

**JOURNAL  
33**

**Channel Islands  
Great War  
Study Group**  
[www.greatwarci.net](http://www.greatwarci.net)



**August  
2010**



**The Jersey Contingent's Backbone  
RSM Jack Le Breton**

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Hello All

Having picked up on heritage and heritage-related tourism in the last Journal, I will lead off on it again this time, having noted with some pleasure that the States of Jersey are proposing to put some £665K to heritage for the continuing upkeep of a number of Island sites. However, subsequently seeing a Channel TV news item (shown on the 9<sup>th</sup> July) on the problems of artefact storage being experienced by Guernsey's Museums' Service, I gained the impression that they were also in dire need of a large dollop of money, £2M in fact, just to be able to store non-displayed artefacts in a serviceable condition. It is sometimes forgotten or ignored that money needs to be spent on what is normally out of sight, and also that that today's item of use is tomorrow's museum piece. Heritage grows as a function of time!

I made no comment in Journal 32 on the articles that it contained, however, I hope that you were as fascinated as I was with Ned Malet de Carteret's piece on his first cousin twice removed, John 'Jock' Armstrong. Jock's letters show a considerable degree of observation powers in noting the minutiae of naval life, the impact of the armistice as well as social 'goings on' in Jersey over those three months. There is an undercurrent of concern with the Spanish flu outbreak, while we are also treated to train timetables of the day! It was funny being reminded of the old boat train service from Waterloo to Southampton, leaving at 2.30 pm and arriving at 4.00 pm, and yet, with ninety years of progress, today's journey is only five minutes quicker, and it no longer takes you quayside! I've re-read Ned's article several times since.

Turning to this Journal, Liz Walton follows up on her article on Wilfred Picton Warlow (Journal 32) with a look at a further number of Guernsey aviators, while Ian Ronayne 'returns to the fold', following three trips to France in quick succession, by looking at the Le Boustoullers, a French family that had moved to Jersey. It is a reminder that, if the 'British-Jersey' contribution in the Great War is not adequately recognised, that of the 'French-Jersey' population is less so.

The Book Reviews rarely receive a 'Mention in Despatches', but as ever, Peter Tabb, our literary stalwart, consistently provides us with an insight into what can be found on the bookshelf. Nor should I forget Alan Bertram who opened his innings with a review of Hibberd's 'Wilfred Owen' in the last Journal. As ever, my thanks go to all of them, and others not specifically mentioned, who have contributed.

### **This Month's Cover**

It is frequently said that the Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs) are the "backbone of the British Army", and none more so than the Warrant Officers (a view that I would not argue with having been one!). But, what finer example was there to support that premise than RSM Jack Le Breton, who through the indisposition of Jersey officers, looked after the interests of the men in the Jersey Contingent.

A formal picture, it shows him wearing a Sam Browne belt, the royal coat of arms badge as a Warrant Officer Class 1, and the overseas service stripes that cover the years 1915-17. But, it is interesting to note that his medal ribbons which, although shown in black and white, appear to be the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and the Military Medal (MM). However, all is not what it seems as you will be able to find out in "The Medal That Never Was" later on in this Journal.

## Volunteer(s) Wanted

One of the areas that is still lacking on the 'Channel Islands in the Great War' website is that of a Guernsey Roll of Service to complement the existing Guernsey Roll of Honour. As far as can be determined Guernsey never established a Roll of Honour and Service in the same fashion as Jersey did in 1919. We were therefore fortunate in being able to create Jersey's Roll from the existing data, even allowing for a fair proportion of inaccuracies.

We're looking for one or more volunteers who could create and maintain Guernsey's Roll. It would be an exercise starting from a 'clean sheet of paper', but, there are the 'Diex Aix' listings that can be used as a base, while those who served in the forces from the dominions could be identified by 'Guernsey names' or by key field searches in databases. Similarly, one cannot expect it to be 100% accurate or complete from the outset as names and their details will continue to emerge. Jersey's equivalent is no where near complete, after more than five years. If you are interested in taking up the challenge can we ask that you contact Roger Frisby and me on our new E-Mail addresses (see in **Odds and Ends** below).

## The French Connection

Looking for British Great War dead, we need to look no further than the CWGC Debt of Honour Register or the ODGW/SDGW, either on a CD-ROM or the Ancestry.co.uk website. However, what of the French? There is no non-government equivalent and it is in fact handled within France's Ministry of Defence by the department for the Secretary General of Administration (SGA). The first useful link is:

<http://www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/spip.php?rubrique16>

It offers three links, the first being 'Morts pour la France'. Following that link will lead you to a new page with 'Formulaire de Recherche' as the second option. From this new page you can enter the surname you are looking for, and other information that you may have, but remembering that less input means more information, sometimes as Liz Walton has reminded me, by ticking the 'Contient' (or 'Contains') box and entering just part of the surname. Hitting 'Lancer la Recherche' will create a list that contains Name, Forename, Date and Department of Birth, and by selecting the name you want from the list, a manuscript death certificate will appear. That will include his fate whether he was killed, died of wounds or disappeared. It will tell you where he died, but not where he was buried. For that information, instead of hitting 'Lancer la Recherche', go to 'Vous cherchez un lieu de sépulture'. This will provide a new list from where, again by name selection, the grave can be found. However, there will be a numerical mismatch between two lists with the same surname, and this is due to the missing (or 'disparu') being unaccounted for or that the grave has been lost. This is clearly different to the CWGC approach. At this point, what better place to experiment than with names from the next article? But, watch for spelling differences!

Hopefully, we can take a brief look at the French regimental system and unit war diaries in the next Journal.

**Brothers in Arms**  
**The Le Boustouller Family in Peace & War**  
**By Ian Ronayne**

Within hours of starting on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1915, it was obvious that the Second Battle of Champagne was doomed to the same failure as its predecessor.

Launched on the dusty chalk plains east of Paris, September's offensive was the culminating French attempt of to pierce the German defences that year and bring an end to the nightmare of trench warfare. Up until then, all previous efforts had failed. For the thousands of French soldiers waiting nervously to go over the top that morning, the hope would have been this was the one to succeed. Sadly for them, and millions of other soldiers on both sides, it was not to be. Optimism and courage proved hopelessly inadequate once more against determined German machine guns on a battlefield churned up by rain and shelling. When the fighting petered out in October, French casualties approached 145,000 men. Among the many dead was an Yves-Marie Le Boustouller from Jersey.

It was in 1906, or possibly early in 1907, that the Le Boustouller family first arrived in Jersey from Brittany's Côtes-d'Armor region where the head of the household, Jean Le Boustouller, found casual work as an agricultural labourer. Even before 1906, however, Jersey's flourishing potato industry had drawn Jean to seek work in the Island on a seasonal basis. Now working in Jersey was no easy option – for minimal wages farm labourers had to endure long hours of toil and often wretched living conditions. But it seems that it was at least preferable to life in Brittany because at some point the Le Boustouller family decided to make the move to Jersey a permanent one.



