YOU might think that the two objects shown above are something of an eclectic mix – a cigarette lighter and a brass-bound hymn book. In fact the hymn book is actually a cigarette case holding six Wild Woodbines (it is engraved on the back AE Coleman 224 By RGA<sup>5</sup>) but what both also have in common is that they are 'trench art',

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<sup>5</sup> 224 Heavy Battery, 62<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, Royal Garrison Artillery, posted to the Western Front in 1914

artefacts wrought by the men who occupied the trenches and rear areas of the Western and other fronts.

Look on E-Bay and you will find dozens of examples of this most evocative culture, ranging from the almost ubiquitous cigarette lighter made from a redundant .303 cartridge case (see above) to ornaments made elaborately engraved howitzer shell cases and paper knives and cigarette cases from sheet brass hammered out from redundant shell cases.

What is more, creating trench art was a craft practised by both sides.

Wittingly or otherwise the horror, sound and fury of trench warfare led to the creation of many artefacts of great beauty, in particular shell cases engraved with bucolic country scenes by artists of considerable merit. Even helmets were painted in representations not dissimilar to canal boat art.

Trench art was not confined to metal. Bits of wood, chunks of chalk, bones, pieces of cloth, dried leaves and even Army-issue biscuits were all recruited as the canvases upon which fighting men expressed their artistic skills.

Nicholas Saunders, an acknowledged expert on Great War material culture, defines trench art as 'any item made by soldiers, prisoners of war and civilians, from war materiel, or any other material, as long as the object and its maker are associated in time and/or in space with armed conflict or its consequences'. While that's a bit of a mouthful, I have yet to find a more comprehensive definition. In fact trench art was recycling in one of its earliest manifestations since redundant war materiel such as shell cases, bullets, bits of shrapnel, grenades, ship and aircraft parts provided the raw material. These were crafted into the aforementioned cigarette lighters, pens, matchbox covers, letter openers, crucifixes, ashtrays, cigarette cases, inkwells and writing sets. Very often these items were created with a view to them being sold or exchanged. They also made evocative gifts for the folks at home.

Probably the most common piece of military materiel to find itself transformed into a work of art was the empty shell case.

The Great War was the first conflict in which artillery was deployed as *the* major weapon of war. Strategic artillery barrages had been used in the American Civil War against entrenched opponents but the nature of that war, where armies were constantly on the move, meant that barrages were part and parcel of the cut and thrust of battles fought out by moving bodies of infantrymen. In the Great War, after the initial German advances, the war stagnated into almost immovable fighting fronts. For the British and French Armies trenches were temporary structures while the generals worked out strategies intended to do rather more than achieve Capt Edmund Blackadder's somewhat cynical 'moving General Haig's cocktail cabinet ten feet nearer to Berlin'. For the Germans, trenches were deep, permanent structures supported by concrete redoubts and bunkers behind by miles of barbed wire. They were created to avoid the French and British Armies throwing the Germans back to their own borders. It was to flatten that barbed wire that both the artillery barrage and ultimately the tank were devised. The static barrage whereby up to a million tons of high explosive rained down on a single location for a few hours or even a few days was designed to vaporise barbed wire, destroy trenches and redoubts and slaughter the enemy. The most sustained barrage was that which was a prelude to the Battle of

the Somme and lasted the week leading up to 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1916. However, with the bulk of the German defenders in bunkers often ten or more metres underground, injuries were few (apart from to the ear drums) and while the barbed wire was indeed pounded, flattened and fragmented, so was the ground across which the infantry (and in that battle, the first tanks) were expected to advance. The Germans emerged from their bunkers and engaged their Maxim guns while the troops and the tanks were ploughing towards them through the churned up mire...

Notwithstanding, these barrages created thousands of empty shell cases and while the Army itself was keen to recycle them (brass was not a cheap metal and the cases could always be used again) there was more than enough to go round to be turned into artworks. Many shell cases, especially the ubiquitous 18-pounder, were turned into decorative vases. One British soldier obtained a paper template from a Belgian artist in exchange for cigarettes and using a bent nail transferred art nouveau designs featuring female figures (what a surprise!) and flowers, inscribing his work with 'Souvenir of Ypres'.

Most trench art had a purpose – the lighters worked, so did the pens and the inkwells. Soldiers at the front would make the items for use; prisoners-of-war would use the items to exchange for extra foodstuffs and a refugee to make money.



**The contents behind the cover of Hymns A & M  
– six Woodbines**

However, many soldiers, particularly the French, wrought the debris of war into religious artefacts, items to invoke divine protection or call down good fortune. Thus crucifixes, rosaries and even the images of patron saints were forged from the scrap all around. A particularly bizarre example is a crucifix made by a British soldier from the bullet that maimed him as he went over the top at Messines in June 1917. Vincent Sabini of the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion, London Regiment was hit in the leg and, while recuperating, fashioned the removed bullet into a crucifix which he wore around his neck until his death, aged 90, in 1981.

Making trench art was not without its dangers. Three Belgian soldiers were killed attempting to open a shell fuse for the aluminium content. Sadly the fuse was still live, it exploded and all three died of their injuries.

Creating trench art was regarded as valuable therapy for wounded soldiers. Depending on the extent of their injuries, the wounded used scraps of wood to make picture frames and boxes as well as creating embroideries and textiles. With the sentimentality of the age, many wounded soldiers laboured over embroidering heart-shaped cushions.

Trench art became collectable even before the Great War ended and even after the conflict ended such artefacts continued to be made although mostly by civilians. It's often not too difficult to identify post-Great War items since most identify themselves as 'a souvenir of the Great War 1914-1918', and few of the participants, as they huddled behind the lines working away with their bayonets and bent nails, were aware when the Great War would end. These items are not necessarily fakes since huge quantities of junk were left lying around when the guns finally fell silent but these later items do not have the provenance of being created by men who might not see the next dawn.



**Editor's Note:** A further sample of trench art from Max Harrison to amplify Peter's article. The base of the shell is stamped Mai 1917 while the man's initials PB can be seen in the eight point star in more detailed photographs Max has sent.

**A Visit To Verdun**  
**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2007**  
**By Ned Malet De Carteret**

I have long wanted to visit the battlefields of Verdun, having part read many times over during the past 10 years or so, “The Price of Glory” by Alistair Horne, still perhaps the seminal book regarding the battle.

I arrived in Frankfurt at 14.25 pm on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September and was picked up by my sister Liz, to go on her second ever WW1 battlefield tour and our first time in Verdun. Despite our powerful black Mercedes, there was a lot of road works on the motorways to France and it took us a good five hours to reach Verdun, and we finally arrived at 19.15 pm at “Le Coq Hardi” on the “London” pedestrian esplanade in the town. After a quick wash and brush up we ventured round the corner to the “Estaminet” the only “happening” place in town to sample some of Alain’s home brew (very good) and an early-ish supper at the Table D’Alsace next door to our hotel where we had a good meal – the owners are very welcoming (36 years hard at it!)

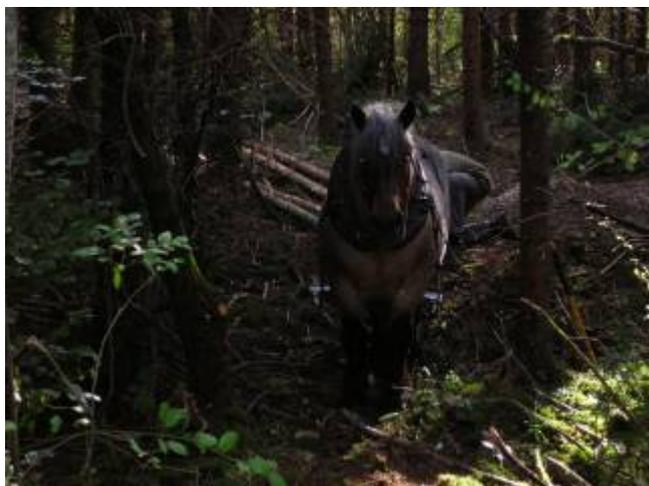
We were en route for the Memorial de Verdun fairly early, it was a fine morning. The Museum is impressive and there is some excellent archive film footage. Several coaches of children arrived and so we fairly smartly left for the Ossuaire, which is the architecturally stunning memorial for the French fallen. A new monument at the end of the road commemorates the Muslim dead.



**Liz posing at L'Ossuaire de Verdun**

We then followed Tour 1 in Christina Holstein’s book – Fort Douaumont (Battleground Europe – the bibles for battlefield pilgrims!) So on walking down the Monument road we took the road to the ruined village of Douaumont, one of twelve

ruined villages around the battlefield. On the way there we passed a lorry on which side said “herbergement animaux” and, hey presto, we saw in the forest, “Scooby Doo”, standing very quietly, next to two forest workers culling the trees with chain saws. We were amazed and we watched him pulling the felled trees onto the road – the terrain is so shell holed that this is the only way to clear the forest.



**Scooby Doo – 6 years hard at it!**

The ruined village of Douaumont is a very quiet place. Where each of the houses stood are small plaques in the ground telling who lived in each one of them. There is hardly a stone standing, it is very sombre and not a little eerie, the atmosphere is certainly moody. A new chapel stands on the site of the old one, machine guns from which caused many German casualties on their first attack on Fort Douaumont on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 1916.

The path then takes you up the glacis field to the Northwestern corner of Fort Douaumont. It is fairly steep and the forest is full of shell holes containing stagnant water. You arrive at the car park. Crossing this we found the signpost and path to the memorial to the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 74<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. This is an important post that was captured on 26<sup>th</sup> February. It served as a Command Post, dressing station and observation post. Commandant Lefebvre-Dibon tried re-taking it on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> May – he lost 72% of his battalion in the action.



**Liz at the battery entrance which goes down right into the Fort.**

Continuing into the forest you come to Abris des Infanterie DV1, DV2, Etang des Vaux. DV1 housed half a company.

On the road back to the Ossuaire you come across 2 new places where new graves have been found before coming to the “Boyau de Londres” communication trench on the left of the road. There are 2 more damaged combat shelters on the right hand side of the road. You then arrive back at the Ossuaire, there is a little more to do, which we didn’t – the total time of our tour was about 2 hours – it says 3 in the book.



**Liz at DV1.**



**Ned repelling all attackers! (With guide book in hand!)**

It was midday and thinking of a picnic spot and what to do after lunch we plumped for Bras-sur-Meuse. En route we stopped at the Ouvrage de Froidterre (a well fortified ridge). It is quite a steep decent from the dizzy heights of the Douaumont plateau to the river valley. We lunched by the river, where we duly demolished our sandwiches and regarded the Friesian cows. Bras-sur-Meuse is quite an attractive little village.

