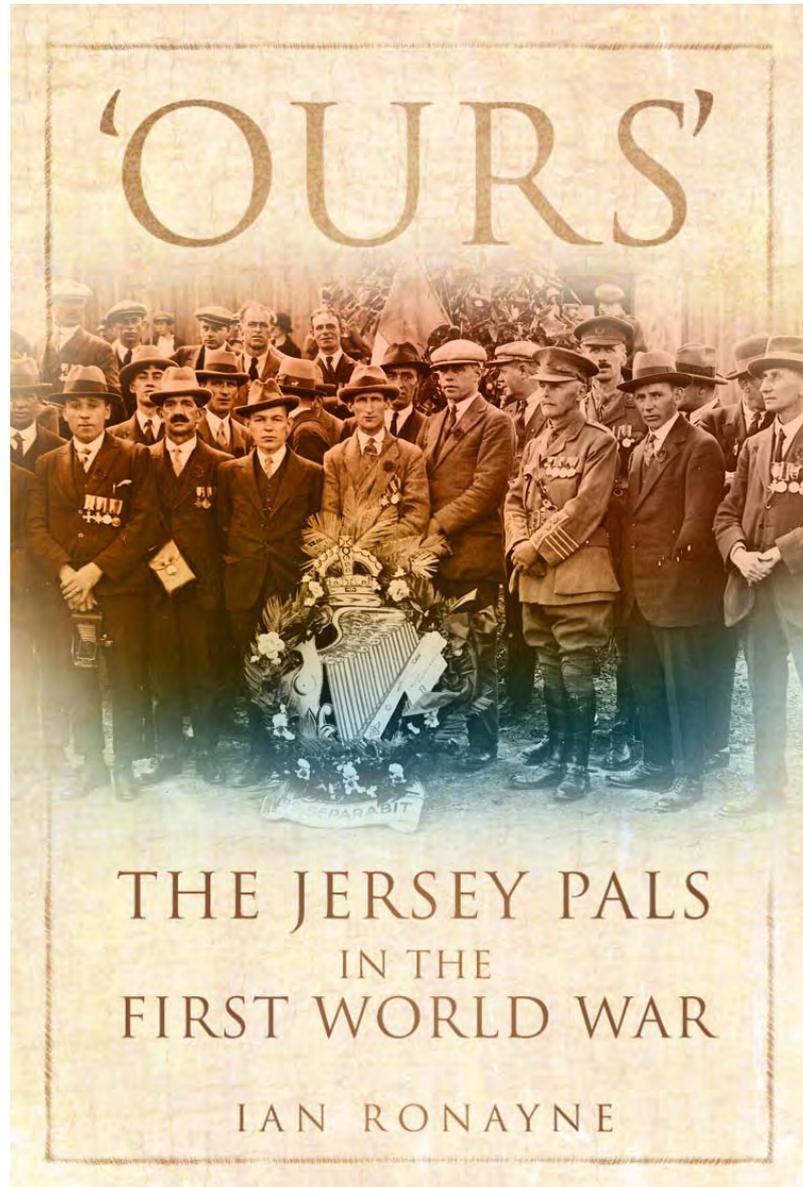


CHANNEL ISLANDS  
GREAT WAR STUDY GROUP



'Ours'

JOURNAL 26  
JUNE 2009

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Hello All

With a fortnight's summer break commencing in Normandy this coming Friday the production of June's Journal, like those in previous years tends to be frenetic. At one level there are the continuing domestic chores that must be cleared away while bills need settling and deliveries cancelled. Meanwhile, a watchful eye is maintained on the weather to determine the best time to tend the garden and cut the grass – past experience has taught me that a mower today saves the machete tomorrow! This summer, I am under strict orders not to go hunting for Great War cemeteries so, "Orders must be obeyed"! However, nothing has been said about my personal mobile library which will contain a couple of Great War books to surreptitiously read and review, nor has my net book been confiscated to prevent me toiling way at data entry.

Hopefully, you will find that my last minute holiday preparations have not impacted on the Journal, and if there are any minor hiccups, it is my fault, and not those of the contributors.

To an extent, this Journal seems a blend of finality and renewal. To adopt a racing commentator's phrase, Ian Ronayne "is in the final furlong" with his long-awaited book on the Jersey Company, while Liz Walton has ensured that the CWGC mismatch over the brothers Blaise has been resolved. She is even "scenting blood" as far as AB John Helman is concerned, while I have probably reached a stage with Coutart de Butts Taylor where to proceed further would greatly involve me in family research rather than the Great War. However, with the conclusion of some of these projects, be they large or small, there is still so much to research. CWGC non-commemorations must continue be followed up, while, save for Ian Ronayne's article about four years ago on George Cawley, the washed up sailor from Q-36, little has been done on other "washed ups" that must have turned up in the Channel Islands, an undoubted consequence of the Kaiser's order for unrestricted U-boat warfare and the Atlantic currents.

Talking of Ian's book, it was coincidental to chance upon an article in the Jersey Evening Post of 11<sup>th</sup> June that the States of Jersey have voted unanimously for "local children to be taught about local history, culture and politics" to be included as part of that Island's Strategic Plan. This is a move that is long overdue, but nevertheless very welcome. Given that my schooling is a dim and distant memory, I cannot recall local history as a subject in the curriculum however, we had a very good master by the name of Mr MC Green at Victoria College who organised a weekly local history group that saw pupils heading on a JBS or JMT bus out to Faldouet, Mont Orgueil, the Pinnacle and the many other places of significant historical significance in Jersey.

I hope that, in our various ways, we can find a way to influence the Island's "movers and shakers" to have the Great War included as an element of the curriculum, rather than jumping from 1781 to 1940 without looking at those events in between. Perhaps "Ours" will become a recommended school book as is Guernsey Museum's Cambrai 1917 book, with Ian's timing fortuitously spot on? It may also be possible that our website assumes some rôle in the learning process. One lives in hope!

So, with those thoughts on Island education I'll close and take myself back to weather watching and keeping an eye on an improving Pound/Euro exchange rate!

## **This Month's Cover** **Ours: The Jersey Pals in the First World War**

As you can see, having already given it a "mention in despatches", we've featured the cover of Ian Ronayne's forthcoming book that shows some of the surviving Contingent men at Guillemont. Ian has provided an updated status report on the book's progress to release:

*"In the last few weeks I have received the page-proofs and photographs to review, change as necessary and sign-off. I have also received the index which needed matching to the laid-out text. All done and dusted. The next time that I see them will be in the final printed version, which I am expecting around the date of publication. This is set for 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2009.*

*It was also great to see the proposed front-cover layout. The publishers seem to have a good job on it, so please feel free to include in the Journal (Editor: I did!).*

*I have been in contact with the local media in the last couple of weeks to let them know about the book. All have shown interest. The JEP in particular have asked for a copy for review and so I have provided a PDF of the page-proof version. They also want to do an interview and there may be more. Another port of call has been the local distribution company (contacts courtesy of Peter Tabb). They are going to contact the History Press to ensure agreements are in place to distribute. In respect of distribution, it is amazing to see that 'Ours' is already widely available for pre-order on the websites of Amazon, Waterstones, WH Smith, etc - in some cases at a discounted price! I am never going to make my million at this rate!*

*In terms of related effort, I am currently spending a lot of my time working on the website ([www.thejerseypals.com](http://www.thejerseypals.com)) I plan to associate with the book. Its main point is to present a comprehensive list of Jersey Company members and so I am going through all my data, plus Ancestry.co.uk to work out ages, family, service details etc. Very interesting... but very time consuming!*

*Watch this space."*

## **Guernsey Non Commemorations – An Update** **By Liz Walton**

I have been involved in some rather lengthy discussions with the CWGC about errors and omissions in their database and am pleased to report a degree of success.

Firstly, they had included 89317 Gunner Emile Blaise of the 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Ammunition Column, who served right through the war and did not die until 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1926. But they had not included 219902 Gunner Yves Blaise of the Royal Garrison Artillery. 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. He died of the disease on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1920 and is buried at the Foulon Cemetery in Guernsey. Thus although he never saw active service his

death fitted the guidelines for CWGC commemoration whereas Emile's did not. The CWGC have now altered their entry and Yves is correctly listed at:

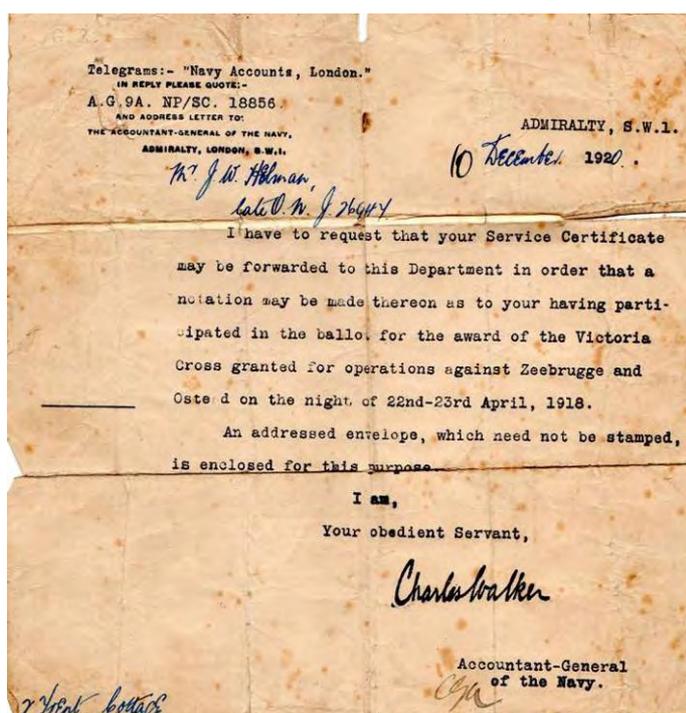
[http://www.cwgc.org/search/casualty\\_details.aspx?casualty=4028801](http://www.cwgc.org/search/casualty_details.aspx?casualty=4028801)



Another case of possible non-commemoration was recently brought to my notice by Dave Ricketts. 255580 (WR28504) Sapper William John Le Noury of 321 Quarry Company, Royal Engineers died of influenza and pneumonia at Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1919, apparently aged 55. He is listed in "Diex Aix" and had served in France with the "Quarrymen" from the inception of the Company in January, 1917, and having survived the war had returned to England from France for dispersal. There was no record of his death on the CWGC database though he clearly fulfils their requirements for commemoration, having died from an illness contracted whilst in service well within the required timescale. Dave had found his service record which included notification of his death, and an entry in the births, marriages and deaths index for the area. I then discovered his headstone in St John's Churchyard in

Guernsey. Incidentally this states that he was 58 years of age when he died, which means that he was 56 when he joined up in 1917 though he gave his age as 48! The CWGC are now looking into his case with a view to adding him to their database.