**Marie Le Boustouller**

Sadly, it turned out that Jean did not live to see that day. Just before the family departed France, he unexpectedly died leaving behind wife Marie and their nine children, the youngest of which was just a babe-in-arms. Nevertheless, the move to Jersey went ahead and Marie arrived with her five sons and two of her four daughters to take up residence at Brook Cottages on St Aubin's Hill.

The Le Boustoullers would have found a large and thriving French community already living and working in the island. As export demand for the Jersey Royal soared, so too had the number of Bretons serving the local farming industry. Like Jean Le Boustouller, most had started out as seasonal migrants, coming only to the island for the planting and harvesting seasons. But also like him, they had seen the chance to improve their lives and made the decision to move to Jersey on a more permanent basis.

Once in Jersey, many set out to farm land of their own, although local laws prevented them from buying fields or property in their own right. So they rented small plots from local farmers or landowners who saw the opportunity to make some easy money, and settled their families in whatever buildings were to hand. Although conditions were tough, this clearly did not put the newcomers off because the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>

Century, the number of French nationals in Jersey had reached nearly 6,000. It was a figure not welcomed by everyone in Jersey however.

As the French presence grew, so too did the sense of resentment among the local population. While seasonal workers may have been acceptable, the increasingly permanent 'foreign' presence was certainly not. The Breton community was blamed for the increasing land prices, for taking jobs from locals, for looking different, for speaking a different language, for having a different religion. In fact, some among the local population saw the Breton presence as a threat to Jersey's traditional way of life. If conditions were already challenging for the immigrants, local hostility certainly would not have made it easier.



**Yves-Marie Le Boustouller**

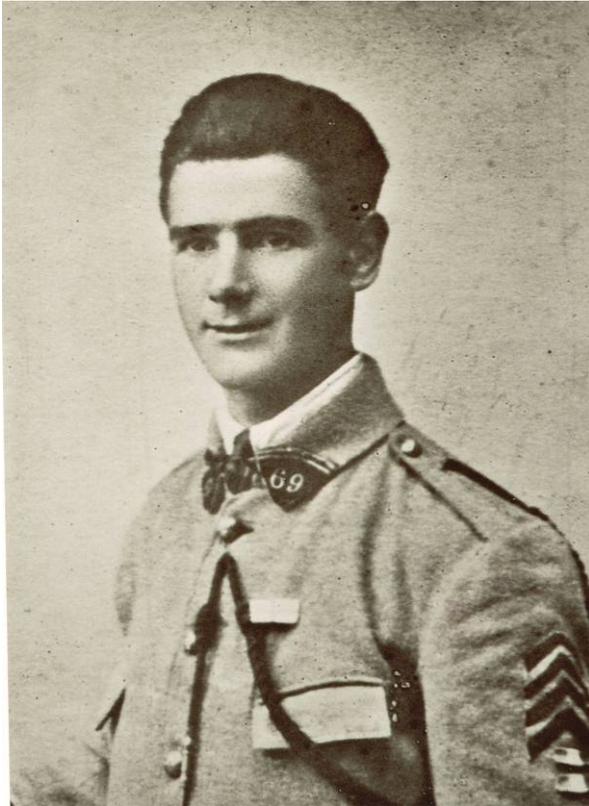


**Emmanuel Le Boustouller**

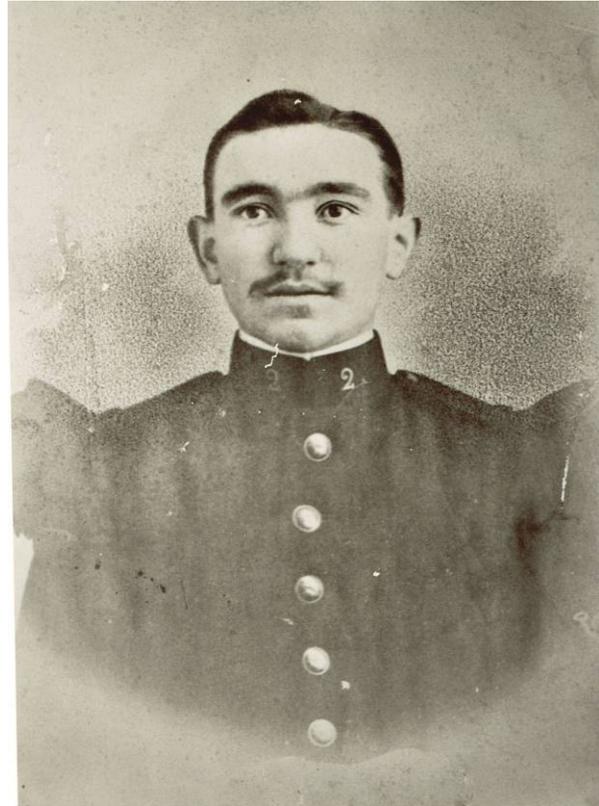
Nevertheless, numbers continued to rise. By 1911, the number of French nationals had climbed to over 10,000, or one in five of the population. Despite local hostility, there seemed to be no going back – the Bretons were in Jersey to stay and steadily becoming an integral part of island community. But a cloud lay on the horizon. With the outbreak of the Great War in August, 1914 things were about to change.

Despite living in Jersey, in peacetime and war, all Frenchmen were required to serve their country. Upon reaching the age of 20, they commenced a three year period of national service in the armed forces. Once complete, for the next twenty years a man remained liable for recall in the event of war. At the start of August, 1914, this recall, or mobilisation order, arrived in Jersey and overnight, several thousand of the Island's French families were wrenched apart as men hurried to rejoin their regiments. One of those families was the Le Boustoullers.

For three of the Le Boustouller brothers August's mobilisation had meant a return to the army. Having already completed national service before the war, Yves-Marie rejoined the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Artillerie à Pied, while Emmanuel and Louis went back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiments respectively. In no time, all three units were in the thick of the fighting, attacking the Germans on the frontier or desperately defending as the enemy threatened Paris and the Channel Ports. As the war dragged on into 1915, brother Theophile joined them, leaving Jersey to serve in the French Army's 69<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment.



**Theophile Le Boustouller**



**Louis Le Boustouller**

That left only the youngest Le Boustouller brother, 16 year-old Alain, at home in Jersey, presumably waiting for eventual call-up into the French Army. But for reasons not fully known, he chose a different path, and in doing so perhaps underlined the changes taking place in the Breton community's relationship with Jersey. In October, 1916, Alain volunteered for the British Army. Modifying his name to sound more English and giving a false age, he joined the Hampshire Regiment before transferring to the Machine Gun Corps (Regimental number 86390 - Ed) for service in France.

The war sadly took its toll on the Le Boustouller family - whether serving in the French or British armies. Yves-Marie, as we have seen, died on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1915 while fighting in France's Champagne region. A few months later, on the 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1916, tragedy struck again when Emmanuel was killed while serving in the dreaded Argonne Forest, leaving Marie Le Boustouller to cope with loss of her husband and two sons. Fortunately, there were no further fatalities, although both Theophile and Alain would suffer wounds through gas poisoning.