We then proceeded to the left bank of the battlefield and the Mort-Homme and Cote 304, the furthest point of the German advance on the left bank. It is somewhat difficult to grasp the perspective of it. We then visited Montfaucon, the magnificent American memorial and finally the immaculately kept American Meuse-Argonne

Cemetery to the west of Cunel. This is at the North westernmost point of the battlefield.



**The extremely impressive Montfaucon monument, with very ancient ruined chapel behind (8<sup>th</sup> Century)**

It is slightly annoying that the main road runs straight past the cemetery. That was the end of our first day. It was a great deal to try to take in and to picture in one's mind the actions involved. We had an excellent meal at the hotel that night, not in the splendid main restaurant but in the bar/breakfast room – a small armagnac was had! Then we were “Estamineted” falling into evil ways until 3 am! I'm told it sometimes happens on battlefield tours!

We were slightly late up on Friday morning, but clear headed! It was another beautiful day and there were very few pilgrims around for our tour of Fort Douaumont. The lady at the ticket counter asked if we needed a guide, but I just held up my guide book and she smiled, saying that Christina Holstein was charming! It certainly is an impressive fort.



**The beautiful American Meuse-Argonne Cemetery**

Very wet and claustrophobic inside, I would not like to have been stationed there. With the Germans having captured the basically undefended Fort very early on, the French then spent the rest of the battle trying to recapture it - losing some 100,000 men in the effort. On the 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1916, a catastrophic explosion occurred. 679 Germans were killed and a further 1,800 injured. The majority of the dead lie entombed in the fort.

The outside – top – of the Fort is vast. You get a good impression of the importance of the topography. Christina in her guide suggests 2 hours inside and out – we had “done” our bit in 1 and a half hours.

We then drove to the Bois de Caures, where the Germans launched their first attack of the battle and we visited the Command Post of Col Emile Driant and saw the place where he fell. This wood has its own special feel too.



**The view from the Northwest corner of Fort Douaumont.**



**Colonel Driant's Command Post**

We had plenty of time left, a whole afternoon, what were we going to do next. Liz said naturally she wanted to see some German Cemeteries. So we embarked on Tour 4 of Christina's book - a general tour of the area.

We drove all through the German positions and visited many cemeteries, there are I believe 23 in total. We lunched at an excellent café (one of the few open) We visited the excellent site of "Long Max" – the German 380mm Naval Gun, which fired the first shot in the battle of Verdun which hit the Bishop's Palace instead of a bridge over the Meuse.



**A peaceful German Cemetery on D66 near les Rosies, before Romagne sous les Cotes**



**The Gun position of Long Max in the background – near Pillon**

Returning back towards Verdun on the right edge of the battlefield we stopped at the ruined village of Damloup devant Douaumont. This is a very interesting ruined village with lots of artefacts tastefully arranged next to each of the houses. It is a particularly moving place.

This ended our touring on Friday. Again, a great deal to absorb.

On checking out on Saturday morning I "clocked" a menu in an alcove for a Dinner in honour of General de Gaulle in 1961 (my birth year). I asked the madame on reception if she had been in the town. She told me that the town had closed for the day because of security and most of the townsfolk had departed! I wonder if that was the first time that the General had returned to the battlefields. As an infantry Captain

he was reported dead in an action on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 1916! He spent the rest of the war in Germany as a prisoner of war.

Our route back to Germany involved heading south on the Voie Sacrée via Souilly which was General Petain's headquarters on the road to Bar Le Duc.



**Part of Damloup devant Douaumont.**



**Petain's HQ in the Marie of Souilly.**



**Liz at the first Memorial stone on the Voie Sacrée from Verdun to Bar-Le-Duc, there is one every kilometre.**



**Part of "Soif" Trench near St Mihiel – it saw bitter fighting in 1915 with horrific French losses.**

Continuing our way, I spotted St.Mihiel on the map, and I knew that there had been much fighting here in 1918. I also knew that my good WFA friend from Omaha, Nebraska, Jim Taylor's father had fought here with the Americans. Jim having himself fought at Okinawa in WW2, as a very young US marine.

The countryside and villages here are extremely attractive, deceptive with all the battlefield positions all around. Our last visit was to the German Cemetery of St Mihiel – very quiet, but not forgotten.

Verdun certainly doesn't disappoint, however, I have no connection with the participants there and therefore naturally my heart and interest leads me to the battlefields of the Somme and Ypres. Having said this, I have naturally said many prayers to soldiers of both sides who fell in the carnage of the battle. The city where the German chief of staff General Falkenhayn said he wanted to "bleed the French dry". He almost succeeded.

As an aside, whilst in Germany I visited Annweiler, where Richard The Lionheart was imprisoned for a year by Barbarossa in 1191 – my ancestor Philippe de Carteret fought alongside Richard at the taking of Acre in the Holy Land on the Third Crusade the year previously.



The Fort at Douaumont could take a leaf out of that of Bitche in France (20 minutes across the border from Liz's home in Dahn), one of two Vauban forts which failed to fall to the Germans in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. Its story is told in superbly re-enacted detail on film in each of the rooms in this massive fort. It is the finest audio visual that I have seen in any fortification on my travels.

**Editor's Note:** While Ned's article makes no claim to any personal link that he has with the men who fought at Verdun, it may yet serve to remind us that for many families in the Islands, Verdun, Chemin des Dames and the many other French battles were a source of concern for their menfolk who were serving as *poilus*.

### **St Peter's Parish Memorial by Paul Ronayne**

The St Peter's Parish Memorial commemorating the dead from the two World Wars is located in St Peter's Church. The church itself is located in the heart of the village with the Parish Hall and Parish School just a stone's throw away. As you enter the church, the memorial is to be found on the right hand side, and to the front of the church where the altar stands. It takes the form of a marble plaque, white with a black background. It's fixed to a granite pillar with the pulpit just to the right of it. There are 38 names of men who died during the Great War and a further 8 names of men killed during the Second World War. The plaque containing the Second World War names was obviously added onto the bottom of the main plaque, as a join is visible. The inscription reads:

In Grateful Memory of Those From This Parish Who Gave Their  
Lives for King and Country in The War of 1914-1918

“Their Glory Shall Not Be Blotted Out”. Ecclus.XLIV.13.



The following men are remembered on the memorial.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1917 whilst taking part in the Battle of Third Ypres, Robert Charles Courcoux was killed by a shell. He was a drummer serving with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment. Robert was the son of George and Mary Ann Courcoux and husband of Angelina (nee Beuchet). They lived at 13 Green Street, St Helier, and then later at 9 Francis Street, St. Helier, and was reported as been 27 when he died. The JEP give his rank as a Sergeant-Drummer and also strangely records his wife's name as Rose. He is buried at Tyne Cot Cemetery in Belgium.

Sydney William Ecobichon was a well know farmer during the War, and he had remained exempt from service until 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1918, after which he joined the Royal Jersey Garrison Battalion as a Private. His time in the Battalion was to be a short one with Sydney succumbing to disease not two months after he had joined on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1918, a sad case of Jersey man dying during the war without ever leaving his Island home. Sydney was 30 at the time of his death and it is recorded that he was the husband of Lilla Marie Amy, of Chandos Granty, St. Ouen. He is buried in St Ouen's Churchyard against the south boundary.

Another Jersey man to die during the Battle of Third Ypres was John Cantell Falle. He was killed on the first day that he entered the trenches, having only been in France for a short time. John was the eldest son of John and Susan Falle of Victoria Farm, Coin Varin, St Peter, and was just 25 when he was killed on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1917 whilst serving with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Hampshire Regiment. John became one of

thousands of men listed as missing in that battle and therefore is now remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing in Belgium.

George Moignard is buried in the Dar-Es-Salaam War Cemetery situated in the Africa country of Tanzania. He was the son of John and Sarah Moignard (nee Shackell), of St. Peter, and was married to Clara (nee Le Rossignol), of Sandy Brook, Beaumont, St. Peter. George was a driver with the Army Service Corps MT Spare Parts Depot and died of dysentery on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 1917 at the age of 36.



On leaving the church I noticed a memorial to two brothers who had died in the War. I thought I would include it in this article. We can only imagine the pain and sense of loss suffered by their family, and I find it is personal memorials like this one that really hammers home the affects on so many families of the death of loved ones during the Great War. The first brother to die was Lieutenant John Le Seelleur, Royal Marines who died on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1916 during the Battle of Jutland. He was 27 when he died whilst serving on HMS Invincible. The second brother was one Sub Lieutenant Gordon Le Seelleur serving with the Royal Naval Division. He was killed in action on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 in France at the young age of 22. The inscription below their names reads:

Beloved Sons of Capt JM Le Seelleur  
Haute Place, St Peter's, Jersey

"Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace, Whose Mind is Stayed  
On Thee Because He Trusted in Thee."

Deeply Mourned by Their Sorrowing Father,  
Mother, Brother and Sister.

It is a simple yet powerful memorial to two young men who found themselves caught up in the most terrible of conflicts, alas like so many others. The brothers are also remembered on the main parish memorial in the church.

St Peter's is my home parish in the Island and I often walk through the churchyard on the way to the local Co-operative Stores or when taking my daughter to the small playground at the Community Centre around the corner and on each occasion I always give a thought to the men of my parish listed on the memorial inside the church who gave their lives so I can enjoy mine.

## **No more the lonely Sea and the Sky** **By Barrie H Bertram**

### **Introduction**

My first thoughts on putting this article together was that to use a line such as "shipping was the lifeblood for the Channel Islands during the Great War" would be regarded as blindingly obvious! So, I have not used it. Yet, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century can it be so easily forgotten, with the technological advances of the last 100 years? I can fly from Manchester to Jersey or Guernsey in 90 minutes, an E-Mail reaches my intended recipient seconds after I hit the Send button, while events in far off Basra and Baghdad are immediately visible on television. Shipping, in its broadest sense, enabled the Islands to be fed, to communicate with the world, and to ensure the movement of people and produce, often competing against what the sea might offer, whether natural or man-made. It probably contributed to a more benign society that, I suspect, many Islanders miss today with the pace of living as it is.