Finally, an "old favourite" of mine! This is the case of the non-commemoration of AB John William Helman continues, with new information regarding his hospital treatment for tuberculosis whilst he was still in the Navy having been forwarded to the appropriate bodies. Contact has now been made with his great nephew who provided an excellent photo (now on the website) to replace the one from the newspapers, and also definite confirmation that he was included in the ballot for the VC at Zeebrugge. Having discussed this with the family who live in the UK, I now aim to visit St Andrew's cemetery and clean his headstone which is now in a very poor state.



## **Back to the Front The 2009 Ronayne Battlefield Tour**

Gazing up at the strikingly ornate ceiling of the Menin Gate with the haunting tones of bugles echoing around, there was one question that kept coming to mind. Had a year really passed since the last time I was there? Well it had (where does the time go?); and there, on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2009, Paul and I stood at the start of another annual battlefield tour.

Broadly speaking, the locations and itinerary for this year were the same as for last. Start with a long drive up to Ypres for night one; spend the second in Arras; and end up for a final night in the wonderful little Normandy port of Honfleur. Lying in between lay a thoroughly planned and proportionally weighted schedule of historical sites and decent refreshments. In contrast to previous years, however, being accompanied by two relative newcomers to First World War sites, we planned to take in some of the more popular locations. For the benefit of our older brother Peter, and our friend Chris Nelson, Tyne Cot, Vimy Ridge, Beaumont Hamel, etc., were prominent on the agenda. Squeezed in between were a number of obligatory Jersey Company related sites and cemeteries, and visits to two long-forgotten relatives. It was packed programme. And I can start by saying it all went very well.

### **Day One: Ypres, Loos & Arras**

After a splendid night in Ypres, a quick stop at St George's Church started the day in order to take a picture of the Harold Ackroyd VC plaque for Ned Malet de Carteret. From there, it was northwards to Boesinghe and the preserved site of the Yorkshire Trench.



For anyone who is unaware, the construction of a new industrial park there a few years ago uncovered an 'unknown' battlefield, complete with trenches, dugouts and more than 100 dead. French, German and British remains were found in significant quantities, lying where they fell more than ninety years ago. In recognition, and presumably as a mark of respect today, a small portion of the battlefield remains in the middle of an ugly modern clutter of metal and concrete. Consisting of a few metres of trench complete with dugouts, and some well laid out interpretation panels, it makes for a very interesting visit – if you can find it. The complete lack of signposting from the main road, and quite small signage in the estate, must leave this excellent site under visited.

Tyne Cot Cemetery, complete with a new access road, parking and visitor centre, came next. The latter items were new – for all of us. So, in my view it was reassuring to see that the authorities have done a good job. The visitor centre was suitably modest, respectful and informative, while the removal of cars and coaches from the front of the cemetery restored dignity and vista to the entrance. I know purists may take issue with the crop of new interpretation centres that have sprung up in recent years, but the benefit really becomes apparent when one is visiting with people whose knowledge of the events of ninety years ago is limited.

A whistle stop tour followed, going past Polygon Wood, through Hooge, Kemmel, Wytschaete, Messines, Ploegsteert and Vermelles, and making suitable stops for cemeteries, memorials, lunch and coffee. This first day ended at Vimy Ridge - complete with yet another new interpretation centre. Despite the stern warnings of the man on gate duty that everything was soon to shut, we managed to get on the day's last tour of Grange Tunnel and the nearby concreted trenches. Our impressive



guide was a young Canadian student, who knew her stuff and led the tour with a patient authority. Paul and I had been before, but many years ago. It felt like a first time visit again – excellent. Finally, there was time for a quick photo call on the magnificently restored Vimy memorial before a swift run to Arras for night two.

## Day Two: On to the Somme

The second full day of the tour started in the rain. After a good couple of days, were the weather gods about to turn against us? Heading south from Arras towards the village of Bienvillers, it seemed that they were.



Rain buffeted the car as we made our way past seemingly endless Sunday morning cyclists towards Beinwillers Military Cemetery, and the as yet unvisited grave of great uncle Phil Coyle. Private Coyle, of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, was our mother's uncle; unknown to her, and known now only to us in the form of a single photo and couple of faded postcards. The weather eased on arrival and we were able to visit his grave in this impressive but isolated spot without getting wet. Private Coyle died in August, 1918, presumably somewhere near there. Regrettably, we know nothing more about his life - or the circumstances of his death – at the present time. By the time of the next visit, I hope this will have changed (Editor's Note: Ian now has a copy of the Battalion's War Diary for August, 1918).

After a brief visit to nearby Couin New British Cemetery to visit Frank Lunn of the Jersey Company, it was across the northern Somme battlefields to Delville Wood and a welcome coffee break. Delville Wood is a favourite of our brother Peter, who through his business connections has strong associations with South Africa. The memorial did not disappoint, and the wood was suitably sombre, with the damp rising from the ground and the morning's rain still dripping from the trees.

Lunch followed at the Bar Tommy in Pozieres. This rebuilt and expanded café provided both good food, and a chance encounter with a group of Australians and a film crew. A historic and poignant moment was being played out. It turned out that a digger fighting in the village in 1916 had picked up a small wooden crucifix from the ruins of the church and held on to it ever since. On that very day, more than ninety years later, his son had returned with very item and was handing it back.

After a quick stop at the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Division memorial (friend Chris's grandfather fought with the Division), it was on to Thiepval and the Newfoundland Memorial Park. The main visit of the afternoon followed. Armed with some then and now photographs, we stopped near the famous sunken road outside Beaumont Hamel and took a walk round the area. With all trace of the morning's rain gone, the view from the edge of the Hawthorn Ridge crater was all the more rewarding.

All that remained for that day was to make the two hour drive down to Honfleur, and enjoy a final night on the quays alongside its beautiful old harbour. And all that remained for the final day was leisurely drive back to St Malo via the Normandy coast and Pegasus Bridge. Now, how long until next year?

## **Orders, Decorations and Awards to the RGLI – Part 2** **By Mark Bougourd**

***Editor's Note: This concludes Mark's study into the various awards that were made to the RGLI, the first Part of which was contained in Journal 25.***

***Looking at the figures, when one considers the accounts of their outstanding defence at Les Rues Vertes in November and December, 1917 and later at Doulieu in April, 1918, it does strike one that the number of awards were fewer than may have been merited.***



### **Mentioned in Despatches (MiD)**

#### **Temporary Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Lyttleton de HAVILLAND DSO, CMG**

Citation: None

Notes: Listed under Royal Scots Fusiliers. Attached as Officer Commanding. 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., RGLI. (Late, Major, South African Defence Force). Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31439, published on the 4<sup>th</sup> July, 1919. Page 13 of 18 (8589).

#### **Temporary Lieutenant Edward Arthur DOREY**

Citation: None

Notes: Awarded for the Battle of Cambrai 1917. Second Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 30704, published on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1918. Page 14 of 14 (6178).

#### **Temporary Lieutenant Harry JONES**

Citation: None

Notes: Awarded for the Battle of Cambrai 1917. Second Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 30704, published on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1918. Page 14 of 14 (6178).

**Temporary Lieutenant Norman Redston INGROUILLE MVO**

Citation: None

Notes: Battle of Lys, Doulieu 1918. Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31446, published on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1919. Page 56 of 58 (8794)

**Quartermaster and Temporary Lieutenant Albert J MURDOCH**

Citation: None

Notes: Battle of Lys, Doulieu 1918. Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31446, published on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1919. Page 56 of 58 (8794)

**266 Lance Corporal Cecil C MACHON**

Citation: None

Notes: Awarded for the Battle of Cambrai 1917. Second Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 30704, published on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1918. Page 14 of 14 (6178).

**1131 Lance Corporal William T ROBINSON**

Citation: None

Notes: Awarded for the Battle of Cambrai 1917. Second Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 30704, published on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1918. Page 14 of 14 (6178).

**438 Lance Corporal Charles W HOCKEY**

Citation: None

Notes: Fourth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31088, published on the 27<sup>th</sup> December, 1918. Page 24 of 24 (15216)

**250 Colour Sergeant Major Albert LE CHEMINANT**

Citation: None

Notes: Battle of Lys, Doulieu 1918. Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31446, published on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1919. Page 56 of 58 (8794)

**600 Company Quarter Master Sergeant William S SACKETT**

Citation: None

Notes: Battle of Lys, Doulieu 1918. Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31446, published on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1919. Page 56 of 58 (8794)



### Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

#### 7479 Temporary Regimental Sergeant Major Albert Harry C HART

Citation: None

Notes: 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., Worcester Regt. Permanent Staff attached RGLI. Employed with 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., RGLI, awarded for services in FRANCE. Fifth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31370, published on the 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1919. Page 98 of 132 (6886)

#### 534 Temporary Regimental Sergeant Major George CROSS

Citation: None

Notes: 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., Scots Guards, Permanent staff attached RGLI, awarded for services at HOME with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reserve Bn., RGLI. Sixth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31684, published on the 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1919. Page 26 of 32 (15460)



### Special Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

#### 2520 Colour Sergeant Major Adolphus Charles BIRD

Citation: None

Notes: Army Order No. 339, dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1919.



### Médaille Militaire, (France)

#### 843 Corporal Joseph C. SEALLEY MM

Citation: None

Notes: According to the 1st Battalion's Special Orders: "The award of the Médaille Militaire has also been made to No. 843 Pte. J SEALLEY Corpl (late Pte.) SEALLEY is already in possession of the Military Medal. This recommendation was made before I took over command of the Battalion, and so I presume it is for the operations near CAMBRAI. These names will be published in the London Gazette in due course. {Signed} TL DE HAVILLAND. Lt Col,RGLI." Second Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 30848, published on the 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1918, Page 6 of 10 (9654). According to Daily Part II Orders, No. 50, dated 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1918, "843 Cpl (Now Sjt.) SEALLEY, J. Awarded Médaille Militaire". Second Supplement to London Gazette dated 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1918 His Majesty the King has given unrestricted permission in all cases to wear the decorations and medals in question."