In the years that followed the war, Marie chose to leave Jersey and return to France. Her children, including the three surviving Le Boustouller boys, chose to remain in the island however, and there raise their families. Jersey had clearly become their home, and remains the home today for lots of their descendents.

Many people living in Jersey today can trace their roots back to the Breton immigrants of 100 or so years ago. The Le Boustouller story, while special in its own right, and certainly remarkable given divided wartime loyalties, will certainly not be unique. But how many of us are aware of the hardship and suffering faced by these newcomers, in peacetime and in war, and how many, when passing comment on the latest wave of migrants arriving in our island to live and work, realise that their forebears may have faced the same comments a couple of generations ago. Rien n'a changé!



**Alain Le Boustouller**

### **CWGC Non-Commemorations**



The CWGC have received feedback from the Royal Marines Historical Branch who have accepted Major John W Dustan, Royal Marine Light Infantry as a war casualty. He will be added to the Debt of Honour Register once the CWGC have surveyed his headstone at St Paul's CE Churchyard at Langleybury (near Watford), where the Commission already commemorates four (one Great War and three WW2) war dead.

### **Fromelles - A Further Update**

Many will have watched on television, or read in the newspapers of, the moving ceremony held at Fromelles on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, to the day, the ninety-fourth anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles. The BBC news channel provided a live feature, a fact that I discovered too late to rearrange what I was doing, but of what I saw, I could not fail to be moved by the letter readings and the poignant symbolism in using a GS wagon to bear the last set of remains for burial and using a cornet from one of the units at Fromelles to play the Last Post.

Prior to the ceremony, the identification process turned up two further men, now making it that 96 of the 250 men found have now been identified via their DNA and other items. The process must rightly be slow, painstaking and laborious to ensure accuracy, so a 38.4% completion figure is indeed remarkable, given the comparatively short time between the removal from the burial pits and last month's ceremony. I am disappointed that Chester Cecil Church is not amongst those 96, but I remain convinced that he is one of the remaining 154 who have yet to be formally identified, based upon the evidence of German documentation in his file, and the contents in the article below, which is taken from the Sydney Morning Herald of 9<sup>th</sup> April, 1917.

**WAR CASUALTIES**  
—♦—  
**KILLED.**  
—  
**SERGEANT C. C. CHURCH.**  
Information has been received from the Red Cross Bureau that the name of Sergeant Chester Cecil Church appeared in the German list of dead issued on November 4. Confirmation of this has been received by letter from a wounded comrade, who saw him lying dead in a German trench on July 19. His only brother, Sapper Theodore Mark Church, R.E., Kitchener's Army, died in England on April 2, 1915. They were both single, and the only sons of the late Mr. Augustus Mark Church, of Brisbane, and of Mrs. Church, of Tyrle, Allison-road, Randwick.

It has been widely acknowledged that men buried by the Germans were those that had reached the German trenches before being killed, and it would not have been logical for the Germans to have been gone forward of their front line to recover the bodies of the Australian and British fallen.

However, there is also the news of another Channel Islands link to Fromelles with Private Victor Simon, the son of Guernseyman, John Blondel Simon having been formally identified and buried in the Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery with a named headstone (Grave IV.C.2).

What is strange is that the Australian government originally identified that the burial pits could contain the 191 men that were listed, yet so far, 205 have been identified as Australian, and Private Simon is one of the 14 that were not originally considered.

Returning to the quest to identify Chester Church's remains, any possibility that the maternal line can provide definite mitochondrial DNA evidence appears to be somewhat limited, and I think that little if anything has been done to consider the paternal line commencing with Chester's father, Augustus Mark Church. This is a line of interest that I am now pursuing following an exchange with the department within the Australian Defence Ministry responsible, the starting point being the marriage of Augustus to Susanna and the parents' names on their wedding certificate.

As an aside, the Grasshopper Hotel, Chester's home while in Jersey, can be made out in card 24 alongside the Hotel de L'Europe in Charles Larbaestier's book on "The Postcards of HG Allix".

Finally, the CWGC have published a book: "Remembering Fromelles", to coincide with a special exhibition at the Imperial War Museum (IWM) that opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2010 and will run into the next year. Hopefully, feedback on the exhibition will appear in Journal 35 later this year, meanwhile, the book is reviewed on page 21.

## The Medal That Never Was

A number of us will remember 62 year old Roger Day. He is the chap who turned up at a Remembrance Service in Leicestershire last year wearing more medals than those fine figures of men who were cinema commissionaires all those years ago. Looking again at his photograph, one notes that he displayed the DSO with a couple of Bars, the MC and the MM, plus more than a dozen others beside. He topped his bravura display with Special Air Services (SAS) badges and beret.

He was regarded by some as a Walter Mitty character, only wearing these medals to impress a wife, much younger than he was, however there were those who thought otherwise, and, surprising as it may seem, he was charged and found guilty under Section 197 of the Army Act of 1955. However luck came his way with the fact that this Act had been superseded ten days prior to the offence by the Armed Forces Act of 2006 and the sentence was subsequently quashed! Now, I do not know if the new Act covers the offence, but it is interesting to note that the Section 197 could apply to civilians who were not under the jurisdiction of the military in the UK or in any colony.