### **Looking Aft**

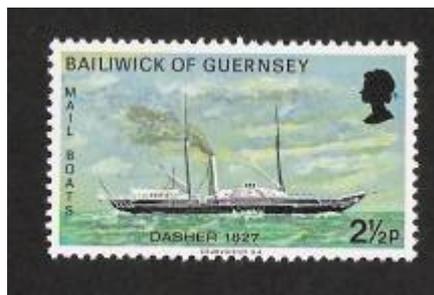
The importance of communication in the 1700s resulted from the concerns that both Bailiwick Governors had regarding contact with the authorities back in London. This was particularly so in the light of continuing difficulties with the Islands' French neighbours and, in that context, the strategically important position of the Islands. In February 1794 an official mail service was set up between Weymouth and the Islands, this being the shortest sea-route. There had been, of course, communications and trade with the English south coast long before this date, Southampton having long been the predominant exit and entry port.



The mail packets would be permitted to carry passengers but not goods, and there was confidence in crew and passenger alike that the Royal Navy would keep them safe from "Johnny Frenchman". Not so, for in October 1911 the *Earl of Chesterfield* would be taken prize by the French privateer, *L'Epervier*.

At the outset, the packets were single-mast cutter rigged vessels of some 50 or 60 feet long, and would provided sterling service for some 30 years, this sadly being marred in 1826 by the loss of the *Hinchinbrook* and the *Francis Freeling*.

However, over time sail would, in any case, give way to steam and in 1827, the first of the steam packets would commence the service and continue over the years to come with ships such as the *Ivanhoe*, the *Watersprite* and the *Dasher* offering a more reliable service than could the old sailing packets with their reliance on the prevailing winds.



The next influence on the mail packet service was the railway, and in May 1841, the completion of the London and South Western Railway (L&SWR) line between the capital and Southampton. This brought the time between both termini down to about three hours and thus eliminated the advantage of the shorter sea-route to Weymouth. For a time, it was hoped that the Great Western Railway (GWR) backed Wiltshire, Somerset and Weymouth line would be soon completed along with a Southampton and Dorchester line to restore Weymouth's advantage, but these were delayed until January 1857. Even then, the line did not extend to the harbour. The next 30 years would see rivalry develop between the operators, with the L&SWR seeking to be the sole company running the mail packet service.



Competition would look to reduce the point to point times and in 1869 for example, the GWR-connected service from London Paddington to Jersey, via Weymouth, would take about 14½ hours, while services would be twice weekly during the winter and three times weekly in the summer between 1859 and 1882. In 1883, a daily service would be introduced during June-September.

On 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1889, the GWR would start running the Weymouth service, and for this would obtain three new vessels, the *Lynx*, the *Antelope* and the *Gazelle*. There was almost an immediate effect with passenger numbers declining via Southampton and increasing via Weymouth. The point to point times were such that the Weymouth route was two hours shorter on the outward journey.



The GWR would obtain the *Ibex* the following year, while the L&SWR would introduce three new vessels of its own, the *Lydia*, the *Stella* and the *Frederica*, thereby reducing the Southampton route's time to below that via Weymouth.



Two GWR vessels, the *Roebuck* and the *Reindeer* would be ordered from Barrow-In-Furness in 1896 as the GWR sought to introduce a daylight service leaving London at 8.15 am and arriving in Jersey at 7 pm. This would, however, require changes to inter-Island services to enable cargoes to be carried from Guernsey to the mainland.

During this period, racing the mail-boats against each other came into being, although the operating companies would never admit to it at the Courts of Inquiry into a number of mishaps, some sadly tragic, as in the case of the *Stella*.

On 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1897, the *Ibex* would be beached at Portelet Bay in Jersey having gashed the hull on rocks, while trying to make St Helier's Harbour before the tide turned and having been two or three lengths ahead of the *Frederica*. Two years later, the *Stella* would strike the Casquets, having sped at 19 knots through patchy fog to make up for time lost leaving Southampton, with the result that 105 lives would be lost.



It had not been unknown for one vessel to wait off Guernsey for the other to leave St Peter Port and then both race for Jersey, with the passengers on the sides shouting across at each other and for the leading boat to trail a derisory tow-rope!

This could not continue, and in 1899 the GWR and L&SWR established a cooperative arrangement that would last until the outset of the Great War. This brought improvements in revenue sharing and ticket inter-changeability, and would also reduce racing, although the *Ibex* would again be in difficulty in January 1900 striking rocks off Guernsey before sinking with the loss of two lives. Salvaged, the *Ibex* would return to service fifteen months later.



### The Calm before the Storm

In the year prior to the Great War, the Islands would enjoy two daily sailings every day except Sunday during the summer months while there would be an alternating

night service from Weymouth and Southampton during the winter, with a Third Class return ticket from London costing thirty shillings (£1.50).

However, other ports would be served, not least those around the Bay of St Malo on the French coast and also Sark and Alderney which would see six and three departures a week respectively. A weekly service operated by the Anglo-French Shipping Company's *Devonia* would depart for Guernsey and Jersey on a Monday and then on to St Brieuc and Treguier, both returning on the same route to arrive back at Plymouth on the Friday. Separate services, using the *Victoria* and the *Princess Ena*, would also operate to Granville and St Malo two or three times a week during the summer months from Jersey when third class returns would cost 8s 4d (42p) and 9s 2d (46p) respectively, while a weekly service on Tuesdays from Guernsey to Cherbourg would go via Alderney.

Passenger growth could be described as steady rather than spectacular, and in the case of the GWR Weymouth route, numbers increased from 42,000 in 1900 to over 63,000 in 1913 (the last meaningful figures before the Great War). Economics would always be a consideration, and the L&SWR having acquired *Sarnia (I)* and *Caesarea (II)* a few years prior to the war would lay these ships up over the winters due to their high fuel consumption when passengers were fewer.

### The Clouds break

At the beginning of August 1914, shipping services would be quickly disrupted with the need to support mobilisation.



Some 2,500 French reservists would be very quickly moved to France from the Channel Islands with extra ships diverted for this task. Similarly, the peacetime British garrison would be heading off in various directions! The Devonshire Regiment history for this period informs us that of some 650+ men on strength with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 450 would leave Jersey for Le Havre on the 21<sup>st</sup> August, on board the *Reindeer*. Prior to that, 180 'under age' soldiers had returned to their regimental depot at Exeter, while two other groups had headed off, one to help form a new Battalion, the other to collect the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's war transport and take it directly to France. There were of course the British reservists that would also return to the mainland to join their units.

With war underway, there was a need for shipping to be diverted into war service and on 24<sup>th</sup> August, the services to Weymouth and Southampton prematurely became winter services again, and this would largely continue 'for the duration', and would occasionally be disrupted through the need to divert additional shipping to support the military, not least during the German Offensives in 1918. Two related difficulties would manifest themselves with regards to the Great War. There would

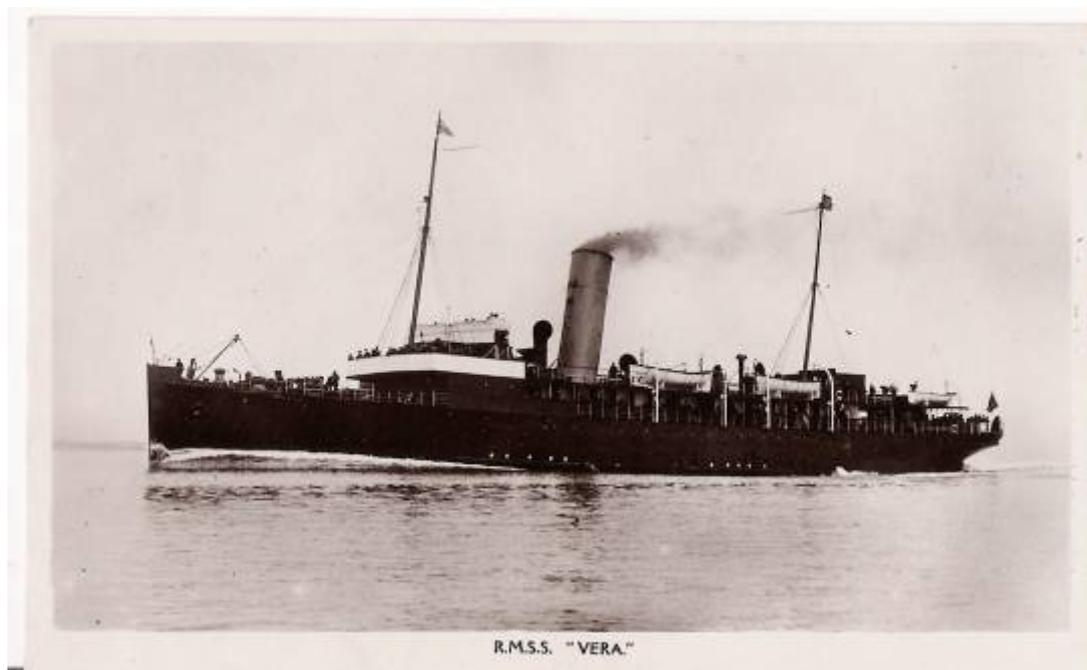
be more night-time sailings to minimise the risk of ships being visible to enemy submarines, while navigation would not be helped as coastal navigation aids and lighthouses would be extinguished at night along with any residential lighting deemed visible from the sea.



Unsurprisingly passengers dropped, sometimes to a mere handful. Travel control was established and prospective passengers would have to report to the authorities to obtain a permit to travel a few days beforehand, while the shipping companies would issue landing cards. Some of these cards have survived, and they form the basis of the Jersey Passenger Lists that the author has been researching and assembling in conjunction with the Jersey Archive. The occupation of these passengers remained quite varied with commercial travellers, potato merchants, school masters or mistresses and scholars returning home at the end of term or back to boarding school. One must conclude that the risks were considered acceptable to maintain their way of life as little inconvenienced from the War as possible.



As can be seen in the photograph above, there would be two-way movement of men in the forces whether British or French, joining or leaving, or taking leave. It is interesting to note from the photograph also that it was taken in the afternoon, signifying an overnight sailing perhaps. The vessel is the *Vera* incidentally, which is also shown below at speed.