### Croix de Guerre, (France)

#### Lieutenant Herbert Arthur LE BAS MC

Citation: None

Notes: According to the 1st Battalion's Daily Part II Orders No. 31, dated 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1918. "To be General Staff Officer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (Liaison) , with 10<sup>th</sup> French Army CR 3305/5479B dated 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1918". Third Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 32268, published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1921, Page 2 of 4 (2388). Later in service promoted to Major. His Majesty the King has given unrestricted permission in all cases to wear the decorations and medals in question.



### Croix de Guerre, (Belgium)

#### 588 Sergeant Edward Daniel LOGAN

Citation: None

Notes: Fourth Supplement to the London Gazette Issue No. 31514, published on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1919. Page 3 of 14 (10605). His Majesty the King has given unrestricted permission in all cases to wear the decorations and medals in question.

### Summary of Awards to the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry

CMG	1
MVO (5 <sup>th</sup> Class)	1
MC	5
DCM	3
MM	6
Mentioned in Despatches	10
MSM	2
Special Reserve LSGC	1
Médaille Militaire, (France)	1
Croix de Guerre (France)	1
Croix de Guerre (Belgium)	1

### Revisited: An Enigma at Caterpillar Valley

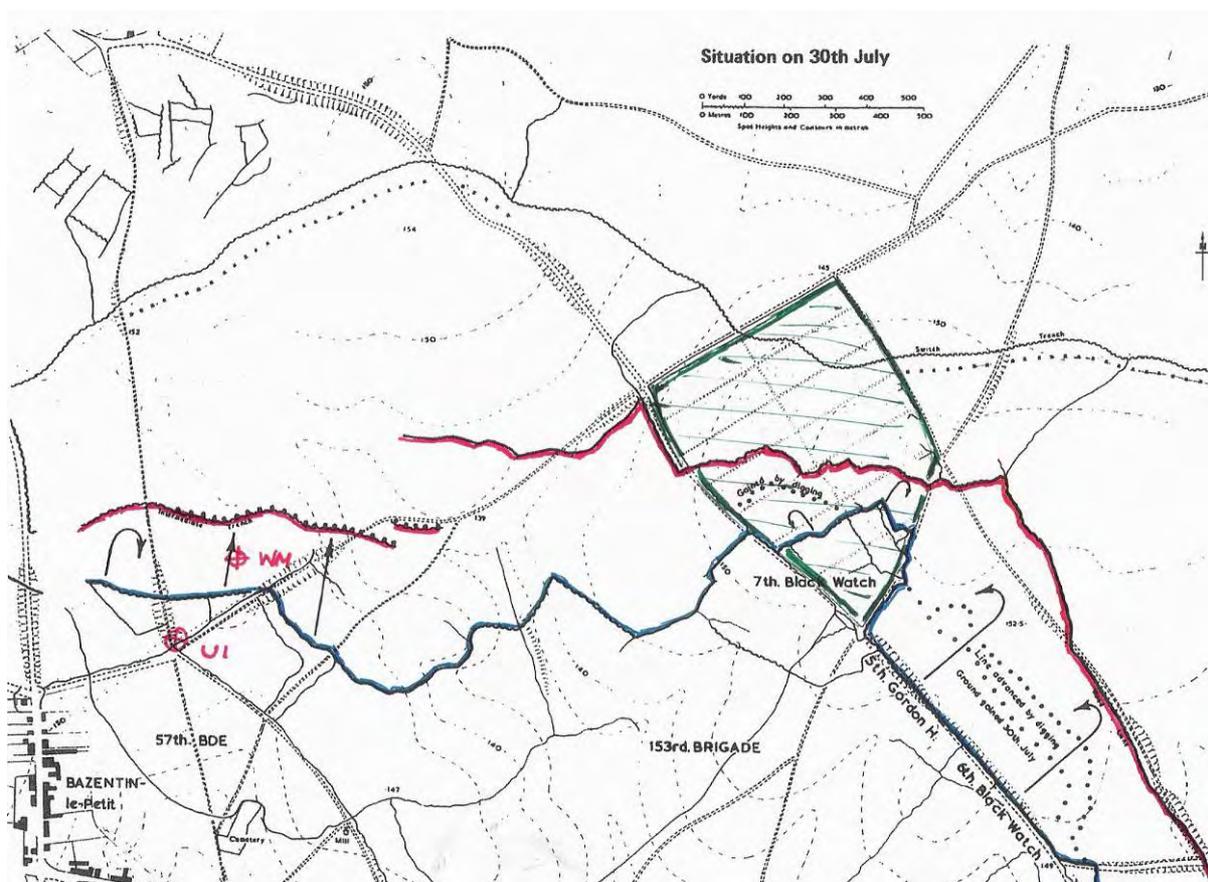
*"All we have is that in April 1922, the remains of a soldier and a cross marked '7/4170 Pte. W. Martin R.I.Rifs.' were recovered from 57c.S.2.d.8.3..... The Grave Concentration Report states that the identity was established solely from the details on the cross. Nothing further was found on the body to confirm this. So, as we do not know what evidence was originally found which lead to this cross being erected, we can not comment on how accurate or inaccurate this might have been",* these being the words in an E-Mail from the CWGC's Head Archivist, Mr Roy Hemington, some eighteen months ago. So, it seemed that the "Enigma at Caterpillar Valley" was insoluble, and that we were no closer to a rational explanation as to why Walter Martin's headstone (at 5.A.10) showed him as having died on the 30<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, some 40 miles from where the Jersey Contingent were manning the trenches.

And, in truth, we are still no closer. However, various items do emerge, and the book "The Hell They Called High Wood" by the late Terry Norman (see the Book Review below) came up with two highly useful maps, added below as An Enigma - Maps 1 and 2 respectively, showing the trench lines on 30<sup>th</sup> July, and 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 in the vicinity of where would be found. The Jersey Contingent, some 40 miles

away on 30<sup>th</sup> July, was just a couple of miles to the east on the later date at Guillemont and Ginchy.

Map 1 shows the German's Intermediate Trench (to the left of the map) which was attacked in the centre by the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment at 6.10 pm, according to their War Diary. Three of the companies achieved their objectives but one was held up, although it was later led forward. A King's Own Battalion was also successful on the Warwickshire's right flank but the Worcestershire's on the left flank were not, and that portion of the Trench remained in German hands. A number of events occurred as the position was being consolidated. Reinforcements and more ammunition was sought from the Battalion HQ, a communication trench (visible on Map 2) was dug by the South Wales Borderers, and some 20 Germans who had been captured, were being escorted back when most were killed, along with their escorts, by German shellfire.

Both maps have been marked WM to show where Walter Martin was found in a grave that was shared with the remains of 9168 Private Thomas Partridge (at Caterpillar Valley 5.C.1) from the 10<sup>th</sup> Warwickshire's, but how had Walter died on the 30<sup>th</sup> July and in the middle of no-mans land if that was indeed the case?



An Enigma – Map 1

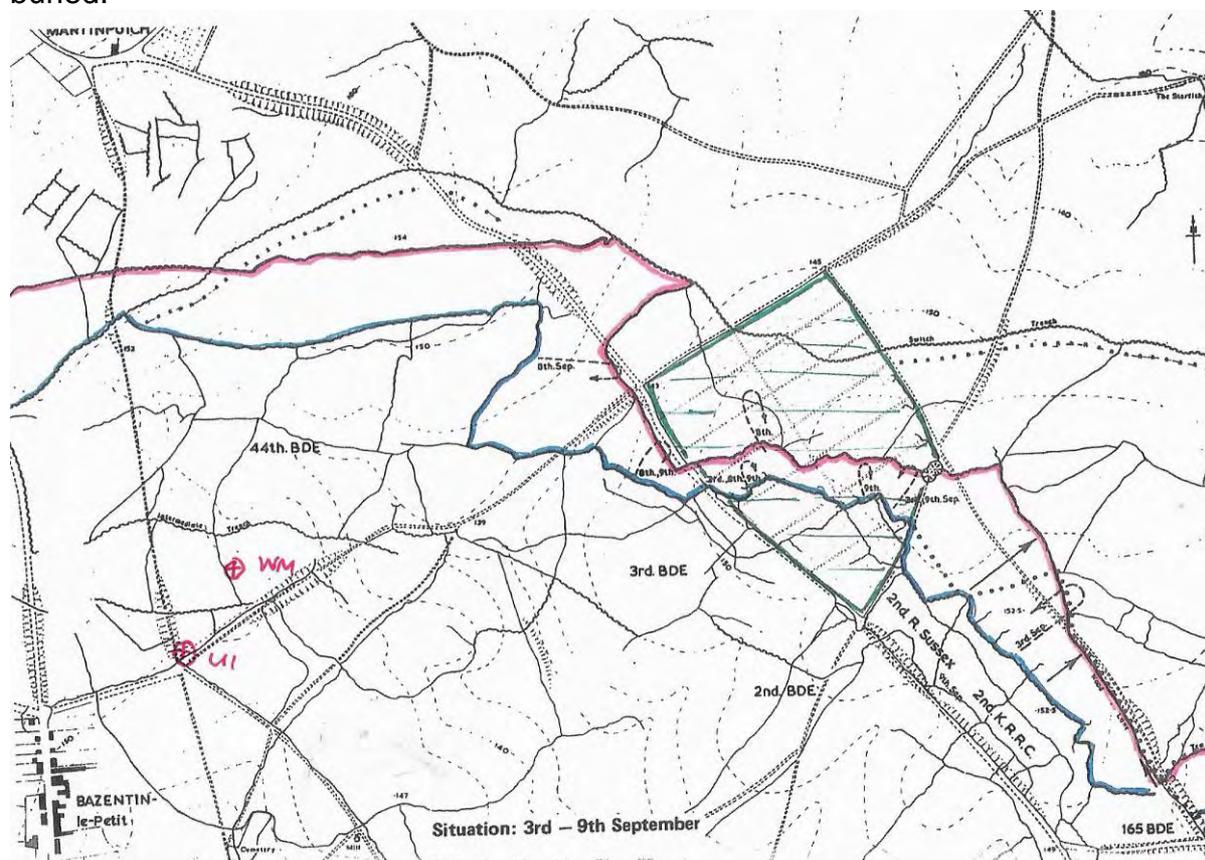
Looking at the casualties of that Battalion (see the Table below), they were light compared to others, those particularly who were engaged in some of the bloodier fighting on the Somme. The War Diary shows variations, but this is understandable given the fog of war where men go missing and the accuracy of reporting. It reports

27 Other Rank casualties on the 3<sup>rd</sup> for example, which clearly differs from SDGW, but the Battalion is in the line at La Boisselle. But the War Diary is useful in another aspect, as it reported the number of men who were reinforcements, and by 12<sup>th</sup> July this had totalled 69 men. This figure covers the 55 dead up to that point, but of course I've used the figures as a snapshot, which obviously excludes men who were wounded and missing. However, the Battalion could not be described as grossly under strength and it very unlikely that Walter was with them.