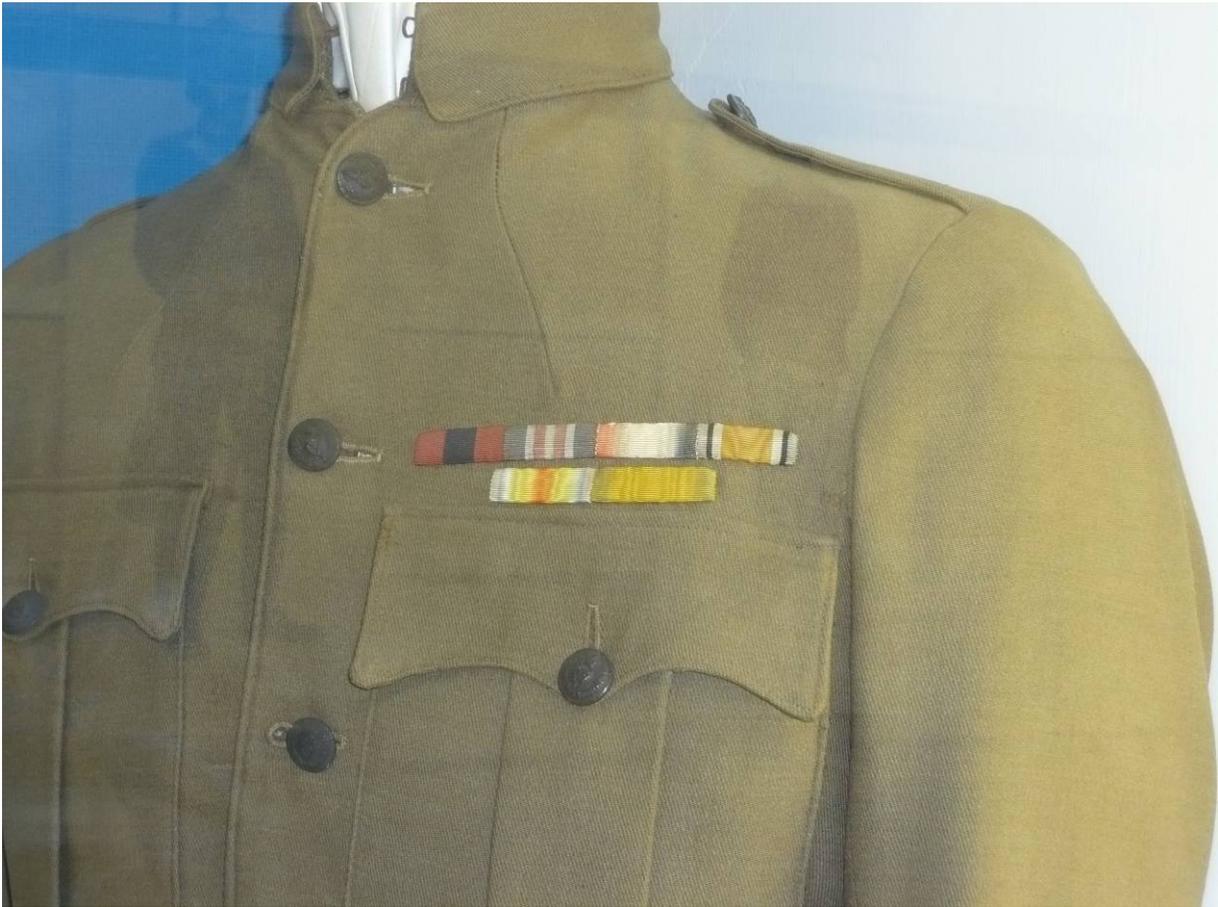
The legal line was not drawn at medals, for the Uniform Act of 1894 stated that: It shall not be lawful for any person not serving in Her Majesty's Military Forces to wear without Her Majesty's permission the uniform of any of those forces, or any dress having the appearance or bearing any of the regimental or other distinctive marks of any such uniform: Provided that this enactment shall not prevent any persons from wearing any uniform or dress in the course of a stage play performed in a place duly licensed or authorised for the public performance of stage plays, or in the course of a music hall or circus performance, or in the course of any bona fide military representation. Perhaps they could have charged Mr Day under this Act also, given that he was wearing the SAS insignia? There is another Section that deals with the offence of bringing contempt upon a uniform, but, I run the risk of digressing too far, although, as an aside, I would be curious to know if these provisions were and are enacted in the laws of Jersey and Guernsey. The basic rule is that individuals should only wear medals to which they are entitled.

We return to RSM Jack Le Breton having featured him on the front cover wearing the ribbons for the DCM and the MM. As can be seen in the photograph of his jacket on display at Elizabeth Castle on page 9 overleaf, those two ribbons precede the trio of the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, with the final ribbon being that of the French Médaille Militaire, representing six medals in all.

Turning to the second photograph on page 9, we again see Jack with his wife, flanking General Sir George Erskine, the Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey between 1958 and 1963. The occasion was the presentation of the medal as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his work in Jersey on behalf of ex-servicemen. But if you look at the picture closely and count, you still only see six medals, the one on the right being the MBE!

That is what Jack Le Breton's descendants did, and furthermore, they have his medals, and there is a gap where the MM should be! But, they also have a copy of 48<sup>th</sup> Brigade's Brigade Routine Orders (BRO) No 266 dated 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 (shown on page 10) which contained a list of immediate awards of the MM to

seventeen men of the four Battalions in the Brigade, most likely for actions that occurred at Guillemont and Ginchy a few weeks earlier, and Jack's name is included.