As to many of the ships themselves, the following table briefly attempts to summarise their war-time activities:

Ship	Activity
<i>Alberta</i>	Operated L&SWR throughout the war other than a period in March 1918 when requisitioned for government service.
<i>Bertha</i>	Operated GWR cargo services Weymouth-CI between October 1914 and February 1915. Remainder of war on L&SWR cargo service to Honfleur.
<i>Brittany (II)</i>	Operated L&SWR. Further investigation required.
<i>Caesarea (II)</i>	Requisitioned October 1914 as an Armed Boarding Vessel, converted in December 1915 for troop ship duties.
<i>Douglas</i>	The former L&SWR <i>Dora</i> , it would operate the potato service between Jersey and Hull during 1915.
<i>Frederica</i>	Sold to a Turkish company in 1911, would be requisitioned by Turkish Navy as a minelayer in 1914. Sunk by mine on 22 <sup>nd</sup> November, 1914!
<i>Galtee More</i>	Operated GWR route Weymouth-CI in June 1915 when the <i>Ibex</i> was temporarily unavailable.
<i>Gazelle</i>	Requisitioned in 1914, would operate in the Mediterranean for most of the war as a minesweeper. Served as HMS <i>Gazelle</i> .
<i>Great Southern</i>	Operated GWR route Weymouth-CI in July-August 1916 when the <i>Ibex</i> was temporarily unavailable. Normally on Milford-Waterford route.

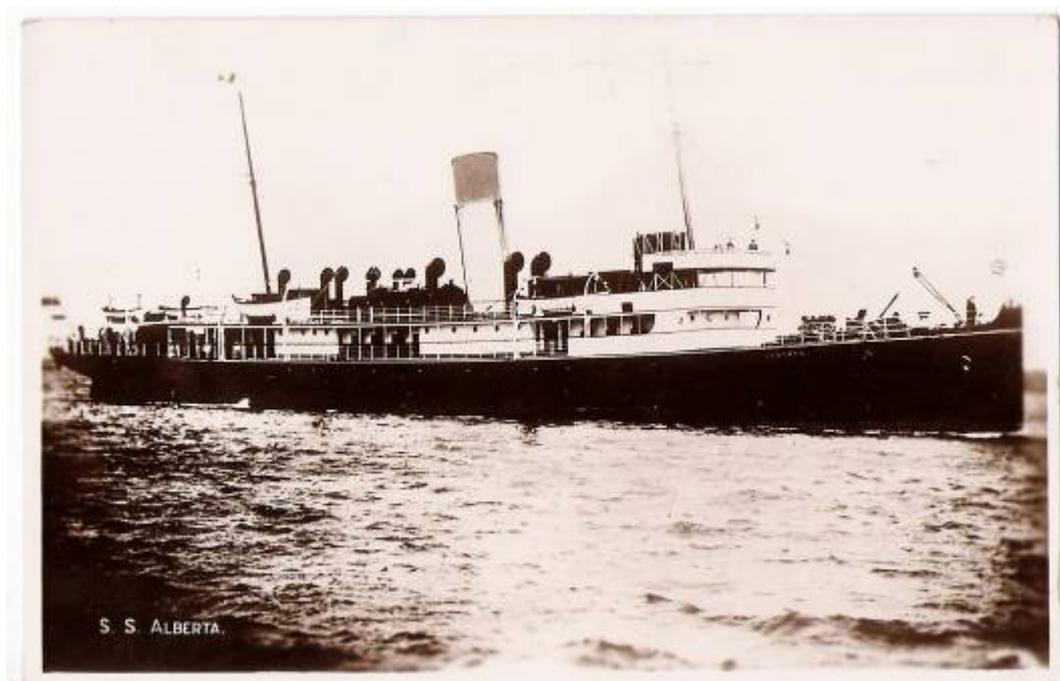
Ship	Activity
<i>Guernsey</i>	Operated L&SWR cargo services. Lost with 7 dead, having run ashore at Cap de la Hague on 9 <sup>th</sup> April 1915.
<i>Ibex</i>	Operated GWR throughout the war other than a period in spring of 1918 when requisitioned for government use on Dover-Calais service.
<i>Laura</i>	Operated L&SWR service Jersey-France service when <i>Victoria</i> was not available, and entirely so as of September 1918 until March 1919 when route closed due to losses.
<i>Lydia</i>	Operated L&SWR until March 1915, then requisitioned for government service as troop ship.
<i>Lynx</i>	Requisitioned in 1914, would operate in the Mediterranean for most of the war as a minesweeper. Renamed HMS <i>Lynn</i> .
<i>Mellifont</i>	Operated GWR route Weymouth-CI in June–July 1915 when the <i>Ibex</i> was temporarily unavailable.
<i>Normandy (II)</i>	Operated L&SWR. Further investigation required. Torpedoed off Cherbourg on 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918
<i>Pembroke</i>	Operated GWR cargo services Weymouth-CI from March 1916, and also acted as passenger ship when the <i>Ibex</i> was temporarily unavailable.
<i>Princess Ena</i>	Requisitioned April 1915 initially as a Q Ship, but converted in October 1915 for troop ship duties. Served at Dardanelles and Salonica.
<i>Reindeer</i>	Requisitioned in October 1914, would operate in the Mediterranean for most of the war as a minesweeper. Served as HMS <i>Reindeer</i> .
<i>Roebuck</i>	Requisitioned in October 1914 and converted to an armed cruiser. Sank in Scapa Flow on 13 <sup>th</sup> January 1915. Renamed HMS <i>Roedean</i> .
<i>Sarnia (I)</i>	Requisitioned November 1914 as Armed Boarding Vessel, converted December 1915 for troop ship duties. Torpedoed off Alexandria on 12 <sup>th</sup> September 1918.
<i>South Western (II)</i>	Operated L&SWR route in November 1915 and again in November 1916. Torpedoed off the Isle of Wight on 16 <sup>th</sup> March 1918.
<i>Ulrica</i>	Operated L&SWR cargo services Southampton-CI as from April 1916.
<i>Vera</i>	Operated L&SWR route throughout the war.
<i>Victoria</i>	Requisitioned November 1914 briefly as a Q Ship until January 1915 then operating L&SWR route until September 1918 when again requisitioned. Renamed HMS <i>Surf II</i> but did not enter service due to war's end.

**Note: The above Table is not meant to be exhaustive. Many other vessels would operate in Channel Island waters during the Great War to collect or deliver coal, produce etc.**

## The Menace from the Deep

Operating ships in the English Channel during the Great War could never be described as risk-free, particularly so after the Kaiser had authorised unrestricted submarine attacks on allied shipping – both military and civilian – in early 1917. On the allied side, one might question the use of Armed Merchant Cruisers and the interdiction tactics applied to neutral shipping or the use of Q Ships, but that debate can be saved for another day. In 1917, many civilian vessels would be armed, and

this was certainly true for the *Ibex* and the *Vera*. The following year paint-brushes and rollers would be brought out as dazzle paint schemes were applied to all ships.



The case for arming civilian vessels appears to be justified. In one book by K Le Scelleur (Reference 1), “during which period [*Ibex*] both missed being torpedoed and sank a German submarine”, while a further book by JH Lucking (Reference 2) gives the date of the failed torpedoing as May 1917, but expands on the sinking by stating that on the night of 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1918, her gun scored a hit on the submarine which promptly submerged, and it was recognised as having been sunk. In appreciation, the Admiralty awarded £500 for distribution among the crew. Further on, Lucking’s book refers to an article in *The Railway Magazine* of April 1922 that mentioned a brass tablet that had been fixed to the head of the saloon staircase, in part commemorating the ‘sinking’ incident. Lastly, there is anecdotal evidence from the late Mrs Blanche Corbet who would be given the shell cases by the gun crew as souvenirs, since she was a Stewardess on the *Ibex* at that time. Those shell cases are, today, in her son Francis’ possession.

Was the U-boat sunk? At first sight, there is no documented evidence, since there were no U-Boats sunk in the English Channel around the 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1918 according to [www.uboat.net](http://www.uboat.net), while no reference has been found to the £500 bounty award in the *London Gazette*. Yet, Lucking’s book that I borrowed from the local library has had the 18<sup>th</sup> April date amended to 18<sup>th</sup> March by hand! This is a date more consistent with the disappearance of the UB 54 which sailed on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1918 to patrol off Portland and which was never heard of again. Caution needs to be applied as there is also a suggestion that the wreck of UB 54 may be lying off Brighton.

Another U-boat sinking has been claimed for the *Vera* by Richard Mayne in his 1971 book, “*Mailships of the Channel Islands, 1771-1971*”. This claim is still to be investigated, so cannot be commented on at present. Perhaps a visit to the ships’ logs, wherever they may be stored, is the solution to this puzzle. Interestingly, the other menace – the mine – appears not to have (please forgive the pun) surfaced in the accounts of the time. Clearly, as Liz Walton has previously highlighted in her article on Guernsey’s Seaplane Base (see Journal 13) a number of minefields had

been discovered off the CI, evidence of the German capability with its mine-laying submarines in this aspect of naval warfare.

## **Dropping Anchor**

The Armistice came and went. Over time many of those vessels which had not been lost would return to serving the Channel Islands. But before that, much of the army and its equipment would have to be brought back from France and other theatres of war, and we are all well aware that the RGLI returned on *Lydia* in May of 1919. Ships would require to be refitted and de-militarised, after all how many mail-boats would still need to be armed?

In 1918, the GWR service had shown a drop of 60% in passengers compared to 1913, but by 1920 could show a slight increase at 67,000 compared to that last pre-War year, helped by the return of the *Reindeer*, *Lynx* and *Gazelle*. Great efforts were made to return to normality, but this was not helped by coal strikes, while fares had risen 75%, in part to running costs that had more than doubled.

By 1922, all ships, with the exception of the *Roebuck*, had been refitted and were back in service, but a new crisis loomed for the railway companies – that of bankruptcy. However, that is a different story.

## **Author's Notes**

I have found three references very useful, and the first is worth looking out for and I think that it can still be bought at the Société Jersiaise shop in Pier Road, while the second does tend towards railways "anorak-ism". The third is of more general use in its role as a 'pre-Lonely Planet' guide-book before the Great War.

1. Kevin Le Scelleur's "Channel Islands' Railway Steamers" (1985)
2. JH Lucking's "The Great Western at Weymouth" (1971)
3. CB Black's "Channel Islands and Western Normandy" (1913)

## **Two Jersey Guernseymen By Ian Ronayne**

Through a contact from the Jersey Archive and Barrie, I met up with Eric Vautier, a native Jerseyman now living in Australia. Eric was in the Island on an extended visit, and took the opportunity to try to find out more about his father's wartime experience.

From what he had learned, he was certain his father had been a member of the Jersey Contingent, serving with them in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles. The odd thing was that his father's pay-book showed the regiment as being Royal Irish Fusiliers, rather than Royal Irish Rifles. Eric assumed this an error – because the Battalion correctly stated 7<sup>th</sup>, and his father was definitely marked as being in 'D' Company, which was the correct one for the Contingent. But Eric could find no other links – over the course of a couple of visits, we tried to establish the true situation.