Date	2	3	4	5	6	7	10	21	23	24	29	30	31
KIA	2	41	0	1	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	34	0
DOW	0	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	3	1	1	4	2
Died	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Daily Total	2	44	2	3	2	1	1	1	22	1	1	38	2
Accumulative	2	46	48	51	53	54	55	56	76	77	78	116	118

**Other Rank Casualty Figures in July 1916 – 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment  
(Extrapolated from SDGW)**

It may be worth analysing the other Battalions in 57<sup>th</sup> Brigade, if not the 19<sup>th</sup> Division, to determine whether casualty figures were comparable with the 10<sup>th</sup> Warwickshire's, but, I am fairly certain that the differences will be marginal, and explicable by minor actions conducted at Battalion or Brigade level. So temporary reinforcements from other units were probably unlikely at this stage, and men for ammunition and ration carrying parties would have been found from the Brigade's reserve Battalion, while prisoner escorts would have been slightly injured soldiers heading rearwards for treatment. If this is so, it does seem illogical that Walter was serving where he was buried.



If he was with the Contingent throughout the time up to his death, then Map 2 is far more appropriate, but for him to have reached a location close to the communication

trench some 3 miles from the actions at Guillemont and Ginchy was remarkable given the circumstances of the time. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that, according to “High Wood”, it was not until November that the clearance of bodies from the battlefield took place, a point in time consistent with the announcement on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1916 that Walter Martin was dead.

Arguments can be made for Walter Martin having died on either date. But, I have found after further enquiries at the CWGC that there was another body found at the point that I have labelled UI, and he was also reinterred in Caterpillar Valley, at grave 30.D.7. His headstone had the Royal Irish Rifles badge, and UI stands for Unidentified Irishman. However, given that SDGW does have errors, an analysis of Royal Irish Riflemen who died between 27<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> August reveals 20 names, and furthermore, all have known graves, and are thus accounted for. The question must be, and it can never be answered with any certainty, who was he and from which Battalion. But, his presence, so close to that of Walter Martin’s, could indicate that both somehow reached that area from Guillemont or Ginchy.

### **Advance Australia Fair**



Today, most Australians regard the Great War as a historical watershed for their marvellous homeland, one where the transition from penal colony to being a nation amongst other nations was completed through the courage and sacrifice of its men-folk, and indeed women-folk, in a great moral cause.

Undoubtedly many myths have evolved of that period when raw, under-trained troops either became men or corpses at Gallipoli, when they succeeded in taking Pozieres or in stopping the German’s March offensive outside Amiens, and when they were in the vanguard of advances in France and Arabia as German and Turk were both forced back.

We can, for example, regard the men of those days as we see Australians today, possibly regarding each and everyone as a six foot plus, twenty stone Wallabies or Aussie Rules player, or a rangy leathery-skinned drover. But, the reality was far more prosaic, in that largely of British stock and, in many cases, no more than one or two generations removed from the mother country the majority were no different to those enlisting in the new armies back in the UK, in terms of height, weight, health and physical defects. The evidence for this is readily available on the superb National Archive of Australia website ([www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au)) which holds the personal records of some 300,000 plus Australian servicemen from the Great War. These records, unlike the equivalent for the British of that period are complete, and provides “warts and all” views of each man. However, with the availability of these records, there is also an opportunity for researchers to look at the broader issues that were associated with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and establish a comprehensive view of a particular topic by taking a sample of names.

Recently, I decided to do some research into individuals by entering “Jersey” as the key item to search for and discovered some 447 records. Many of those records were about Jersey cattle! However, some 75 or so Jersey men emerged although of course, this excluded those men and women whose parents were from Jersey but who had been born in Australia themselves. Collectively, I am not sure that the

figure 75 constitutes a good sample from which to judge all Australians but there were clear trends.



Peter Weir's 1981 film "Gallipoli" does convey the impression that the British officers regarded Australian soldiers as far more undisciplined than their British counterparts. There is strong support for this view with a high incidence of men being charged for "Disobeying a lawful command" or "Absence without leave" (AWOL) with the attendant range of punishments that included a few days in the cells, fines and Field Punishment No. 2. In one case, that of Acting Sergeant Edward Maurice O'Connell, having previously served in the Royal Marine Artillery for 4½ years, frequent drunkenness led to his discharge as an inadequate soldier well before his departure from Australia. The records are liberally sprinkled with Courts Martial of the Field General (FGCM) and District (DCM) varieties. Private Keith Renouf with the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion managed two FGCMs for being AWOL and for Drunkenness. An ex-Jersey Militia man, one should not be too critical of him as he was also awarded the MM, while his partiality to acronyms extended to contracting VD while visiting Guernsey in February, 1918.

A more serious disciplinary case was that of 3451 Private Phillip Vine who served with the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion or not as the case may be. With previous 8 years previous service in the RGA, he would go AWOL several times, and in 1917 would be charged with the more serious offence of Desertion. This was not a capital offence as it was in the British Army and the parading of a firing squad was never envisaged, although a few of his mates might have thought otherwise! Instead, he received a 15 years Penal Servitude sentence, although this was later commuted to 2 years in the comparative safety of the military prison at Le Havre. Looking through his file, he was later repatriated to Australia, and what seems surprising was that he could claim his war medals that included the 1914/15 Star. A footnote in November, 1945 is interesting in that it stated that Vine's real name was Phillip Eugene Villard (although I suspect it may have been Villalard).



What encouraged these men to enlist? Clearly there was a strong element of "For King and Country" throughout the War years. But, it might be suspected that financial and domestic considerations also played their part. In comparison to the British, the Australian soldier was much better paid, and if single, was able to make an allotment of a couple of shillings a day to a bank, thus building a nest egg to be enjoyed on a safe return home, hopefully. This was a very advanced way of thinking. A nest egg was not the only possible financial consideration. We might consider 11212 Private John Paul Verlet (born in St Mary, 15 August, 1889) who managed barely 4 months in the army before receiving a medical discharge in December, 1916 due to abdominal crises (Yes, I don't understand that either!). Never leaving Australia, he was not seen again by the military authorities, who could only say as much some time later to a credit company seeking the £67.11s.3d that Verlet owed to the Queensland Cycle and Motor Works Company.

Clearly money prompted men to sign on, some well into their 40s, yet there is also a sense that some having left the comparative confines of Jersey, they were now seeking to escape from the constraints of domestic bliss, forgetting in a couple of cases that they had wives at home, and in one instance, also citing that he was a widower. There are a number of letters on files, written by despairing spouses that she has not heard from her husband in 6 or 12 months and she wonders where he is. One such individual was 4838 Driver John Leroy of 6 AMT Company, AASC who was given 6 months leave to work in Brussels in July, 1919, yet stayed away until March, 1922, before eventually reaching Australia in December of that year. Did he just forget to write?



The doctors and the dentists clearly had an important role to play as the men sought to be attested into the Army. A lengthy question as to whether the individual had previously incurred this or that disease had to be answered while dental charts are contained in a majority of the files. Someone having poor teeth would be sent away, and would not be allowed in until the problem had been rectified. This is evidenced by the date forms were initiated and subsequently the date that the medical examiners signed off the man as fit. 3112 Private John William Battam was one such, joining in February, 1916 he was discharged in April of that year with unsuitable teeth and reenlisted in May to serve with the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion until December, 1919. Others would fall by the wayside during their period of training, 14087 Private George Eager medically discharged after a few months with eyesight problems. Eager by name, eager by nature, he must have somehow passed the eyesight test at attestation.

In one scene of the film "Gallipoli" there is a reminder that the enemy was not the only enemy to be faced with the Sergeant briefing the paraded company of men of the sexual perils posed by consorting with the local ladies. Undoubtedly this was a problem in the hot climes of Egypt, but Salisbury Plain could similarly present the risk of venereal disease to the unwary. 32 year old 58557 Private Clarence Thomas Dupre managed to contract VD with an "amateur" at Wilton in late 1918, as did 56412 Private Cyril Beauchamp Tournay at Bulford. Neither would reach France before returning to Australia and thus, would not delight in meeting the Mesdamoiselles from Armentieres! Of course, there was a serious side to the problem of VD in that it removed men from their units for some 7-8 weeks while those individuals were being treated in hospital. In the case of ANZAC troops, the incidence rate has been estimated at around 130 men per 1000, compared to British Army figures 80% lower. Either way, VD affected the overall fighting ability of the BEF, and more so, the AIF.