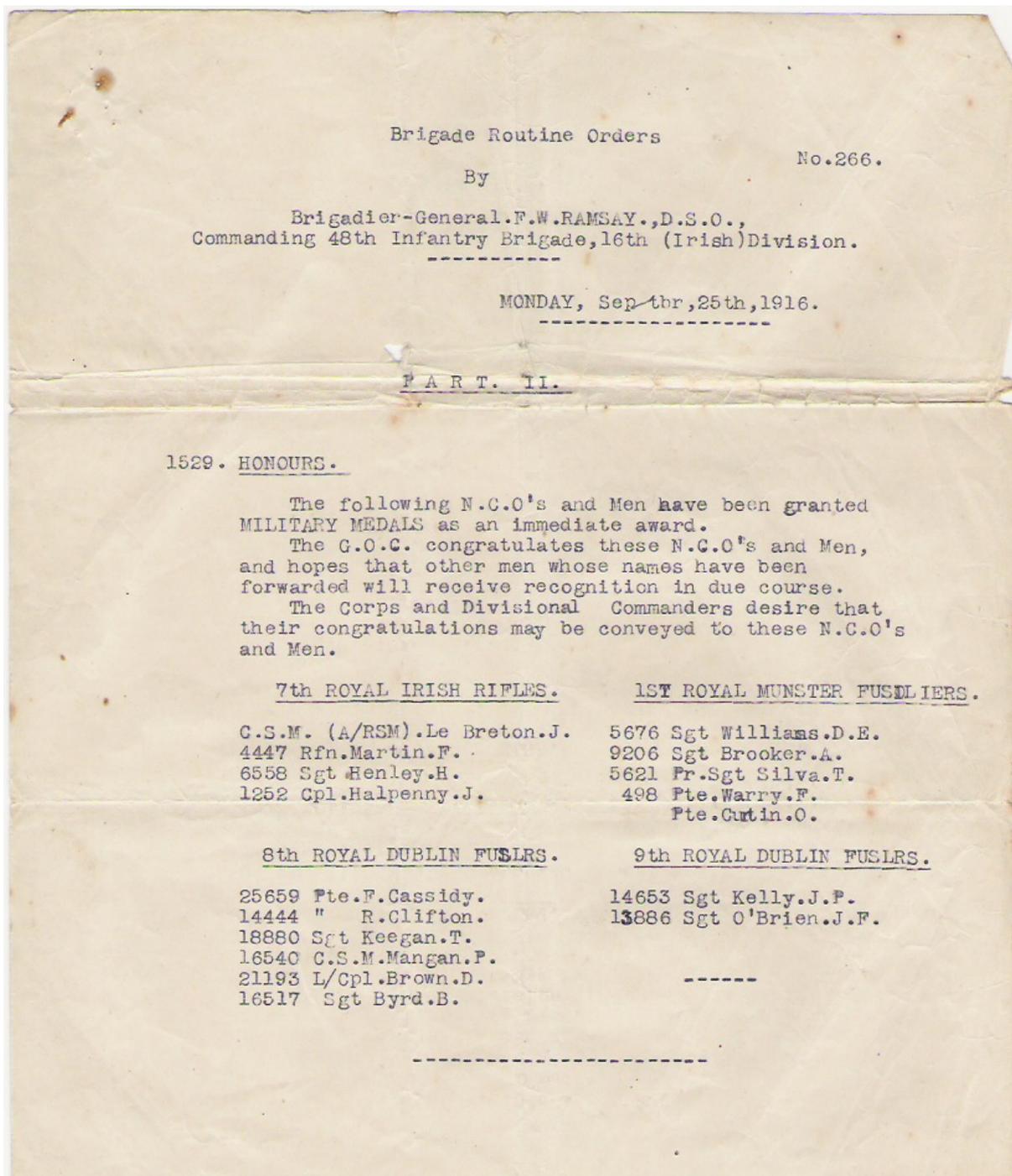


**Jack's Jacket!**



**Ex-RSM and Mrs Jack Le Breton and General Sir George Erskine**

As is well known, medal awards were promulgated in the London Gazette, and it is that document which is the next stop on the paper trail, and in particular Issue 29827 dated 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1916. Comparing the BRO with LG 29827, most of the men are listed in both documents, but there are two exceptions, Jack Le Breton and from the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, a 16540 CSM P Mangan. With that, a simple reason for the missing medal is clear. The MM, which was instituted in March 1916, could only be awarded, at that time, to SNCOs, i.e. those with the rank of Colour Sergeant (or equivalent) and below. The appropriate award for Warrant Officers, and that covered Jack and CSM Mangan, was the Military Cross (MC). So, it is clear that someone in the chain of command had made a *faux-pas* and Jack was walking around with the ribbon of a medal to which he was not entitled!



How long did this situation continue, and why? We can assume that this did go on, well into 1917 and probably beyond, into 1918, given that the 1914-15 Star was not instituted until late that year and is not visible in Jack's photograph on the cover. Given the logistics of issuing medals in those days, one would assume that a medal recipient would have first received a length of medal ribbon 'in the field' to sew onto his uniform and some time later (much later?), the medal was awarded at a ceremony, especially if it was a Victoria Cross, or simply sent in the post. Again, the logistics of the process was such that, at the time, no one saw fit to point out that an error had been made, and as the war had progressed, people had been killed, injured or had just moved on, how could the retrospective awards of an MC now be made to Jack Le Breton and CSM Mangan to rectify the situation?

Mistakes like this would have come to light as the bureaucrats and finance branch men returned to controlling the War Office, and the serving men leaving to resume their lives in 'civvy street'. Jack Le Breton's probable reaction when he learnt of the matter was probably pragmatic, since medals or not, he knew how well he had done, and that he had neither let down Jersey, nor those men that he had left the Island to serve with back in March, 1915.

(Editor's Note: This is a combined input from Ian Ronayne, Mark Bougourd and myself)

### **Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines** **By Liz Walton**

At the start of World War One, the aeroplane was still a very recent invention. On the 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1903 in North Carolina, Orville Wright piloted the Wright Flyer on a 36.5 metre (120 feet) flight lasting 12 seconds. This was the world's first manned, powered, sustained and controlled flight by a heavier-than-air craft. Aeroplanes had never been used in battle and were very basic structures of wood, wire, canvas and skins. When war broke out, it was an achievement in itself that the first sixty four aircraft flew across the Channel - Bleriot had first made the crossing just five years earlier.

Once at the front, the first assumption was that the role of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) would be limited to reconnaissance, the former over land and the latter carrying out fleet reconnaissance and patrolling coasts for enemy ships and submarines. Several countries had experimented with dropping bombs from aircraft, firing guns, and taking off and landing from aircraft carriers, but nobody had yet designed or built aircraft specifically for war functions. An editorial in the Scientific American of October, 1910 stated that...

*"Outside of scouting duties, we are inclined to think that the field of usefulness of the aeroplane will be rather limited. Because of its small carrying capacity, and the necessity for its operating at great altitude, if it is to escape hostile fire, the amount of damage it will do by dropping explosives upon cities, forts, hostile camps, or bodies of troops in the field to say nothing of battleships at sea, will be so limited as to have no material effects on the issues of a campaign."*

However it soon became obvious that airmen would need to defend themselves against enemy aircraft trying to stop them from carrying out their missions and also

stop the enemy from patrolling over their lines. So these roles were soon added to that of reconnaissance, along with attacking enemy coastal territory and defending Britain from air-raids.



**Roland Garros' plane with deflector fitted**

The year 1915 was the year when aircraft were fitted out for combat for the first time. The importance of preventing the enemy from accomplishing its reconnaissance missions whilst carrying out their own soon became apparent to both sides. But the main problem was firing a weapon without damaging your own aircraft. The French were the first to develop an effective solution when, on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1915, Roland Garros took to the air in an aeroplane armed with a machine gun that fired through its propeller. This was accomplished by protecting the lower section of the propeller blades with steel plates which deflected any bullets that might strike them. It was a crude solution but it worked and within two weeks Garros became a national hero because of his total of five enemy kills which became the benchmark for an air "Ace."

However, on the 19<sup>th</sup> April Garros was forced down behind enemy lines and his secret revealed to the Germans. The Germans ordered Dutch aircraft manufacturer Anthony Fokker to duplicate the French machine gun and demonstrate it to them within 48 hours. However, aware that the French device would ultimately result in damage to the propeller, Fokker and his engineers looked for a better solution. The result was a machine gun whose rate of fire was controlled by the turning of the propeller. This synchronization assured that the bullets would pass harmlessly through the empty space between the propeller blades. This innovation changed the way in which aircraft were used in the rest of the war.

It was thought initially that pilots for these relatively small new forces would be supplied from the existing pool of men who already held private Royal Aero Club (RAeC) Aviator's certificates. In 1914 there were about 850 private pilots in Britain, the majority of whom were "gentlemen" who could afford to buy and maintain an aeroplane. This meant that they were almost without exception Public School boys of independent means from privileged families. This in turn coloured the attitude of later recruiters who felt that men who took part in "gentlemanly activities" such as horse-riding, sailing or racing motorcycles were naturally going to be good pilots. Little thought was given to testing physical or psychological suitability. Also the amount of training that pilots received was minimal, to say the least. Louis Strange ( not a local

man), an early graduate of the RFC flight school is said to have begun flying combat missions having completed only three and a half hours of actual flying time.

If we look at Guernsey's airmen it can be seen that their backgrounds and careers match the description presented above. As with everything to do with the Great War, it is easier to gain information on casualties than on survivors, so most of the examples given here come from the casualty lists. However examination of Great Britain's RAeC certificates, 1910 to 1950 on [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) indicates that Guernsey airmen who were lost did not differ significantly in age, family background and education from those who survived. The Bailiwick lost twelve airmen between 1914 and 1919, all of them Old Elizabethans. The early recruits in particular came from wealthy families with connections to the church, the military or overseas trading.