Alfred George Vautier was a 22-year-old carpenter when the war broke in August 1914. Initially he was mobilised with the Jersey Militia, serving in the West Battalion on coastal guard duties, including guarding the submarine cable-head at Plemont.

He had three brothers, John, George and Philip, all of whom also served in the war. At some point, he made the decision to leave the Island and join the British Army. The question was which unit did he join?

The first point for Eric was that I had no record of any Alfred Vautier in the Jersey Contingent, nor for that matter for any of his brothers. There were other Vautiers, but not apparently from this family. Of course, this is not to say he was definitely not in the Contingent – I have other possible unrecorded member – but it seemed unlikely. A key issue however was his date of enlistment as given in the pay-book. It showed Alfred joined the Army on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1916 - five months after the last of the known men joined the Jersey Contingent.

So, if he wasn't in the Contingent, why did Eric think he was? He was certain his father had talked about this. And what made Alfred decide to join at this time? Considering the latter question first, there are any number of possibilities. One would be that the National Service Act was bringing conscription to Britain at this time. Had Alfred realised that it would eventually come to Jersey? Was it better to volunteer now while there was still a choice? Or had the recent pressure of States sponsored recruiting campaigns in Jersey become too much. Given Alfred's age, he was certainly a target candidate. Perhaps, however, the decision linked to the Jersey Contingent after all. At this time, they had just gone into the trenches for the first time near Loos. Up until this point, there had been considerable malicious speculation in Jersey that this would never actually happen. Cynics claimed that the best the volunteers could expect was some dusty colonial posting. It had put off potential volunteers – men who wanted to see action. Did Alfred realise with relief that actually the Contingent was for him?

But clearly, whatever the reason, he did not join the Jersey Contingent, who besides, were up to strength at this time. One unit that was not however, was the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers. This Battalion was a member of 49<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division. In 1915, this Brigade had been known as the 'runt' of the Division because of manpower shortages. All of its Battalions were trying to find more men. It was so under strength in fact, that when the 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division moved to France in December 1915, it remained behind at Aldershot for further strengthening and training. There was even some talk of disbanding it altogether and adding a South African Brigade instead. In the end, this didn't happen, and men were scraped together from various sources. One group came from the Depot Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment. This group consisted of Guernseymen who were waiting as replacements for the Guernsey Contingent serving as 'D' Company in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of that Regiment. They were attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers as 'D' Company – the unit shown in Alfred Vautier's pay-book.

So, we have two Jerseymen (Alfred's brother John joined at the same time) serving in a Guernsey Company in an Irish Battalion. A glance at their Army Serial Numbers, and Eddie Parks' Diex Aix, indicates that although they were not sequential, they were in the same series as the Guernsey volunteers. It seems that Eric Vautier's father was in the Contingent – but the wrong one (as far as a Jerseyman is concerned!). But why? Perhaps having decided to join the Jersey Contingent, the brothers ended up in Aldershot after it had left. With no way of making it to 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, some thoughtful recruiting Sergeant may have directed them into the under strength Royal Irish Fusiliers. Or perhaps having missed the Jersey Contingent, they knew that by joining another 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division battalion,

they would serve alongside their fellow Islanders anyway. Perhaps it was all just a coincidence.

We shall probably never know. But at least Eric was able to further his researches in the direction of the Royal Irish Fusiliers rather than the Royal Irish Rifles.

[Eric kindly photocopied his father's pay-book in colour for me. I have put a scan of it in the member's area under: members/ian's items for Dec 07 Journal. I can provide copies of others as required.]

### **The Re-Dedication of the St Martin's Cross of Remembrance in Guernsey By Max Harrison**



"Eighty-nine years ago today at 11 am on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, Armistice was declared at the end of the First World War and the guns fell silent. Millions had given their lives for the defence of their country and the fight against evil and aggression. This memorial, erected in 1923 at Le Croix Bertrand on land kindly given by the de Sausmarez family, has the names recorded of those from our own parish who fought and died in that war; to commemorate their bravery and selfless courage so that future generations would always remember them. Today, 89 years later, on this Armistice Day, on this Remembrance Sunday and on the very day that we commemorate the Saint after which our parish is named - St. Martin - we have brought this memorial back to the centre of the parish, in order that we and our children may remember, with thanksgiving, the great sacrifice that they and so many others have made since that time, to protect our freedom.



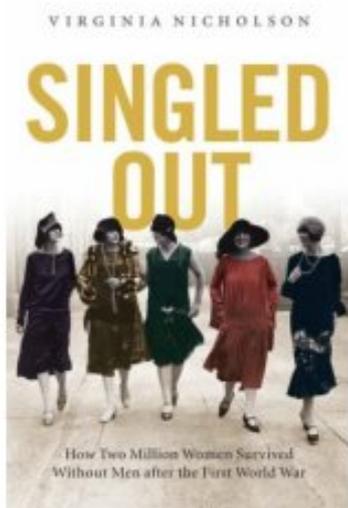
It is with deep gratitude that this memorial is to be re-dedicated today in honour of those men and women."

- the Dean of the Douzaine for St Martin in Guernsey, Mrs Barbara Hervé

On Remembrance Day, the war memorial for St Martins Parish was re-dedicated, having been moved from its former location which, because of road traffic, had become dangerous for those wishing to remember the fallen. The speech, by Mrs

Hervé, served to remind the assembled parishioners that their liberties come at a cost, which sadly is neither cheap nor easy to bear.

## Book Reviews



### **Singled Out** by Virginia Nicholson Reviewed by Liz Walton

This is a major work (nearly 300 pages long and costing £20) which looks at the lives of the so-called “surplus women” in the years following the Great War. According to its author, thousands of women who had been brought up to believe that marriage was the “normal mode of life” were deprived of the opportunity because there simply weren’t enough men to go round. Three quarters

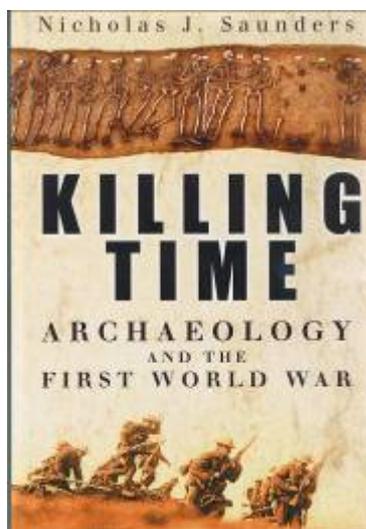
of a million men, “the flower of Europe”, didn’t come back from the war, and at least as many again were seriously wounded or incapacitated. Many also emigrated to the Colonies in the immediate post war years, unable to settle into the old way of life. So a generation of women had to reinvent themselves as they were no longer able to depend on a man for their income or identity.

The author states that her aim was to find out how these women coped with “...enforced spinsterhood and all it entailed”. The book covers the two decades following the Great War, and is based on autobiographies and memoirs of the women themselves, with the emphasis firmly on individual stories and personal detail. The author admits a middle class bias, but there are chapters based on recollections jotted down on scraps of paper by ‘ordinary’ women, as well as published memoirs of women such as Gertrude Caton-Thompson, an eminent archaeologist and traveller. The works of female authors such as Vera Brittain, Winifred Holtby and Ivy Compton-Burnett are also discussed.

Ms Nicholson looks at a wide range of aspects affecting the lives of this generation of women, including friendship, relationships, unfulfilled maternal instincts, and earning a living. She also take a slightly tongue in cheek look at opinions and advice given to them on ‘husband hunting’ as well as how to live without men. She discusses stereotypes and prejudice against single women at some length, citing as one example two respectable middle aged women who could not book hotel rooms when they missed the last train home, because rules stated that for reasons of morality single women could not be admitted to the hotel unless accompanied by a gentleman! However she also discusses women who were not prepared to fit the popular cartoon image of the maiden aunt with a cat, a pince-nez and a hot water bottle, such as Winifred Holtby’s fictional character Sarah Burton, who famously said “I was born to be a spinster, and by God I’ll spin.”

Overall it presents a fairly balanced account of how despite the initial devastation to their lives caused by the war, many of these women found alternative lifestyles, so that by the 1940s “the idea that marriage was ‘the crown and joy of woman’s life - what we were born for... was starting to appear very outdated.” It is well researched

and written in a very readable style. The amount of personal and historical detail gives a real insight into the lives of the schoolteachers, hospital matrons and universal aunts of my childhood as well as the careers of more well known women of that generation.



**KILLING TIME**  
**By Nicholas J. Saunders (Sutton Publishing)**  
**by Peter Tabb**

This is an unusual book inasmuch that its main title bears little relation to its content although its subtitle more or less sums up what the book is about. The author, Nicholas J Saunders, is Reader in Material Culture in the Department of Anthropology at University College London and the book reads a little like a learned paper on both anthropology and archaeology, the more so because the author quotes his sources in full every time he believes he has to justify a comment and that can, irritatingly, be as often as three or four times in the same sentence.

Notwithstanding that particular irritant, this is a fascinating book about a fascinating subject – the emerging debris of war, principally along the Western Front.

It is almost a cliché (however poignant) that the construction of new motorways across and even the routine ploughing of fields in Flanders and Picardy still regularly unearth the detritus of four years' trench warfare, both in terms of artefacts and human remains. Amateurs with metal detectors vie with professional archaeologists to cause the clay and chalk to yield their sometimes still deadly legacies.

However what has been the norm in, say, Ancient Egypt, for years, i.e. the virtual outlawing of amateurs from haphazard digging, is now becoming the norm along the Western Front and while even enthusiasts for the era like ourselves might not think in terms of its study as being legitimate archaeology, Mr Saunders makes a convincing case for that being so. Archaeology along the Western Front (and other Great War locations) is a burgeoning field of study, notwithstanding that some of the participants (albeit very few) of the events are still alive and are thus able to provide first-hand evidence of findings - a bit like being able to cross-examine King Tut about the layout of the Valley of the Kings.

Mr Saunders covers in some depth (pardon the pun) the diversity of the discoveries – from trench art to bone fragments. He also reveals that when skeletal remains are found more or less intact, the most common artefacts found with them are helmets and boots. Those buried in what were intended to be temporary graves tended to have anything that could identify them removed, e.g. regimental badges and buttons, identity discs, shoulder-titles, etc., while those buried by trenches collapsing or by exploding mines and shells tend to have all such evidence of identity around them.