One tends to regard Gallipoli as the first engagement in action undertaken by Australian forces, and I had certainly been guilty of that until I read the file of 620 Private Arthur Ernest Neale who had previously served with the Somerset Light Infantry for 8 years before finding his way to Australia. He was probably the first Jersey-Australian to enlist (on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1914), and his file reports that he embarked 3 days latter on HMAS Berrima with the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Naval and Military

Expeditionary Force. The reason for his deployment is best described in the following excerpt from the Australian War Museum's website:

*"At the outbreak of the First World War Germany administered several territories in the south and central Pacific and operated a small fleet, including the armoured cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, out of Tsingtao in China. In order to prevent harbours in these territories being used by the fleet, Australia and New Zealand were requested by Britain, on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 1914, to dispatch forces to occupy them.*

*A force of New Zealand troops, escorted by HMA Ships Australia and Melbourne, HM Ships Psyche, Philomel, Pyramus, and the French cruiser Montcalm landed on the Samoan island of Apia on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1914. German Samoa was surrendered without a fight. Australia was subsequently dispatched to destroy the German radio station on Nauru. On arriving there on 9<sup>th</sup> September, the radio station was found to have already been disabled by its staff and Nauru was also surrendered without opposition.*

*The major Australian effort was directed at German New Guinea, in particular New Britain. On 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1914, a force consisting of HMA Ships Australia, Sydney, Encounter, Warrego, Yarra, Parramatta, submarines AE1 and AE2, a store-ship, three colliers, and the Berrima with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force embarked, arrived off Rabaul. On the same day, naval troops were landed by Sydney, and by Warrego and Yarra, at Herbertshohe and Kabakaul, respectively, to search for German radio stations. The second force was involved in a series of short contacts with German forces on its march inland to Bitapaka and finally occupied the radio station there around 7 pm.*

*Rabaul was occupied, unopposed, by troops from Berrima on 12<sup>th</sup> September. The German administration fled inland to Toma, but faced with an advance by Australian troops from Herbertshohe, supported by gunfire from Encounter, they surrendered German New Guinea on 17<sup>th</sup> September. In coming months Australian vessels and troops were dispatched to search and occupy Germany's other territories including the New Guinea mainland, New Ireland, the Admiralty Islands, the Western Islands, Bougainville, and the German Solomons."*

He appears to have returned home in March, 1915 when he was discharged, and he would later receive the 1914/15 Star.



The War in Gallipoli and France and Flanders took its toll of the Jersey-Australians though many would return home if a little damaged. One such man was Lieutenant Evelyn Maxwell Hinton Farquharson who would be severely wounded while still a Sergeant or Sergeant Major at Gallipoli. He was serving with the 10<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Horse and would very likely have received his wound(s) during the ill-fated assault on the Nek, and would be evacuated back to Australia. Returning to the fray in France and Flanders, he would be awarded the Military Cross (MC) (see the London Gazette 30997 of 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1918), and overall during that War would be wounded 5 times. 6543 Private George William Luce of was serving with the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion when he would collect his return ticket home. He was variously

described in his file as “nervy”, “concussed” and “suffering from shell shock”. Regardless of whichever label was applied, it would be appropriate as he was one of group of 5 men who were too close to a German shell landing nearby. Of this group, 3 were badly wounded, while the other man was killed. It is unsurprising that he was subsequently “nervy”!

Enemy action would not be the only means by which Jersey-Australians became casualties of the War. 290 Private George William Le Cras was accidentally wounded during bombing practice, while 6923 Private Wesley John Barrot was accidentally shot in the leg on the afternoon of 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1918, having taken part earlier in the advance during the first day of the Battle of Amiens. Lest the reader thinks that it was a Self Inflicted Wound, another soldier, 6928 Private AW Horsburgh was recommended to be disciplined for the offence, although nothing is recorded in his file regarding the incident. 6632 Private Yves Charles Boleat was medically discharged from the army in June 1918, having been invalided with trench foot. He did not head off to Australia immediately, having signed on as an Australian Munitions Worker, a path that would also be followed by 4090 Private Philip Le Masurier.



Everything that could be documented was, such as the personal effects returned via the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) Kit Store at 110 Greyhound Road in Fulham. It is curious to note that one package that found its way to John De Faye Walden at 39 Halkett Place in Jersey in February, 1918, contained items that belonged to his brother, 4625 Private Henry Thomas Walden, who is commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres, and that Henry Walden was originally reported as Missing in Action, but later, in mid-November, the report changed to KIA on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1917. The curiosity is not so much about the change of casualty report (it happened frequently), but the fact that the effects solely consisted of a wallet, 2 letters and a photograph and they would surely have been on his person!



The stories surrounding the fates of two men particularly interested me. The first is of 3137 Private Joseph Wells of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pioneer Battalion, who as many know, is buried at Villers-Bretonneux Cemetery having been killed on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1918. A contemporary account on his file recounts that, while his Battalion was advancing, he was struck in the forehead by a stray shell splinter and that he was buried in the churchyard cemetery at La Neuville Les Bray, south of Bray. There he lay, and, according to a letter written by his widowed mother Alice Maud Wells, she would visit his grave during 1922 on a visit to England and France where she found that it was the only British/Australian grave in that cemetery and was well kept. Expressing her wish that he should remain buried there, it also seems that she had an inkling that he might not, asking for the cross, erected by his mates in 1918, to be sent to St George's Cathedral in Perth.

He was obviously exhumed and moved after her visit, and it is interesting to note that the CWGC's cemetery report for Villers-Bretonneux Cemetery corroborates Alice Wells' letter in that his was the sole grave at La Neuville Les Bray. Alice, who had been widowed some 8 months before the loss of Joseph, would have been about 60 at the time of her trip, and it may be reasonable to assume that she went to Jersey, having been born in St Martin.



The second man is a Chaplain, Captain Gordon William Beaconsfield Statt. He enlisted in October, 1914, weighing 9 stones 2 pounds, and originally went into the Australian Army Medical Corps serving with 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian General Hospital in Egypt in the rank of Staff Sergeant. A year after enlisting, he was commissioned into the Chaplain's Department and would be attached to the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade of 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division as their Church of England Chaplain. He would disembark at Marseilles on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1916. Just over three weeks later, the diversionary and, for the Australians, the ill-fated Battle of Fromelles would take place, involving the 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division! We can assume that Chaplain Statt would have been involved, and we do know from his file that he had comforted a dying soldier from the 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, and had subsequently written to that soldier's parents.

The next date of note is 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1916, when he was given special leave until the 30<sup>th</sup> of that month to visit Oxford where his mother resided, and this was later extended until 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1916. Two things occurred during this period of extended leave. First, he complained of a cold that he had picked up at Fromelles and he would then become ill. The second is that on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 he wrote to the Senior Chaplain of the AIF seeking to resign his commission, which was agreed and would eventually take effect on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1917. However, during the bulk of that period he was in hospital, including the No 3 Southern General Hospital, where he was variously diagnosed as having trench fever, influenza and bronchitis, and neurasthenia. The symptoms had included vomiting, cramp in the limbs, insomnia and weight loss, at one stage some 2 stones. He was described in one assessment as run-down after two years at War, an unsurprising statement given a 20% plus weight loss.



With a decision agreed regarding his resignation, there are numerous notes on the file as to when it would become effective. However, there is no intimation as to the reason. Fromelles was his, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Division's, baptism of fire, and one account suggests that the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade was badly mauled as they had advanced. Had he somehow found that his Christian faith had been severely challenged as the events on the battlefield had unfolded? His physical condition in late 1916 was a cause for concern and may have been symptomatic of his mental state.

I've done a little digging, and found that his family was in the Jersey Census for 1901, although it seems that he was a draper's assistant living in Battersea and

aged 17 at that time. An item in the Times of 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1909 reported his ordination as a priest at St Andrew's Church in Auckland, Durham. After his resignation, except for a form that he signed on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1917, he appeared to have vanished off the face of the earth as far as the Australians were concerned, since in October, 1917, the Private Secretary to the Premier of Victoria wrote to the military enquiring as to his whereabouts. This was met with a "not known" reply, and in February, 1918, his sister Ruby signed a receipt for a commission. Whether the Premier's enquiry and the commission's receipt are linked, I don't know, but it may be an interesting line of research to pursue. However, a search on the London Gazette website for a possible brother's career found that Gordon WB Statt had become a Chaplain with the Royal Navy on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1917. For him it may therefore have a case of "All is well that ends well" with recovery to full health in spirit and in body.

Even if the War was over, the files continued to be used long after Armistice and the signing ceremony at Versailles. The award of medals had to be recorded and the process of pensions being paid had to be initiated - £1.17s.0d per fortnight or whatever the sum might be. We know that "nervy" George Luce for example, died on 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1945, while a letter dated 1924 would at last inform the military authorities that 609 Private Archibald Leopold (who may now be a case of non-commemoration to be considered by the CWGC) died in a Red Cross Convalescent Home three years previously on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1920.

With the small sample used, the files appear to reinforce and demolish some of the myths that have grown around the AIF, and we can better understand the events as they affected the group of Jersey-Australians who enlisted, and who were clearly a mixed bunch of heroes, saints and villains, and that is not meant to be a criticism. We should still be proud of them.



### **Fromelles**

Among the items that featured in a report on CWGC news in Journal 25 was the fact that work was under way to create a new war cemetery after the discovery of the mass burial pits at Pheasant Wood by Fromelles. To keep people informed as to their progress, the CWGC has developed the following website that has the latest news:

<http://www.cwgc.org/fromelles/>

But, in addition, the website is also seeking to find descendants of the 400 men who have been listed as believed to be buried there and, with the help of DNA analysis, try to identify their remains. When the list of names first emerged, we cross-checked it with Islanders who had died on either the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, and although we listed Privates Herbert William Le Maitre and James Patrick Murphy on Guernsey's Roll of Honour as serving with the AIF and being killed on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, neither feature on the CWGC's "to find" list. So the conclusion was quickly reached that there were no Channel Island links in this instance.

But, the situation altered after looking for further Jersey Australians as referred to in "Advance Australia Fair". Having identified new names, and read through their files, the exercise was extended to those who were already listed in Jersey's Roll of

Service, and in particular to glean such data as the award of 1914/15 or 1915 Stars, and the men's units. The file of 635 Sergeant Chester Cecil Church was opened, and within a few pages, there were reports that he was missing, that his identity discs had been returned, and then a German document reporting that he had died and been buried. This was clearly at odds with our information which had been collated from Victoria College's Book of Remembrance, that although it listed him as having served as a Sergeant with the AIF, he had not died and was thus not commemorated on Sir Galahad. The CWGC's "to find" list was revisited, to discover that he did feature.



Victoria College has been informed and they have confirmed that among the entrances for the Second Term 1904, there was a pupil called Church, Cecil Chester (School Register 2819) and that he had been entered by FG Aplin of the Grasshopper Hotel. It was noted in the Register that he served in the Great War as Sergeant, Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force, while the CWGC records that 635 Sergeant Chester Cecil Church, 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry, AIF, died on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1916.

Furthermore, he was the son of Augustus Mark and Susannah Louisa Church (nee Aplin), of 130, Cavendish St., Stanmore, New South Wales, and was a native of Brisbane. The Aplin connection is clearly corroborative and, although I have not received confirmation, the Sir Galahad memorial will now be engraved with his name as did occur with Emerson Currah.