Captain [Wilfred Picton Warlow](#), whose story has been told in a previous edition of the Journal was the first airman with local connections to die as a result of the war, and exemplifies this stereotype. He was educated at Elizabeth College, the son of a wealthy family who owned a large estate in Wales, and an Army officer before the war. He had gained his RAeC certificate in a Bristol biplane in April 1913, whilst a Lieutenant in the Welsh Regiment. Like many airmen of the period he died as the result of an accident rather than because of enemy attack. He was lost in the Channel whilst flying an elderly aeroplane back to England from France when he went on leave in December 1914.

1915 saw the loss of three airmen with Guernsey connections. [Charles Collet](#), [Gerald Hilliard](#) and [Charles Robinson](#) were, like Picton Warlow, Old Elizabethans from wealthy families. Born in Calcutta, India, Flight Commander Captain Charles Collet, DSO of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wing, RNAS and Royal Marine Artillery had qualified as a pilot before the war, gaining his Royal Aero Club Aviators Certificate in an Avro biplane at the Central Flying School (CFS), Upavon, Wiltshire on the 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1913. The CFS was established in 1912, and is the longest existing flying school. Its primary aim was not to produce aviators as such, but to train professional war pilots. This was achieved by teaching more advanced techniques to men who already held a RAeC Certificate. Charles Collet had been a highly successful and daring pilot before the war, winning a long distance flying record by travelling from Plymouth to Grimsby (though he was attempting to reach John o' Groats!).

As a Flight Commander in the RNAS, he successfully carried out the first long distance air raid into enemy territory when he dropped two 20lb bombs on the Zeppelin sheds at Dusseldorf on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1914 for which he was awarded the DSO. It was described thus in a Memorandum by the Director of the Air Department, Admiralty:

*“On the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, Flight Lieutenant CH Collet, of the Royal Naval Air Service (Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps), flying a Sopwith tractor biplane, made a long flight and a successful attack on the German Zeppelin Airship Shed at Düsseldorf, dropping . Lieutenant Collet's feat is notable - gliding down from 6,000 feet, the last 1,500 feet in mist, he finally came in sight of the Airship Shed at a height of 400 feet, only a quarter of a mile away from it“.*

Less than a year later he was killed in a flying accident on the island of Imbros on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 whilst taking part in the Dardanelles campaign. His engine stopped

as he took off from Imbros airfield and his aircraft plunged vertically to the ground from a height of 150 feet, then burst into flames. He is buried at Lancashire Landing Cemetery in Turkey, his body having been brought in from Imbros after the Armistice.



**Lt. Collet, of the Naval Wing of the R.F.C., in the pilot's seat of the 100 h.p. D.F.W. Arrow biplane, prior to his testing the machine on a long flight at Brooklands.**

Another local pilot to lose his life in 1915, Flight Commander Charles Robinson, was also in the RNAS. The RNAS was the air arm of the Royal Navy until near the end of the First World War, when it merged with the British Army's RFC to form a new service (the first of its kind in the world), the Royal Air Force. Charles Robinson was born in Shanghai and was a grandson of the vicar of St Martin's in Guernsey. He was awarded his RAeC certificate at the CFS on the 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1914 whilst a Lieutenant in the Royal Marines Light Infantry, which he had entered in 1904. He was killed in an air crash on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1915 whilst taking part in the Dardanelles campaign. Listed as missing for several months, he has no known grave but is commemorated on the Helles memorial in Turkey.

Unlike the previous three pilots, Flight Sub Lieutenant Gerald Hilliard of the RNAS only qualified as a pilot after the outbreak of war, and was not on attachment from another regiment. He qualified at the Grahame-White School in Hendon, later Hendon Aerodrome, in February, 1915. Guernsey born Hilliard, the son of an Army Officer, who before volunteering worked in the engineer's department of the Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway Company, died at the age of 30 on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1915. His machine crashed in England only seven months after he qualified as a pilot. He is buried at Great Yarmouth (Caister) cemetery.

1916 saw the loss of another three airmen with links to the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Again they were all Old Elizabethans from privileged backgrounds, their names giving some indication of this. Pilot Officer [Frederick St John Ford North Echlin](#) of the 70 Squadron, RFC had been a Lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers. He was the son of Captain Frederic Echlin, RN (retired) of Echlinville in County Down, Ireland and husband of Dorothy Dobree of a well known Guernsey family. Flight magazine for 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1917 states that although he had been previously reported missing, it was now known that he had died of wounds on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 whilst a Prisoner of War, so it is likely that his aircraft came down in enemy territory. He is buried at Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension in Northern France. This cemetery contains several reburials of British servicemen originally buried elsewhere by the Germans.

Second Lieutenant [George Edmund Heygate Fincham](#) of the 6 Squadron, RFC was the son of the late Lieutenant Colonel HG Fincham (Royal Army Ordnance Depot), a former Deputy Assist Commissioner General of Ordnance in Guernsey. George Fincham's records show that he qualified as a pilot in a Maurice Farman biplane in May, 1915 at the Military School at Brooklands in Surrey. The Brooklands circuit opened on the 17<sup>th</sup> June, 1907 as the first purpose-built banked motor race circuit in the world. Soon after it opened, it was realised that the enclosed nature of Brooklands could form a natural calm air confine for testing early aircraft. In August, 1914 Brooklands and all its services including the race track were taken over by the war office and a Military Flying School was formed which employed instructors and aeroplanes from many of the existing schools. The Flight magazine for the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1916 notes that before the war, George Fincham had been a mechanical engineer in Southern India. When war broke out he came back and applied for a commission in the RFC. He was gazetted as a pilot in June, 1915, a month after completing his training, and joined his Squadron in France a mere two months after that. He was flying over enemy lines on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1916 when he encountered hostile aircraft. His observer was killed, he was wounded and lost consciousness and the aircraft fell to the ground behind British lines. He is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery in Belgium.

Flight Sub Lieutenant [Arthur John Whetnall](#) of the RNAS was the third local airman who died in 1916. He had been awarded his RAeC Certificate at the Royal Naval Flying School, Sheppey, the Royal Navy's first school for pilots, on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1915, at the age of 21. His profession is listed simply as a Flight Sub Lieutenant, Royal Navy and he had not learnt to fly before the war so it would appear that he went more or less straight into the air service at an early age. This happened increasingly as the war went on and there was a need for more pilots. He was killed in action in the Eastern Mediterranean just over a year later, on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1916. He has no known grave but is commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial in Southampton along with nearly two thousand other people lost or buried at sea, or who died in the UK but whose bodies could not be recovered for burial.