He cites an example that will be of particular interest to the CI Great War Study Group and that was the discovery of a body in 1999 whose brass shoulder-titles indicated the owner had been a member of the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment whose 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had taken part in an attack on the German salient at Serre on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. He seems to have been killed by a

shell burst as numerous shell fragments were found in and around the skeleton and his upper right arm had been shattered. Although no identity disc was found, personal effects recovered with the body included a leather purse containing several English and French coins and a Jersey penny. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had been stationed in Jersey before the war but had left in 1911 while the penny was dated 1913. Thus the soldier might have been a Jerseyman or someone with an Island connection. He was reburied 'Known to God' in the nearby Serre Military Cemetery by a funeral party of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, successors of the King's Own.

An intriguing element of the book is the number of instances during the Great War when exploding mines and shellfire revealed archaeological sites beneath. Miners digging tunnels under enemy lines often unearthed Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts and in the Balkans an artillery barrage unexpectedly opened up a Hellenistic tomb dating to around 200 BC. The author also relates how, in 1939, archaeologist and author Jacquetta Hawkes published her findings on a site first revealed by the construction of the POW camp at Blanches Banques in Jersey in 1915. The ground that had been disturbed by the building of the camp had revealed a large area of prehistoric occupation dating back to the late Neolithic period.

Killing Time presents a unique (so far) perspective on the Great War and, despite a writing style that at times is almost too academic, offers fresh insights into the human dimension of that huge conflict.

## **Cambrai Reprise**

### **First, a big Thank You!**

A bit of modest blushing by Liz Walton and Mark Bougourd is in order as they read this, since throughout the preparation for 'Cambrai' they have been our Group's main contacts with Dr Jason Monaghan, Matt Harvey and Lynne Ashton, the key players in this project from the Guernsey Museum Service. That support has been reflected in many of the elements that went to form the overall exhibition, including the booklet and the 'time-line' boards, as well the visitors' data search area, where Paul Dorey's contribution in some of the RGLI documents such as the War Diary was displayed for visitors to leaf through.

Meanwhile Russell Doherty, resplendent in uniform and complete with Sergeant's stripes, accompanied by his wife Deborah in her 1918 nursing outfit, was present at the Museum with some of his 'platoon' adding a measure of realism to the occasion. I am sure that he will be pleased to hear that his promotion to Colour Sergeant is in the post!

Liz also organised an excellent Saturday evening at the Cobo Bay Hotel which everyone who could attend, very much enjoyed. A 'return fixture' in Jersey is being considered for next year around the same, and hopefully something will appear in the Journal shortly.

So to Liz, Mark, Paul and Russell, a big Thank You, which I know will be endorsed by those who have had the opportunity to see the exhibition or were at the Cobo.

## **The Crapauds' Views (BB, IR, NMdC, PT)**

For me, the 'Cambrai weekend' was a long weekend in that my wife, Margaret and I wanted to see more of Guernsey than I'd ever managed while still living in Jersey, or when passing through on the mail-boats of old! An early reveille on the Thursday, a seventy mile drive (in a time better than travelling from St Brelade to St Helier in the rush hour!), parking up having pre-paid followed by a quick check-in and security left a comfortable spell to have a coffee before the Aurigny flight.

The extra day was to find our bearings, not least since the evening before the flight, Liz asking me (I think that it really was an order!) whether I would like to speak on BBC Radio Guernsey for ten minutes on the Friday. So, following an 11 am cafe appointment with Liz on Friday, we trooped off to the studios where in due course Liz and I talked for forty minutes or more! Perhaps Guernsey has a different time system? Don't ask me to recall what I said as I think that it was all in gibberish! However, the studio visit produced the bonus of meeting the Diex Aix man himself, Eddie Parks.

As proud possessors of an invitation to the opening event, we turned up at the appointed hour to join Guernsey's great and good. Regrettably for me with these events, I am of an age where names go in one ear and out the other, while failing to stick in the middle and finding there is never enough time to converse in some depth! After an introductory speech which included a welcome reference that the Militia Museum was re-opening in 2008. As mentioned above, Russell's 'platoon' was well turned out with the uniforms of Guernsey's various 'units' being represented. The effort in involving these young lads is giving them a considerable education in what their great-grandparents may have experienced. With the shutters going up there was a general thronging around the various elements of the display, but as we would be there again the following day to take a more leisurely look, I was more interested in the reactions of others, of which all appeared to be highly favourable. We took our leave a little early, and so, slightly before the hire car turned into a pumpkin, the compass bearing was set pointing to L'Ora at St Sampson's for dinner with Liz.

Saturday dawned and we met up with Liz and Mark, who had by this time met up with Ned, Peter and Therese Tabb. Now a more leisurely look could be enjoyed at all of the displays. The 'time-line' boards were well produced and logical in capturing the flow of the GW, and of course there were the obligatory collection of machine guns, shells, rifles, bayonets and so forth. To quote Ned at this point:

*"The information boards were excellent – full marks – I would have like a little more on the Guernseymen at Cambrai, but.... The IWM film was excellent – our pitch (computer area) was superb plus the transcript on the headphones. [It was all] very interesting. Lots of rusty bits etc. Score 9/10."*

Ned also made the comment: *"We could learn a lot!"* I have interpreted the "We" as meaning Jersey and I hope that that the opposite numbers in Jersey to Guernsey's Museum Service and their sponsors have looked at what can be achieved. Ned's phrase and my interpretation appear to have been endorsed subsequently by Ian Ronayne who, absent on the day, managed to visit the exhibition a few weeks later while over in Guernsey on business. He comments that:

*“While in Guernsey today for work I took the opportunity to visit the Cambrai exhibition at the Candie Museum. In my view it was excellent. I was lucky enough to meet Liz there and get some background on many of the exhibits. I thought the balance between information panels, photos, artefacts and displays was right, and the general layout conducive. The central bit with the CIGWSG website was a real winner. It would be great to see something like that in Jersey at some time. Well done Liz and Mark (and everyone else) for their involvement. It’s a great credit to Guernsey.”*

Praise indeed, and at this point, Liz and Mark may now want to check their respective bath levels!

In encapsulating the very good impression made on the ‘crapauds’ who have visited, the last word on the exhibition itself goes to Peter Tabb, who produced the following article that also appeared in the JEP:

*“Artefacts, ephemera and memorabilia of the conflict have been brought together into an imaginative and compelling display. The impact on the Island community of having so many of its young men sacrificed is vividly portrayed and the letters from the men at the Front to their loved ones and the jingoism of the newspaper headlines reveal a bitter pride in the Island’s role and that of its young men in the conflict. Among the artefacts are examples of the Vickers and Maxim guns which wrought such carnage on either side and inspired both heroism and dread. Interactive areas within the exhibition allow visitors to interrogate the CI Great War Study Group’s website ([www.greatwarci.net](http://www.greatwarci.net)) with its mass of detail on the honours and the horrors of what might well be dubbed the first ‘modern’ battle and the precursor of the mighty armoured conflicts that would be fought out by Matildas, Valentines, T34s, Shermans, Tigers and Panthers 25 years later.*

*The exhibition, staged and devised by the Guernsey Museums Service with the assistance of the Imperial War Museum and the CI Great War Study Group, will remain open until 31 December. The exhibition is accompanied by a well-illustrated and instructive handbook – Guernsey and the Great War - written by David Mosley and edited by Lynne Ashton. Published by Guernsey Museums and Galleries, the book is aimed primarily at young people but will be of great interest to any reader wanting to know more of the period. Altogether the exhibition is a poignant reminder that the ‘peculiar’ relationship of the Islands and the Crown of Great Britain has been maintained, in times of conflict, at a very considerable cost.”*

A lengthy stay at the Museum, followed by a quick look into the Priaulx Library which I abruptly terminated since I would be there still was followed by a lengthy chat with Russell and Deborah Doherty on all the work that goes into the Enactment Group and the uniforms.

As the penultimate event, there was the Cobo dinner where an excellent meal was enjoyed by all and Group members and their spouses were joined by the producers of the book referred to by Peter. And so, after a very enjoyable day at the Museum and the dinner, it was off to bed for yours truly, but with the drive back to the Imperial Hotel at Rocquaine Bay punctuated by a blue flashing light. While my offer to a blow into a breathalyser was graciously declined, the attractive young police lady and I somehow came to be discussing Alderney’s albino hedgehogs! Yes!

Sunday morning was spent seeing that Ned and the Tabbs had safely left Guernsey, and buying some Sunday papers at the Airport, a similar exit from Guernsey that we would follow on Monday back to Manchester with England and numerous fireworks displays visible some 18,000 feet below.

### The Foreigner's View (Roger Frisby)



I missed the exhibition opening and the Group Dinner (by all accounts, a wonderful evening) but was fortunately able to visit Guernsey for a few days soon afterwards. By then the exhibition was in full swing with many visitors.

Guernsey's Museums and Galleries had excelled themselves. A first rate, well presented exhibition.

All credit must go to them for the hard work and research by their staff, especially to their graphic designers. The posters and interpretation panels were admirable. Thanks also must go to our members who contributed so much in guidance, contacts and materials. Without our contribution it would have been a much leaner affair.



We had our own area fully integrated into the main event.

Here, an audio interpretation of a serving member of the RGLI gave his account of his experience of the battle. The original diary, from which this had been extracted, was transcribed by us.

Our website, along with instructions for family searches has proved popular. A guestbook for visitors to leave comments and contact details has already lead to more information being supplied to us and take-away bookmarks with contact details and our website details have been flowing out of the door! It's a

great shame that the exhibition must close at the end of the year but, perhaps, it may lead to other events. At the very least, it has shown the demand is there and may encourage easier access to the wealth of materials held by the museum.

My visit coincided with Remembrance Day enabling me to participate in the Service of Remembrance at the Bailiwick War Memorial.



Hearing sirens wailing makes me shiver but somehow set the tone for the two minutes silence. The following parade and service were a credit to the people of Guernsey and left me feeling that they really do “Remember Them”.

### **The next Stage**

Access to the website has proved a very useful in attracting information from the many visitors. Liz has left a Contact Book and produced bookmarks with the Group’s contact details. I hope that we can somehow summarise the results in the Journal next time around.

The future of the exhibition as of 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2008? Hopefully it can be subsumed with the Militia Museum at Castle Cornet when it reopens. The quality of the material is too good to find its way into a skip! Over to Mark, Liz, Russell *et al* on this one!

Finally, to paraphrase Ned: “*Jersey could learn a lot!*”

### **Ronayne Reports! (Some titbits from Ian Ronayne)**

**The Jersey Lieutenant-Governor’s Interest:** You can perhaps include a mention on this, although apart from a brief thanks, I have not heard any more from Government House (Editor: This was in connection with some war graves in Jersey that had the wrong regimental badges displayed).