I have also suggested that the College CCF might take on board helping the CWGC to trace living relatives, and also get involved in the commemorations at Fromelles in due course. Incidentally, Chester Church had been a member of Jersey's Militia, but I suspect that was as a cadet from the College before the OTC was formed in 1908.

### **The In from the Cold Project**

A few months ago, the Western Front Association's "Stand To" journal carried an article by the two men, Terry Denham and John Hartley, who set up this Project. Rather than summarise that article, I have taken the following four paragraphs from their website: <http://www.infromthecold.org/> which provides a far better explanation than I could.

**Aims:** Thousands of men and women died in the service of Britain and the Commonwealth during two world wars and yet there is no official recognition of their sacrifice. The *In From The Cold Project* (IFCP) was formed to research and identify all service men and women missing from the official CWGC list of casualties from the First and Second World Wars. We are determined to get these soldiers, sailors and airmen their due recognition – even after the passing of so many years. Unfortunately, a large number of names were missed from the lists supplied to the Commission and, as a result, many casualties have no official commemoration. Record keeping was not always as accurate as it should have been back in the pre-computer days of the early twentieth century. With modern technology and greater

accessibility to remaining records, it is possible through painstaking and often tedious research to find many of these missing names and to gather the supporting evidence required for recognition by CWGC and the appropriate military authorities.

**Work:** The vast majority of missing names relate to the First World War. The number who died in that first world conflict was far greater as far as the Commonwealth was concerned than in the Second World War and the record keepers had no previous experience to draw upon. Therefore, IFCP has set its first target as finding and submitting for commemoration as many of the missing casualties from the First World War as possible though cases from the second war are also taken up where possible. Initially, the Project is concentrating on those UK personnel who died whilst still in service rather than those who died after discharge as a result of wounds or service-related illness.

**Progress:** At the time of writing, IFCP has put forward and had accepted for commemoration about a hundred casualties of the First World War – men whose sacrifice had been forgotten and who now have their due recognition alongside their comrades. A small number will have war grave headstones erected but, sadly, the graves of most will remain lost forever. However, their names will now appear on the Menin Gate, on the memorials at Thiepval, Helles, Tyne Cot and on many of the other memorials to the missing maintained by CWGC around the world.

**How Many Men Are There Missing:** The simple answer to that question is – nobody knows! However, the Project's early researches indicate that there could be as many as 1,500 British in-service casualties missing from the official Debt of Honour maintained by CWGC. There are many more thousands missing when you take account of those that died after discharge and who would qualify for war grave status if only the authorities knew of them!

Since the article appeared in "Stand To", there has been some dialogue and they had noted our past efforts to commemorate Islanders such as Alwyn Bailey, Jean Blanchet and Albert Warne as well as the current efforts with John Helman, Garnet Burton and so forth. Clearly their effort is nationwide and that there are others who are helping on the project. They have also been able to obtain some funding from the UK Ministry of Defence to help obtain death certificates from the Statistics Office.

#### AMERICAN'S BODY FOUND.

Identified as That of R. L. Martin,  
Killed on Anglo-Californian.

LONDON, Sept. 7.—The body of a man found floating off the Isle of Jersey, has been identified at an inquest, through papers found on it, as that of R. L. Martin of 117 Marine Street, Boston. Martin was a foreman of the horsemen on board the British steamer Anglo-Californian, which was shelled July 4 by a German submarine while on her way from Montreal to Queenstown.

The Anglo-Californian was overhauled by a German submarine while carrying a cargo of horses to Great Britain. When she refused to heave to at the command of the submarine, the underwater boat shelled her, killing eight men of her crew, including Captain Parslow, who was shot down at the wheel, and two Americans, Martin and a man believed to be John Mahoney of New York. Captain Parslow's son took the wheel after his father was killed and brought the vessel into port.

One of the team has highlighted to use the case of RL Martin who was found floating in the sea on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 off Corbière in Jersey by fisherman, Frederick Muspratt. As can be seen from the article, Martin had been on HM Horse Transport "Anglo-Californian", when it had encountered the U-39. The Captain, Frederick Parslow, had the ship take evading action and was in the process "Abandoning Ship" when an RN ship signalled its approach and then continued. In the shelling, some men died on board while others, including Martin, died when their lifeboat was hit when still in the davits. Captain Parslow was awarded a VC posthumously in 1919, while his son received the DSC.

As to Martin, he is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, but it appears that his grave is known in Jersey, the confusion being that it might be in Green Street or at Mont à l'Abbé, and Ned Malet de Carteret is looking into this. Meanwhile, the IFCP have also highlighted two nurses with Jersey links who are commemorated, and these are being checked. An Alderney man who died at the Royal Naval Lunatic Asylum at Great Yarmouth is also being sought, and he is commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial as having no known grave. It is possible that he was brought back to Alderney for burial, and Liz Walton is looking into this.

It is hoped that further information will come the Group's way if there are Islanders who we have not identified, a case of the more pairs of eyes, the better.

### Faces Remembered



We've only one face to remember, that of Charles Brown, who was born in Nottingham in 1883, and at the age of 25, would come to live in Jersey and become a coachman to Sir Bertram Falle's maiden sister. One presumes that after a year's residence in Jersey he was required to enlist into the Royal Militia Island of Jersey, which was the law for British immigrants from the UK. I cannot identify him in the Militia's 1913 Nominal Roll, and it may be that, because of age and an establishment ceiling, he was no longer obliged to serve at that time but later when the war came, was mobilised.

With the Militia's suspension in 1917, he would have been liable for Army service and his name appears in Jersey's Roll of Service as a Gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) although we have no note of his service number, and where he served. However, his grandson, Roger, writes:

*"He told my father that in 1917 he was called up for service in the Army but, because he had a bad rupture, he was considered to be medically unfit for service overseas. In consequence he was stationed with the Royal Garrison Artillery (Coastal Defence Section) at South Hill to the south of Fort Regent where there were two six-inch coastal defence guns. My father states that when visiting him at South Hill one afternoon in 1918 he saw a submarine come to the surface just off the breakwater of Elizabeth Castle. My father drew his attention to it and for a while there was tremendous activity around the two guns on the hill as the submarine kept edging towards the harbour entrance without making its nationality known. It finally proved to be a French submarine."*

This conveniently leads us into the following photograph of an officer and a number of men with their heavy gun. Charles Brown is the Gunner standing second from the right, while it would appear that some of the men were from the (Royal) Army Ordnance Corps who were responsible for the repair and maintenance of artillery.



I must admit that before Roger Brown's note I had discounted the location as Jersey as the background did not "look" right, while the gun looked too heavy and would need towing. However, I now stand corrected having been informed that the photographer had been "Smiths of Jersey", and of course there was Roger's note. The gun initially posed a puzzle because the 1914-19 War Statistics book refers to the presence of five 4.7" Quick Firing (QF) guns in March, 1919, which I had assumed were in the South Hill Battery and were fixed. Research had indeed shown that there was a variant of the 4.7" QF that indeed had a fixed mount for ships and for coastal defence duties, but during the earlier stages of the War, the RGA had used a variant, that was mounted on a gun carriage, in all weighed around 2¼ tons, and was thus towable by horse or vehicle. They continued to be used in France and Flanders until 1917, when replaced by the 60 pounders, and were sent to other theatres (and Jersey?). I wonder if there is another gun barrel on the left of the picture and if the location is the glacis field at Fort Regent? Any thoughts?

### **A Welsh Break – Some Observations**

In late April, I took the opportunity to spend a few days driving around North Wales, and in particular, to visit the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum in Caernarfon Castle. The castle is a World Heritage Site, along with Conwy and Beaumaris, although there are a number of other castles which are just as important historically. However, my historic focus, as ever, was to look at sites with a Great War connection, and photograph headstones of two Jerseymen buried in North Wales.

Taking the photographic element first, without those CWGC signs so visible in France and Flanders, locating the cemeteries turned out to be navigationally challenging in the extreme. The Colwyn Bay visit had to be aborted on the outward journey and was only made on the return trip, having received instructions of where to come off the A55 on the return. The Cemetery at Conwy was almost as difficult to locate with narrow streets, tight turns and steep hills to negotiate, leaving me to ponder how hearses might similarly arrive.

The A55 from the direction of Chester brings one into the sweep of the North Wales coastline at Colwyn Bay, but just before that there is Bodelwyddan Castle and the nearby Kinmel Park. This area was a major training area for the troops during the War, and the Castle grounds still have the training trenches. As bad luck would have it, the Castle would not be open for another week, while access to the area of trenches was hampered by the fencing and the roaming livestock.



**A Wiring Party? Some Party!**

The visit to the RWF Museum gave me the opportunity to meet and thank the Curator, Brian Owen, and the Archivist, Anne Pedley, for all the help that they provided in finding a photograph with Coutart de Butts Taylor in it while still using his alias of Charles Edward Collins. One or two of the Guernsey group members will know Brian as he worked at the Guernsey Museum Service for eight years before taking up his current position. Anne contributes to the Great War magazine which, I think, is published by Northern Publishing. They are not actually based in the Museum itself, but in the Old Barracks in Caernarfon, where much of the non-displayed artefacts are stored. We spent a few enjoyable hours discussing the Great War and some of the tales about the RWF, as well as being able to handle medals and other items that had belonged to Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Captain JFC Dunn (“The War The Infantry Knew”).

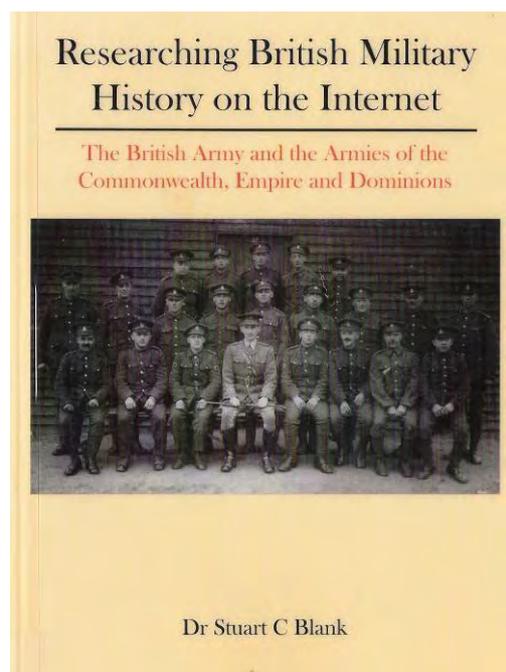
Brian and I had discussed the claim that Coutart had served in the South Africa campaign, and mention of his earlier association with the RWF. However, proof has not been forthcoming, although Brian reminded me of the RWF Details that were based at Fort Regent in 1902, and Frank Richards’ “Old Soldier Sahib” which makes reference to that period.