By early 1917, the RFC was losing 12 aircraft and 20 aircrew every day, and in June, 1918, a question was tabled in the British House of Commons whereby the Secretary of State was asked to explain the extraordinarily high death rate of fighter pilots in training. The figures showed that 8,000 out of a total of 14,166 pilot deaths had occurred before those pilots ever flew against the enemy. The Secretary of State attempted to blame the high number of training deaths on the pilots themselves and

referred to their youthful lack of discipline as the primary cause. However the German figures for pilot deaths while training was about a quarter of the British, so there was obviously more to it than this. Eventually in August, 1918 Robert Smith-Barry, an ace fighter pilot who had seen the short lifespan of the new pilots produced an instruction booklet based on his combat experience to be used by both students and instructors. Concentration was on teaching the types of evasive flying techniques they would need to survive over the front lines. Turns, dives, spins, landing without power and formation flying were practiced with the instructors gradually moving their students into close simulations of actual combat. The Farnham trainer with its low speed and tendency to stall was replaced by the Avro 504K, a two-seater which gave pilots experience of the rotary engined planes they would fly in France. The new training regime had dramatic results, reducing the death rate in training and producing pilots who had a better chance of surviving in their operational squadrons than their predecessors.

However this was too late for the many brave men who had trusted their lives to those tiny fragile machines, flying over the battle lines often after only a few weeks of the most basic training. Guernsey lost four more airmen in the final two years of the war. On the 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1917, Guernsey born Second Lieutenant [Leofwin Collings Fellows Lukis](#) of the Essex Regiment and RFC was killed in action aged only 19. Sandhurst educated Lukis came from a family with a long military tradition, and is commemorated on the family memorial in Candie cemetery in Guernsey. He is buried in St Ouen Communal Cemetery on the Somme.



**Allied Observation Balloon**

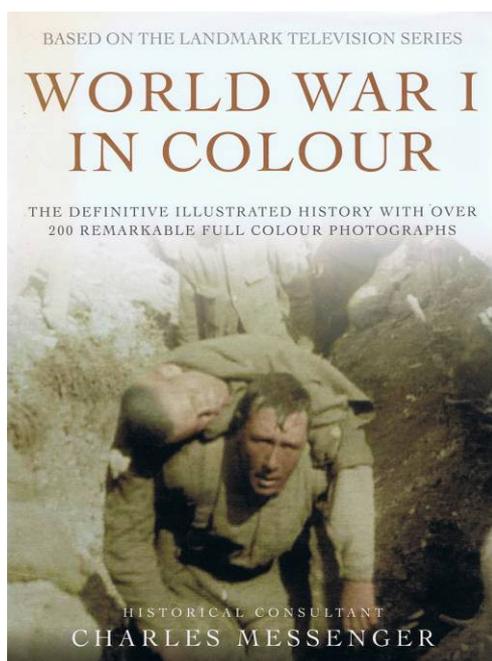
On the 13<sup>th</sup> October of that same year 20 year old [Bryan Grogan Langley Ellis](#) of No. 50 Balloon Section, 5 Wing, RFC, a former member of the Royal Guernsey Militia (Artillery) died in an air accident in Egypt. He had served in France with the Royal Field Artillery for eighteen months from May, 1915 before his attachment to the RFC Balloon Section. Observation balloons were widely used during the Great War. Readings were passed down via the use of flags or occasionally by radio, and

balloon operators would generally remain in the air for hours at a spell. It was regarded as a dangerous job, for although observation balloons were invariably heavily protected by anti-aircraft and machine gun fire and by wire meshes dangled between groups of balloons, they were still a stationary target for enemy aircraft.

The final year of the war saw the loss of two more local airmen, Lieutenant [Adrien Espinasson Barbé](#) of the 5<sup>th</sup> (City of Glasgow) Battalion (Territorial) Highland Light Infantry and RAF and Sergeant [Frederick Fieldhouse Smith](#) of the 59 Squadron, RAF. Lieutenant Barbé died in Egypt on the 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1918 age 33 and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Chatby Memorial which commemorates almost 1,000 Commonwealth servicemen who had died during the Great War and have no other grave but the sea. Sergeant Smith died age 20 on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1918 and is buried in Cologne South Cemetery in Germany, along with more than a 1,000 Allied Prisoners of War plus other Commonwealth soldiers who had died in Germany. A 1<sup>st</sup> class air mechanic, he had qualified as a pilot on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1917 aged only 19.

The fact that the bailiwick of Guernsey provided men and women for all branches of the armed services has tended to be overlooked, with the focus being on the “Guernsey Irish” and the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry. However despite the great bravery and tragic losses experienced by these two units, they accounted for a relatively small proportion of the local men who fought and died for the cause. Guernsey may have only provided a very small number of fliers, but they were representative of the force as a whole. They fought and were lost in many different areas over land and sea, and sadly many died as a result of air accidents rather than enemy combat. Their bravery in taking to the air in the fragile machines of the day in order to bring back information, or to bomb enemy positions should never be forgotten.

## Book Reviews



**World War I in Colour**  
**‘The Definitive Illustrated History**  
**with over 200 remarkable full colour**  
**photographs’ (Ebury Press - £20.00)**  
**Historical Consultant Charles Messenger**  
**Review by Peter Tabb**

The Great War was fought in black and white, or so it has always seemed until now. At the time it was the only way pictures from the front and scenes recreated for the camera could be filmed. Photographers were present in the Crimea while Matthew Brady recorded hundreds of images (mostly posed) of the American Civil War. But these, and the images of all subsequent conflicts until the Great War were shot in monochrome and the only gesture towards recording in colour was the use of sepia, a brown dye extracted from cuttlefish.

That was until now. Thanks to computer wizardry, black and white images can now be transformed into colour and this book, based on the television series "World War I in Colour" first shown on Channel 5, uses this wizardry to reveal two hundred colour photographs, many of which are either rare or previously unseen. All of the images were taken from monochrome film footage provided by the Imperial War Museum, Reuter's Library and the US National Archive. The footage was then colourised by a team from Sony Pictures International. Individual frames from the colourised footage were then selected for this book and transferred using an advanced computer programme which allowed them to be cleaned and downloaded for use on the printed page.

It is not overstating the case to say that the results are indeed remarkable.

We see the glittering courts of Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, Imperial Russia and Germany in all their finery albeit that the result of so much glitter is often almost Impressionist. The assassination of the Archduke was a colourful event as was his funeral, which included a fascinating photograph of a regal dachshund wearing a *picklehaube* with a caption that reads 'small but loyal Germans parade...'.

In many ways this might be considered as just another book about the Great War, majoring on the Western Front with chapters devoted to naval operations and the war against the U-boats and another to the (often very colourful) war in the air. We always knew why he was called the Red Baron, now we can see just how much he deserved the red part of the sobriquet. Charles Messenger is a very competent historian and although we learn little new about the conflict and thus are not necessarily any wiser, we are undoubtedly better informed and have gained insights from seeing the conflict as we would have seen it ourselves.

We see the French divisions marching to and making war in their blue uniforms, the Tommies in their khaki and the Germans in their green. We see red blood and brown mud. We see green fields and blue seas. We see the huge gouts of orange flame that pour forth from 15-inch guns at the Battle of Jutland and the colourful rows of medals on the chests of Admirals Jellicoe and Beatty.