**Contingent Photos:** Following my moment of fame, several the relatives of several Jersey Contingent members contacted me. A number had photos of in their possession and passed them on. I have put them in the member's area. Also, Nigel Burrows contacted me, a medal collector who had a Jersey Contingent Sweetheart Badge, one of only two he knew to exist. I took a rather poor photo and have put a copy in as well.

**Channel Island Family History Society:** I attend a meeting of the CI Family History Society to hear a talk by Sue Payn on Jersey War Memorials. It was a fascinating talk; Sue was the person who had originally transcribed the names and taken photos for the group in the UK recording all of the nations War Memorials.

It was also well attended, and there was good interest in Jersey's First World War history.

**The Royal British Legion:** I recently contacted the Jersey Branch of the British Legion to see if they retained any records or details on the Jersey Contingent. As a result, they invited me down to go through their small archive at the office in Devonshire Place.

While I turned up a blank on the Contingent directly (they are going to look in other cupboards for me) I did find a fascinating collection of minute books, registers and scrap albums. Not having much time, I took a quick look and said I would return. The information contained was mostly small and trivial details, but a thorough review could reveal some really interesting information on individuals.

Below is a list of the ones I saw:

1. Minute Book of the Committee for Naval and Military Pensions – 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1919 to 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1923
2. Royal British Legion Minutes – November, 1922 to September, 1931 (and all subsequent years)
3. List of British Legion Members 1926/1927
4. Royal British Legion Newspaper Cuttings
5. Minute Books of the Jersey Old Contemptibles Association
6. Nominal Roll of the Old Contemptibles Association

They also had an extensive collection of military medals, including a number from the Jersey Contingent.

### **Website Workings By Roger Frisby**

Since the last Journal, most of the additions to our website have been Guernsey related, to fit in with the Cambrai exhibition. Apart from publicising the accompanying book, the staging of "Journey's End" by Elizabeth College has been covered.

The Guernsey Roll of Honour has had a considerable amount of detail added. Thanks to publicity given by BBC Radio Guernsey and the Museums Service, quite a lot of family members have contacted us with additional information and corrections. Many have signed our comments book at the exhibition, left their telephone numbers and are being contacted.

I have recorded several radio interviews, including an excellent one by Barrie and Liz. I'm awaiting permission from the BBC so we can make this available on our site. It has proved that there is a great deal of interest in the family history site of our work and with close family members not getting any younger, there is some urgency in making contact. I believe the oldest so far is 95!

A new source of information is now available as some of the "burnt records" damaged in 1940/41 have been restored and are now on-line. These often give family information, including the name of the soldier's children, at the time of enlistment. Up to now, all we had was census records and newspaper reports. Unfortunately, 60% of the original records have been lost forever and, at this stage, I can only access names A-C. These have already enabled details to be added to names when we had nothing but a memorial listing or a brief newspaper mention and has enabled others to be confirmed where uncertainty existed.

Many other contacts, for both Bailiwicks, have come out of the blue through website submissions. One of these has given us the only Guernsey civilian worker, discovered so far, to be killed in service. It is a fascinating story that will be told in a future Journal. To whet your appetite, have a look at:

<http://www.greatwarci.net/honour/guernsey/database/mauger-wfw-east-ham.htm> .

This led me to explore the original sites in the East End of London. On the subject of visits, I visited Fulford Cemetery in York this week and added one more. I'll leave readers to use our search facility to discover who.

It's a long and ongoing process. So far I have photographed many hundreds of graves relating to both Rolls of Honour and this work continues. Help has come from other group members from their travels. Most of the UK has now been covered but, if anyone is planning to be passing by the Orkneys, please let me know! Visits to France and Belgium planned for 2008 will yield many more.

Before long, we will have a gallery of pictures taken at meetings of group members. If you have taken any of these, please forward for inclusion. They will appear in the "Members Only" area.

The site has become a little unbalanced because of the Guernsey exhibition but I am promised much more material for Jersey and this should be appearing soon. Please put fingers to keys.

Lastly, it is gratifying to find that the Imperial War Museum is referring people to our site. That must say something about the standard of research work by Group members.

### **Membership News**

Hopefully with this being the final Membership News of 2007, I shall have caught up with the names I passed over last time around as well as welcoming new members who have appeared on the scene since then. I apologise if it is a bit like Miss World with the names in reverse order!

**Stop Press:** In the last few days, two new people have registered an interest – Chris Aubin in Jersey, Richard Queripel in London but of obvious Guernsey heritage. More details on them in Journal 18 all being well.

First, a double welcome to Mike and Rosemarie Thomas, who have already mentioned in dispatches with their discovery of BLP Man. Mike writes:

*“Both Rosemarie and I are retired and living in the UK, though Channel Islanders by birth. My interest in the Great War began during my schooldays in Jersey and after Rosemarie and I were married she shared my enthusiasm, having had two great-uncles serving who were killed in 1914 and 1915. Career and family commitments restricted deeper research until the early 1990s when by good fortune, and a French lorry drivers’ and farmers’ strike, we were diverted from auto-routes in the Somme area. There we were surprised to see so many CWGC signs and made the decision that we would return specifically to visit some of these sites; it was during one such visit to a cemetery that we hit upon the idea of looking for any cemetery where a Jerseyman might be commemorated. At that time we still had a second home in Jersey and pursued our research there but were surprised at the sparse amount of information available from official sources (this was before the Jersey Archive Centre had been set up) but having received enthusiastic interest from the Société Jersiaise, who supplied us with a photocopy of the Roll of Honour and Roll of Service we approached the CWGC at Maidenhead (this was prior to their web site) and negotiated the loan of the cemetery registers. These we laboriously checked against the Roll of Honour and had much delight when we found a “name”. In addition when back in Jersey we went through the microfiche of the JEPs of the time looking for any reference to soldiers mentioned on the Roll of Honour. We also searched the cemeteries and churches on the Island for family stones and memorials as well as the Parish memorials. As a result of this we are building a dossier which covers information of their resting place in France and Belgium, overseas, Jersey and the UK. We have photographed almost every cemetery and grave in France and Belgium and at present have located 905 men.”*

Next we welcome Warwick Blench (Jersey) who has a broad interest in the Great War along with the role of Jersey-men and –women. He is followed by Vic Geary who writes as well as offering a couple of helping hands:

*“I retired during 2003 and for more years than I care to remember had an interest in local history. I am a member of the Société Jersiaise and Channel Island Family History Society and became actively involved by doing voluntary work for both associations. This also includes the Jersey Heritage Trust and also the Parish of St Helier for whom I am currently transcribing the Parish Burial Registers.*

*My interest is in the Great War of 1914 – 1918 where my wife’s grandfather and his brothers, and both my grandfathers and their brothers served in the forces. Thankfully most of them survived but we know very little of their involvement and we want to learn about their life during that difficult period.*

*If I can be of assistance to members or those requiring information with gathering Jersey cemetery information, not only Parish of St Helier but other Parishes, please do not hesitate to contact me. Secondly, should you require any assistance with input of data please make contact.”*

Contacting us in Australia to join the Group is Syd Pattison whose Great War interest is very much linked to his family tree research:

*"My father John William Pattison, a Jerseyman, was born 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1896 at First Tower, St Helier, his father John Edward Pattison, an Englishman, born 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1871 at Dover, Kent, my Pattison line appears to be firmly entrenched in Kent, mainly from Elham and the surrounding area. The Jersey lines, I would be looking for are Averty, L'Averty, Laverty, Gibaut, Mauger, Le Gros, Gosselin, Le Gresley, Le Couteur, Aubert and Watte. A number of them must have been of naval or military age during the Great War. My father joined a Hampshire Regiment, his family (his father, mother, brother and two sisters) were based in the Southampton/Weymouth area when war broke out. He then signed up again for a stint in India/Afghanistan in 1918/19, before coming to Australia in the early 1920's and believe it or not joining up in the Australian Army when World War 2 broke out in 1939. My father was the only one of his family to come to Australia, so I am afraid I have no Great War/Jersey/Australia connection in the Pattison line for you."*

We also welcome Graham Naylor who writes:

*"I have been amazed by the amount of information this site provides and very excited to have found information relating to my ancestors. I am related to all the PERKINS who are listed on the Jersey Roll of Honour and I think those on the Service Register (I shall check). I'd be most interested in membership of the Group. I'll gladly help in anyway I can although I don't live in Jersey, but in Plymouth, UK."*

George Gaudin is another new member having had an uncle who died in Arras and a Great Uncle who was a member of the Expeditionary Force, joining the Royal Irish Rifles and thankfully surviving the GW.

Last but not least (and very much hoping that I've not missed anyone), Gerry Beckford, whose resume reads:

*"Was born in Jersey in 1950, where I went to school and subsequently worked as a Police officer with the States of Jersey Police Force until I retired in 2000. I then left Jersey to live in Surrey, England, and have a son, Jamie, who is an architect and lives in Liverpool. He is also very interested in history. My daughter, Jodie, still lives in Jersey with her husband and her two children. I have been studying with the Open University for the last six years and recently submitted my last essay for a BA Hons (History). I am now interested in researching my family tree, although at present I intend to concentrate on my grand father, Alfred John Beckford, who served in WWI. Hence my contacting your website, following advice from the Jersey Archives."*

### **Out and About**

Little to comment on for 2008, since most people only start looking at the travel brochures at the beginning of January. But.....!

I have booked a gîte, aptly named "Les Coquelicots", in Beaumont-Hamel for the period 12<sup>th</sup>–26<sup>th</sup> April. The location is at the left hand corner of the road from Auchonvillers where one turns left at the T-junction for Thiepval before going next right over the level crossing. Planning is in hand for a later trip near Calais in June/July, taking in Ypres and the Bethune area.

Elizabeth Morey is looking to come over from New Zealand to visit France and Flanders in 2008. Too early to determine dates however, and she is currently off-line while enjoying 3-4 weeks in Egypt!

### Odds and Ends

**Sir James Knott:** Ned Malet de Carteret referred to “Sir James Knott of Samares Manor in Jersey” in his article “The Harold Ackroyd Memorial Trip” (Journal 16). I’ve since discovered that Sir James did not acquire the Manor until 1924. His wife (d.1928) and he (d.1934) are buried at St Clement’s, and Liz Walton, by chance, has found that their sons are commemorated on their parent’s headstone. Sadly they cannot be included on Jersey’s RoH.