The Museum is in part of the Castle’s walls, and is quite well laid out having regard to the long and distinguished history of the Regiment. If there is a drawback, it is not convenient for wheelchair users with virtually having to scale, with rope, the castle walls to get to the excellent Medals Room and then through to the top floor of the Museum to again descend the various levels to move from the 1600s to the present day. Unfortunately, photography is not allowed (security, fire system?) and so I could not “shoot” the excellent Great War displays. Obviously time was spent studying each item, not least Sassoon’s MC which the Museum had obtained a few years ago from the family in a private arrangement to forestall its auction that I had seen referred to in a newspaper item which had predicted a £12,000+ bid. I should say that the other phases of the Regiment’s history were equally well presented, especially the period of the South African War and the Boxer Rebellion.

Turning to Caernarfon itself, I must confess to total ignorance of the fact that David Lloyd George was its MP for over 50 years, and was made aware of this by his statue in the Castle Square, which informed me that he was also the Castle's Constable, and which featured a relief of the Versailles Conference. It is easy to forget that people who reach high political office still have their constituency to represent. He was buried at Llanystumdwy near Criccieth on the southern side of the Llyn Peninsular from Caernarfon, and there is a Museum to him there, another place to visit when I have more time.

As with cities, towns and villages throughout the UK, Caernarfon is no different in having a memorial to its dead from both world wars. But, also located in the Castle Square, the town's memorial is the first that I've seen which lists the men's names, but in addition, where there are a number of men with the same surname and first name or initials, distinguishes them by citing their home address. One other name is commemorated in Caernarfon and that is of Group Captain Lionel Wilmot Brabazon Rees who won the VC and the MC during the Great War and who was born in the town. A plaque to his memory is affixed to the seaward facing Castle wall, although he survived the Great War, dying in the Bahamas in 1955.

### Book Reviews



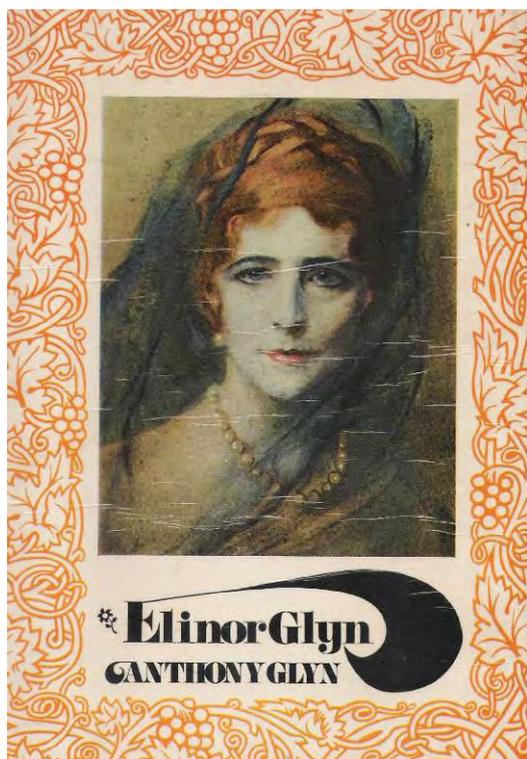
#### Researching British Military History on the Internet By Dr Stuart C Blank

Where does one find an internet site for this particular military campaign or that battalion of the Loamshire Regiment? Too often, one has to "Google", and more in hope than expectation. However, Dr Blank has assembled a reference book, in all 150 pages, that lists some 200 plus websites that deals with the military history of Great Britain, its Empire, and later the Commonwealth, down the ages. He treats the Great War as one element of a much longer timeline, although the photographs on front and back covers are Great War related as are those on the frontispiece. But, Dr Blank goes a step further in that each website is described in a few paragraphs as to what can be found.

The scope of this small book is quite broad in that it deals with Regiments, Campaigns, Ex-Service Personnel Associations, Medals and Awards, Archives, Museums, Battlefield Tour companies, Graves and Memorials and so forth. The book, which came out in 2007, is useful, yet it is not if I can explain. For, once the required website addresses are known and entered on one's PC as Favourites, the book, which is priced at £12.50, becomes somewhat redundant, and of course, in dedicated to dealing with the British side of the coin, there are no references to French, American and German websites.

The other aspect is that it can soon become out of date as new websites develop, and I can anticipate 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Editions. It is probably best borrowed from your local library if you need to consult it for information. That said, I have highlighted the

existence of our website to the author, and he has said that he will include it in any future Edition.



## **Elinor Glyn** **By Anthony Glyn**

This would appear as an unusual book for me to have been reading and then reviewing for the Journal, for as many will know, Elinor Glyn was regarded as the pioneer of women's erotic fiction and created the "It" girl as epitomised by Clara Bow. There were reasons for this. I had been prompted having read Margaret Macmillan's book "Peacemakers" two years ago (see the Review in Journal 16, October 2007) noting a reference to Elinor's presence at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919, having inveigled an invitation from Lloyd George. The other aspect was more important, in that from some dark recess in my head, I had a vague recollection of her being Jersey-born. But, I had never read her books (honest!).

The biographer, a grandson, kept very much to her life in a chronological order, while much of the book deals with her books and the apparent autobiographic nature of them, so that was skimmed over as I read. Very little is written of any affairs that she may have had, save that for some eight years until 1916, when she had been the mistress of the former Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon.

Much of her early life was spent in Jersey, having been born at 1, St Saviour's Road (information thanks to Heather Morton) in October, 1864, at Richelieu on the road (?) from St Helier to St Clement, and at 55 Colomberie, leaving there for London when her stepfather died in 1889. It is clear that the family were socially accepted among the retired Indian Army officers and families of that period, and Elinor was regularly to be found playing at Government House with Ada, the daughter of General WSR Norcott who was Lieutenant-Governor during the period 1873-1878. It is recounted that she had her first kiss on the roof of Victoria College! Was it with Gerald Norcott, Ada's older brother who attended College and who is commemorated on our Roll of Honour? Who knows? Interestingly, she was on a cross-channel packet that ran onto Les Casquets in 1875.

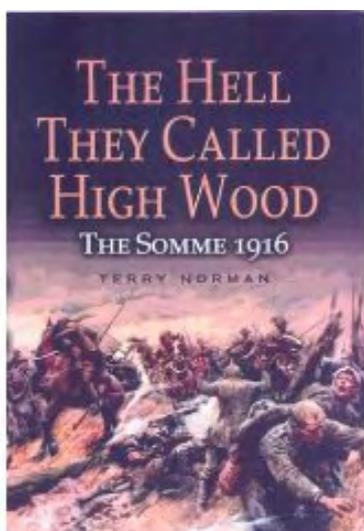
Her mobility, social skills and, in due course, her writing enabled her to adapt to the higher levels of society in both England and France where she was equally at home. However, along with her involvement with Curzon, she would also become familiar to many in the government, and particularly, Lord Alfred Milner who was a member of Lloyd George's war cabinet from late-1916. With these connections, she would undoubtedly have been aware of many high-powered deliberations into the Great War's conduct, although there is little, if any, reference to the disclosures that may have been made.

With the advent of war, she became involved in, first, working at mobile canteens in London, where as a stickler for good manners herself, she was much impressed by the good manners shown by the British Tommy as he was served his tea and sticky bun. Later on in France, while waiting for papers that permitted her to travel as a war correspondent to the battle areas, she was involved with a Franco-American relief organisation aimed at resettling those French who had become displaced by German occupation. In this, she was somewhat critical that the well heeled French ladies could not roll their sleeves up in the manner of their Anglo-Saxon opposite numbers! Spending much of this time in Paris, she would get to know the lever-pullers and would be a frequent dinner companion of many.

While used to a more comfortable way of life, her war correspondent role, when the paperwork eventually came through, would mean nights when she would be forced to “rough it” close to the frontline sleeping in her car or some billet. On one occasion when detained as a suspected spy, the fact that among her baggage was a pink silk nightgown convinced her detainers that she could not have been! It was as an accredited war correspondent that she attended Versailles, and although she had already met Lloyd George, there was no indication that she was helped by him.

The book notes her comments on various characters. Lloyd George with his Welsh lilt and flowing hair was considered a foreigner and a troubadour by Elinor, while Woodrow Wilson’s professorial solutions for the peace should have been more rigorously challenged as they were less than substantial. Having seen the French stone the German delegation on their departure, she felt that Lloyd George subsequently developed some sympathy for them as the underdogs.

Following the Great War, she did work for WR Hearst, and went to Hollywood as a scriptwriter. After her departure in 1889, it seems that she only visited her birthplace once more in February 1939, and it would appear that she was critical of the developments around Jersey’s coastline. *Rien ne change!* Dying in 1943, she would not have seen the German legacy! Throughout the book, the author remained largely discreet as to his grandmother’s life, and it would be interesting to see the many papers that I suspect that the family holds today. The book added little value in terms of my understanding of the Great War, but it satisfied a mild curiosity in this Jersey lady.



### **The Hell They Called High Wood By Terry Norman**

It is doubly sad that Terry Norman died in 1994. In the first instance there must be sympathy for his family and friends, but also for many readers whose choice of his books have been limited to this book and to “Armageddon Road: A VC’s Diary, 1914-16”, a book about the brief life of Major “Billy” Congreve, VC, DSO, MC. At the outset, I have to say that this is a book that I would strongly recommend as compulsory Great War reading.

High Wood (Bois des Foureaux or Fourcaux), a rough diamond-shaped wood with each of its corners pointing to the cardinal compass points, was at the most northern

of the “horseshoe” of woods through which, after the first day the Battle of the Somme, were seen as the best opportunity for the British to advance and to bring the cavalry into action. The comparative success of the two Corps on the southern flank on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1916 had presented a fleeting opportunity for further movement, but a reticence to advance with the consequent exposure of the formations’ flank saw a more cautious approach northwards.

The book covers the progress as the Army slowly made its way forward, battling to secure Mametz, Bernafay and Trônes Woods against stiff German defending and counter-attacking, and then on the night of 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, the battle to take control of the Bazentin Ridge which was achieved, with the exception of Longueval by around 9 a.m. The way to High Wood and beyond to the German third line appeared clear, but any move by the Infantry Divisions was delayed because of the risk of enfilading fire from parts of Longueval and Delville Wood still in German hands. An Indian Cavalry Division was given the task to enter the Wood, but not until about 10 hours later. The Wood, empty earlier that day now started filling up with Germans pouring in to occupy the Switch Trench that ran roughly east to west through the northern corner of the Wood.

During the first few days subsequently the British would try advancing from the south-west face, only to be pressed back by the Germans with few net gains in terms of the real estate. Then, before an attack was launched in late July, it was discovered that the Germans had dug an Intermediate Trench to the north of Bazentin-Le-Petit. An attack on 30<sup>th</sup> July saw some of this trench taken while other assaults in and by the wood were again repulsed, with a the help of a well-sited machine gun emplacement in the Wood’s eastern corner. This situation would continue throughout August where, though the Germans were pushed back to the west of the Wood, little real progress was made inside. Both sides subjected the other to shelling, and for good measure, British shells were hitting their own side thanks to the worn out state of many of the Artillery’s gun barrels.

The author recounts some innovations that were applied, not least a continuous 14 hour machine gun barrage by six Vickers on German positions designed to keep heads down. When water to keep the barrels cool ran out, the crews resorted to using their urine, while two men spent the whole time refilling the ammunition belts. During that period, almost one million rounds were fired. Other innovations were far more “Heath Robinson”, and unsurprisingly less successful, such as underground pipe charges that were meant to explode and create new trenches, while another device would project flaming oily rag bundles in the enemy’s direction. Mining was undertaken and that was aimed at the disposing of the machine gun emplacement referred to in the previous paragraph.

Against the new Tank Corp’s advice, four tanks would be committed to the task of capturing High Wood on 15<sup>th</sup> September, but again, success was not forthcoming, with one veering off course and another bottoming on stumps just a few yards in. Shelling had by then reduced the trees to stumps and fallen down trunks, a situation that would be of no advantage in using the limited mobility of a Mark 1 tank. However, success (if it can be considered as such) would be eventually achieved by the 47<sup>th</sup> (London) Division, but at a cost that would see some 4000 plus casualties to be added to the thousands already killed and wounded. The Division’s General Officer Commanding, Major-General Barter would subsequently lose his job through the high loss of life, a situation for which he would seek an enquiry, since it was

considered somewhat unfair with Barter being treated as a scapegoat by his Corps Commander.

I was impressed that the author had varied the pace of the account, dealing quite quickly with the general nature of the Somme battles and dealing with the decisions being made at high-level, yet taking more time in descriptions of the actual fighting. It is clear from this book and “Armageddon Road”, that the author was very much a “Congreve man” *père et fils*, in having made use of some family material! He also made good use of other participants’ accounts, including that of a Corporal Martin Guiton of the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion, London Regiment (a Channel Islander possibly?) who would lose a leg at High Wood. If there is a criticism here, and it is a slight one, there were no annotations to show the reference material. The other excellent feature was in referring to the troops who belonged to those Battalions either held ready to support the assaulting Battalions or those in reserve. They were important while battle raged in a number of aspects, in tasks such as ammunition carrying and ration parties, trench digging and helping in casualty clearance. He reminds us that they were also taking casualties while they carried out those tasks, as were the Artillery, who were located in Caterpillar Valley.

The book was intended to be read! I am sorry if that sounds a little cock-eyed, but it also strikes me that it would serve as a highly useful guide to the various stages of the fight around the Wood. Many of us know the terrain albeit, in a somewhat general manner. However, it is well illustrated with excellent maps of the various phases showing the trench lines at each phase, the direction in which each Battalion went and other key features. I will certainly take it with me in October, when I next visit the Somme and will use it to “walk the course”. The photographs were of a lesser quality, but that was not too much of an issue.

Although the copy that I read came off the Library shelf, it is available at around £13.97 (hardcopy) and £10.49 (softcopy) from Amazon. Go for the hardcopy as I suspect that the softcopy’s maps will not be of an adequate enough quality to read and interpret.

### **Where and When?**

Valerie Sarre has very kindly sent in a number of photographs which are greatly welcomed. I have a number of queries as to some with just a few men in, but I have included two at the end of the Journal in the hope that someone can come up with more information. In both cases, I have assumed that the men are in the RGLI, but I could be wrong.

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

Having recently returned from France, with visits to some 50+ Cemeteries both French and British, just over a 100 photographs will be added to or replace existing ones in the Rolls of Honour.

The Jersey Roll of Service has been updated with some 80 additional names, largely as a result of the “Naval Gazing” and “Advance Australia Fair” analyses, but has also included the inclusion of further medals where discovered. It is expected that another update will happen in early August.

The News feature is being used to promote “Ours” and to highlight Chester Church and Fromelles.

A further Jersey Passenger list should be available by mid-August. Future updates depend on the Archives ability to transcribe more data.

Work on Jersey mismatches between the CWGC and ourselves is on hold until July. Vic Geary has done a great job going through the lists provided in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office, letter preparation is the next phase.

### Out and About

No trips have been advised for the near future. Those which have taken place recently are dealt with elsewhere in this Journal.

Looking a little further, Ian Ronayne’s talk in Jersey is on 21<sup>st</sup> November, while I will be giving one to the North Wales WFA at some stage in 2010

My next trips are Gallipoli in September, and then Ypres, Poperinghe and the Somme in October.

### Odds and Ends

**New RGLI Museum:** In part, a long term aim of the Guernsey Museum Service, in part, the opportunity to capitalise on the excellent material generated by their “Cambrai 1917” exhibition, a new permanent Museum dedicated to the RGLI will be opening in Castle Cornet as of 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2009. It is anticipated that the Journal will carry a report on it next time around.

**Naval Gazing:** A further visit to Kew in late May saw the collection of another 60-70 records of Jersey born naval ratings. These will be analysed over the next two months and a summary will appear in Journal 27. In advance of this, one further man, William James Burton, has been identified and added to Jersey’s Roll of Honour.

**Philatelic Matters:** Shown below is the final set of “Uniform” stamps to be issued on 17<sup>th</sup> September by the British Post Office following on from the Army and the Royal Air Force issues (Journals 14 and 20). The WRNS Second Officer represents the Great War involvement and serves to remind that the war saw the first large-scale involvement by British women in the conduct of war.



**Captain Coutart de Butts Taylor, MM:** While little research has been taken place, there have been a few happenings which will be of interest. Firstly, I’ve completed a

first issue of "Honour Redeemed", a 42 page account of his life and the associated research material. It is now featured on the website as Issue 1A. The reason behind using this convention is that numbers will be used for any future content changes while alpha characters will indicate changes made to typos and writing style.

Secondly, the kettle has been presented to the RWF Museum by Len Rowlands, its owner. It is in a way sad that it did not return to Jersey, but I think that he felt that it might not be adequately displayed given the background, and felt that it might find a better home at Caernarfon when one considers Coutart's military redemption was achieved with the RWF.

Finally, some 90 years after the War Office wrote to Headquarters, Jersey District recommending that Coutart be reinstated as a Captain in Jersey's Militia. Jersey's present Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant General Andrew Ridgway gave due consideration to that recommendation, and following discussions with the UK Ministry of Defence and Jersey's Bailiff, Sir Philip Bailhache, the Lieutenant-Governor approved Coutart's reinstatement which was subsequently promulgated in London Gazette 59083 on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2009.

**The Visit of King George V to France – August, 1918:** Journal 27 will carry a piece on the King's visit, the guards provided by the RGLI, and the related award of medals.

**Jersey Non-Commemorations:** Though it seemed to a medical layman such as I, that a case for the CWGC to commemorate Garnet Cory Burton's death was not really supportable, a letter was sent to them about six weeks ago, more in hope than expectation, endeavouring to make a case no matter how contentious. There has been no response to date. In Herbert Cudlipp's case, nothing has progressed as family information has still not materialised.

Similarly, no response has been received to a JEP appeal for information regarding the four sailors (Ounan, Breban, Lindsey and Turner) and support has been offered by the IFCP people.

**Australian Leave and Education:** Some interesting queries have been received regarding Australians coming to Jersey following the Great War on extended periods of leave to acquire and develop work skills for when they were repatriated home. Ian Ronayne is currently looking into this with the hope that an article will be available in the next Journal.

### Enfin

Well, another Journal is closed. This is a perennial plea of mine for some new blood, and indeed old blood to generate a few more articles, book reviews, pictures of Uncle Albert and what have you. I say this because I feel that I am starting to bore people with my perambulations. However, do enjoy this one!

Regards  
Barrie H Bertram  
15<sup>th</sup> June, 2009

## Journal Issue Dates For 2009

The planned Issue dates for 2009 are as shown below. Any changes will be notified if needed, but I do not foresee any events that can cause programme change at the present time.

Issue	Month	Articles To BB	Posted Web/Mail
24	February 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
25	April 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>
26	June 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
27	August 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
28	October 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
29	December 2009	10 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>



Where and When? - 1



Where and When? – 2



HENRY JONES	ROBERT MORGAN
JOHN JONES, SPAIN PLACE	WILLIAM REES NANNEY (DEATHED)
JOHN JONES, 142, PENYMAELIA	JOHN H. NANNEY (DEATHED)
T. O. JONES	GEORGE OWEN
J. JONES (FRON LODGET)	GORONWY OWEN
JOHN JONES, 512, ST. HELENS STREET	JOHN O. OWEN
JOHN JONES, 117, CALDER (LAMPPOST)	JOHN L. OWEN
ROBERT JONES	WILLIAM R. OWEN
JOHN H. JONES	WILLIAM H. OWEN (DEATHED)
JOHN O. JONES, (DEATHED) (CONTRACT)	HUGH OWEN
JOHN O. JONES, (DEATHED) (CONTRACT)	WALTER PALMAR
MORNY'S WAYNNE, JONES	ALBERT E. PARRY

A Welsh Break – Photo Album