**St Anne d’Auray:** I’m carrying a planned article on my October visit to the Breton Great War Memorial over until the next Journal due to volume.

**Channel Island Family History Society:** My “A Silver Kettle” item is appearing in their next newsletter in January (I think). It may help attract more information on Coutart de Butts Taylor. Roger Le Dain Jones of the CIFHS has also suggested that we might cooperate on a book they plan to assemble on Jersey’s war memorials. While not yet confirmed, Paul may help on that for the Great War ones.

**Administration:** Can you make sure that, if you have changed your E-Mail address and other contact details you let me know. I’ve been having a couple of rejections recently, and I’m uncertain whether my ISP – Tiscali – is again having difficulties.

In any case, there are still some details to be forwarded for the contact list which I’d like to update at the end of December.

### Enfin

A brief Enfin, but as ever, many thanks to all contributors.

I close with the hope that Jersey will do more to recognise its Great War past in 1918 than it has done in the last few years, and will not be too proud to follow the path trodden by Guernsey this year. Do help in prompting the powers that be on this if you can.

Regards  
Barrie H Bertram  
15<sup>th</sup> December 2007

### Journal Issue Dates For 2008

One change for the April issue, thanks to an earlier Easter than usual.

Issue	Month	Articles To BB	Posted Web/Mail
18	February 2008	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
19	April 2008	7 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
20	June 2008	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
21	August 2008	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
22	October 2008	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
23	December 2008	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>

## PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM



### Ypres from 1913 to 1923

With thanks, via Ned, to Chris Ackroyd for copies of these original postcards that were found tucked away in old papers, reminders of the conflict in the Salient ninety years ago, that would turn the village named Passchendaele into a by-word for unrelenting warfare.

**JERSEY CONTINGENT LOSSES AT THE BATTLES OF GUILLEMONT AND GINCHY**

Surname	First Name(s)	Regtl No	Rank	Age	Casualty*	EP Date	Comment
<b><u>Night Patrol to the east of Guillemont 5th/6th (or 6th/7th)</u></b>							
CARVER DU	Harold	4090	Cpl	28	KIA	18.09.1916	Married/EP of 07.09.16 carries news of promotion to Corporal
HEAUME	Reginald	4351	Sgt	27	MBK	20.09.1916	Age based on RMIJ Category 2 in 1913/Leoville St Ouens
VIBERT	John	4363	Rfmn	?	MBW&C	01.08.1917	Buried Guillemont Road Cemetery, Guillemont
BLANCHET	Jean Baptiste	8385	Rfmn	?	MBK	20.09.1916	Not in CWGC/SDGW but in MRI/In Times Casualty List of 21.10.16 as Missing

**Guillemont Shelling 6<sup>th</sup>**

AUFFRET	John	4821	Rfmn	18	KIA	20.09.1916	Age based on 1901 Census and assuming Jean = John
BLAMPIED	Charles Garnet	4071	Rfmn	19	KIA	20.09.1916	Age based on 1901 Census
CARRE	John Francis	4356	Rfmn	21	DOW	20.09.1916	
LUCE	Edward	4365	Cpl	35	KIA	18.09.1916	Age based on 1901 Census
MARSHALL	William Frank	4168	CSM	25	KIA	18.09.1916	Age based on 1901 Census
	Harold						
REYNOLDS	Robrough	4187	Sgt	25	KIA	16.09.1916	
SWEENEY	William Denis	4196	LCpl	27	KIA	16.09.1916	Listed in CWGC as Denis Sweeney/Age based on 1901 Census
VASSE	Peter L	4210	Rfmn	28	KIA	18.09.1916	
BUTTERY	Charles Henry	7563	Rfmn	28	DOW	04.10.1916	Age based on 1901 Census and assuming Stepney born

**Ginchy Attack 9<sup>th</sup>**

BRINT	Stephen	8080	Rfmn	48	MBK	20.09.1916	Married
CAUVAIN	Henry Bennet	4080	Rfmn	36	KIA	09.10.1916	Listed in CWGC as Canvain/Age based on 1901 Census and assuming Henry=Harry
MALE	Arthur Joseph	4174	Rfmn	27	KIA	14.12.1916	
MARTIN	Walter George	4170	Rfmn	?	KIA	14.12.1916	Buried Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval
OLIVRY	Sidney John	4233	LCpl	22	KIA	20.09.1916	
PEARCE	George Edward	4185	LCpl	?	MBK	20.09.1916	
PIROUET	Arthur John Fra.	4234	Sgt	24	DOW	14.09.1916	Buried Heilly Station Cemetery
SCOTT	Richard	4198	Rfmn	?	KIA	20.09.1916	

**\*Casualty Code**

DOW	Died of Wounds
KIA	Killed in Action
MBK	Missing Believed Killed
MBW&C	Missing Believed Wounded and Captured



The village had been taken but four days earlier, as part of the series of attacks which had advanced our line at this latitude to a point nearly six miles from the original front. To the north-east was the village of Ginchy, already taken but lost to a German counter-attack. It was now to be attacked by the 16<sup>th</sup> Division, in conjunction with other attacks upon the southern portion of the British battle-front.

For three days the Battalion remained in the village, consolidating it with the aid of the Engineers. There was no shelter but a few dug-outs, in which in the darkness men sometimes happened upon strange and grisly house-mates, and the shelling was very heavy. Casualties were numerous.

On the night of the 6<sup>th</sup> September the Battalion, though holding the support line, sent forward three strong patrols to locate the enemy's position at Ginchy. They were fired upon, and Lts Morgan and Williams were killed. Next evening the Battalion took over the front, which was about half-way between the two villages.

The assembly trenches were only too visible to the German observation officers, and they had a good nine hours of daylight to pound them with their guns. It is easy to imagine that losses were high. But there was loss from a reason less creditable to the authorities in rear.

At 7.55 am the Brigade received a report from the Royal Irish Rifles, and soon afterwards one of a like tenor from the Munsters, that our artillery was bursting shells in their front line and causing heavy casualties. Apparently the account of these battalions having gone forward two hundred yards to dig their assembly trenches had not reached all the batteries of the numerous artillery brigades supporting the attack, or had not been understood. According to the Brigade's report, it was batteries of the Guards' Divisional Artillery and the 61<sup>st</sup> Brigade RFA that caused the trouble.

## THE UNKNOWN JERSEYMEN

This and the previous two pages summarise the original analyses which originally resulted in Sergeant Du Heaume, Corporal Carver and Rifleman Blanchet being considered as possible names for CG Man, while in the case of the trench map, this has been amended to include BLP Man.

The three areas where it is believed that the casualties resulted are colour coded as are the list of the dead, and the relevant text in the adjacent panel which is an extract from the regimental history.

For my part, I was a little unnerved when having thought that I had drawn the green box in an arbitrary manner, the location of BLP Man was well within the boundaries. So, perhaps it was more of an intuitive action than I had realised.

The discovery now poses a number of questions. Can another set of Jersey remains be located that was recovered from the green box? If so, where? Where are the patrol reports? With the Brigade or Division War Diaries? How useful would they prove to be?

My "To Do" list is growing with this, and any ideas that can be offered to help get to a conclusion would be very welcome!

**TIMES CASUALTY LIST ANALYSIS - JERSEY CONTINGENT - GUILLEMONT AND GINCHY**

Surname	First Name(s)	Regtl No	Rank	Casualty*	DoD	EP	Wounded	Missing	Killed/DOW	In EP	In Times	Diff
<b><u>Night Patrol to the east of Guillemont 5th/6th (or 6th/7th)</u></b>												
CARVER	Harold	4090	Cpl	KIA	06/09/1916	18/09/1916			10/10/1916	12	34	22
DU HEAUME	Reginald	4351	Sgt	MBK	06/09/1916	20/09/1916	16/11/1916	16/11/1916		14	71	57
VIBERT	John	4363	Rfmn	MBW&C	06/09/1916	01/08/1917	14/12/1916	14/12/1916		329	99	230
BLANCHET	Jean Baptiste	8385	Rfmn	MBK	06/09/1916	20/09/1916		21/10/1916		14	45	31
<b><u>Guillemont Shelling 6th</u></b>												
AUFFRET	John	4821	Rfmn	KIA	06/09/1916	20/09/1916			10/10/1916	14	34	20
BLAMPIED	Charles Garnet	4071	Rfmn	KIA	06/09/1916	20/09/1916			10/10/1916	14	34	20
CARRE	John Francis	4356	Rfmn	DOW	06/09/1916	20/09/1916			20/10/1916	14	44	30
LUCE	Edward	4365	Cpl	KIA	06/09/1916	18/09/1916			10/10/1916	12	34	22
MARSHALL	William Frank	4168	CSM	KIA	06/09/1916	18/09/1916			10/10/1916	12	34	22
REYNOLDS	Harold Robrough	4187	Sgt	KIA	06/09/1916	16/09/1916			10/10/1916	10	34	24
SWEENEY	William Denis	4196	LCpl	KIA	06/09/1916	16/09/1916			10/10/1916	10	34	24
VASSE	Peter L	4210	Rfmn	KIA	06/09/1916	18/09/1916			10/10/1916	12	34	22
BUTTERY	Charles Henry	7563	Rfmn	DOW	06/09/1916	04/10/1916	10/10/1916		30/11/1916	28	85	57
<b><u>Ginchy Attack 9th</u></b>												
BRINT	Stephen	8080	Rfmn	MBK	09/09/1916	20/09/1916		15/02/1917	21/05/1917	11	159	148
CAUVAIN	Henry Bennet	4080	Rfmn	KIA	09/09/1916	09/10/1916			20/10/1916	30	41	11
MALE	Arthur Joseph	4174	Rfmn	KIA	09/09/1916	14/12/1916			08/01/1917	96	121	25
MARTIN	Walter George	4170	Rfmn	KIA	09/09/1916	14/12/1916			16/12/1916	96	98	2
OLIVRY	Sidney John	4233	LCpl	KIA	09/09/1916	20/09/1916			20/10/1916	11	41	30
PEARCE	George Edward	4185	LCpl	MBK	09/09/1916	20/09/1916		21/10/1916		11	42	31
PIROUET	Arthur John Fra.	4234	Sgt	DOW	09/09/1916	14/09/1916			23/11/1916	5	75	70
SCOTT	Richard	4198	Rfmn	KIA	09/09/1916	20/09/1916			20/10/1916	11	41	30

**\*Casualty Code**

DOW	Died of Wounds
KIA	Killed in Action
MBK	Missing Believed Killed
MBW&C	Missing Believed Wounded and Captured