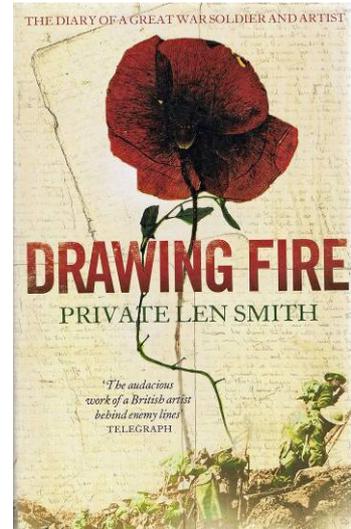
At the beginning of the conflict there was much colour on the battlefield but by 1918 the photographs of the devastated plains of Flanders and Picardy, blasted by shot and shell, have reverted to poignant monochromatic tones. Even Sony could find little colour there. Walking the battlefields today we need to see the wide green fields and darker green woods and it is difficult to visualise what these would have looked like across almost a century. This book both makes that task somewhat easier.

Following a recent visit, a number of the photographs I took across the now lush fields under which lie many of the battlefields of the Somme and Passchendaele, were later transferred to black and white (thanks to Photoshop). Somehow they looked so much more fitting. Notwithstanding this book fulfils a vital need, to see the Great War as we would ourselves have seen it.

The book is an extension of the six-part television series and that series is available on both DVD and VHS videotape. I would recommend either as a fascinating and revelatory record of that appalling conflict.

**Drawing Fire**  
**The Diary of a Great War Soldier and Artist**  
**Private Len Smith**  
**(Collins - £20.00)**  
**Review by Peter Tabb**

This is an amazing book! Len Smith joined the City of London Regiment on his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday in September, 1914, and fought in some of the bloodiest battles of the Great War – Loos and Vimy Ridge – before being drafted as an observer and becoming an accredited War Artist. After a severe bout of trench fever he was transferred to the Royal Engineers Special Branch where he worked on various camouflage devices.



Returning to civilian life following the War he worked as a commercial artist and died in 1974 aged 83. His nephew, David Mason, discovered the diary among family papers and in the 1970s Len had tried to find a publisher for it without success but thankfully his distinctive view of the Great War is now available for all to appreciate.

The blurb on the book's back cover (illustrated with some of Len's sketches) rightly states that the: 'horrors of war in the trenches are brought to life with a rare immediacy and power through the diary of soldier and artist Len Smith'. Living through some of the fiercest battles of the Great War: 'Len survives with a mixture of whimsical humour, bravery and sheer good luck. Len's colour sketches of the people and places he encountered create an extraordinary intimacy and tremendous sense of being at his side during his experiences.'

Len wrote his diary in longhand on tiny pieces of paper torn from a notebook, which he kept hidden by concealing them in his puttees. Keeping a diary was a punishable offence and the writings were smuggled home, along with many colour sketches and drawings and souvenirs, including two poppies taken from No Man's Land and a German prayer book found in an abandoned trench. Shortly after the war Len wrote up all his text into a carefully and lovingly crafted diary, along with his drawings and sketches. His skills as an illustrator were put to use in a unique way, creating an extraordinary record of life in the trenches. The diary includes over 350 illustrations and covers Len's entire Army career from signing up to Armistice Day.

Many pages from the original diary have been scanned into the book and show not only what an innovative and competent illustrator Len was but also his considerable journalistic skill. Len's own handwriting is almost copperplate but for ease of legibility much of his text has been set in Caslon, a typeface dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and thus entirely contemporary to the events conveyed so vividly.

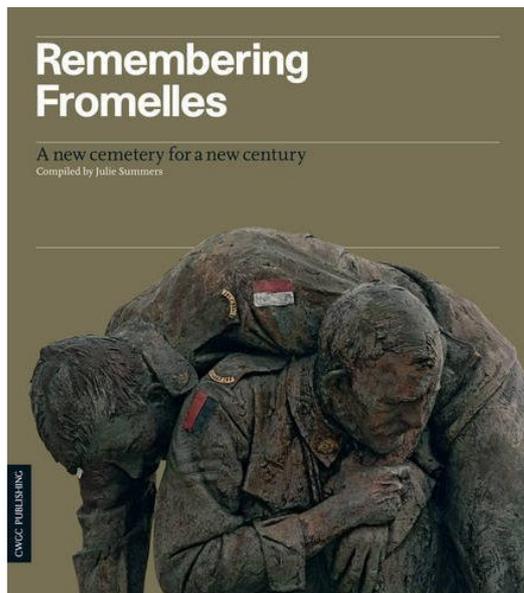
Much of the diary's contents will come as something of a surprise to those whose vision of trench life on the Western Front is that it was unmitigated hell. Curiously Len finds much to be cheerful about even in what was undoubtedly the unmitigated hell of Loos and Vimy Ridge. We have the strong impression of a soldier not only determined to survive but also to share his experiences. Even a spell in a military hospital with trench fever with tonsillitis does not dim Len's optimism.

I read many books about the Great War, most of which portray the tragedy that it was for millions and inevitably most are depressing because there is little of the Great War to be other than depressed about. But Len Smith's book is curiously uplifting. It is a triumph of the human spirit conveyed by someone with the skills to put that into graphics. Despite the often morbid content I will read works by John Keegan, Peter Hart, Richard Holmes and Lynn MacDonald *et alia*, with pleasure because they are skilled writers as well as being knowledgeable historians. Len Smith makes no claims to be a historian but he is an indefatigable chronicler of history as it happened with a unique and discrete style all of his own.

Len's lavishly illustrated valedictory Armistice Day entry is particularly telling:

*"Thus ends a fairly 'good meal' - sometimes glad, oftimes sad but on the whole a jolly fine adventure in the lifetime of an ordinary everyday citizen. Though much of it seemed futile and one's own little bit utterly negligible, it is to be hoped sincerely that the sum total of all our little parts in those days will have a real lasting good influence on the history of the world yet to be, and will do much to ensure peace and goodwill between countries hereafter, when they fully realise the wastage and hold-up to civilisation that occurred during 1914–1918."*

As I am sure you will gather I thoroughly enjoyed making the acquaintance of Len Smith and his is one chronicle of the Great War that I shall read again and again. I suggest you read it at least once.



**Remembering Fromelles**  
**A new cemetery for a new century**  
**Compiled by Julie Summers**  
**(CWGC £9.95)**

As was mentioned earlier, the CWGC published this book to coincide with their exhibition at the IWM that opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July. However, it was not that event that prompted my buying it rather than a debate a few of us had following another TV programme screened on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> July by Channel 4 which looked at the progress of Fromelles from the early research carried out in Australia to the eventual cemetery now visible.

For me, the programme did pose a number of unanswered questions, and I was hoping that the book would provide many of the answers, and it indeed did. First of all, it is a compilation of a number of inputs, some written as essays such as the Missing Dead of Fromelles Part 1 and 2, while others are interview based, i.e. the question is posed and then an answer is provided. But the combination does work well, and there is an implication that work pressures or a lack of authoring skills were circumvented by interviews.

The book is 96 pages in all and is well illustrated as would be necessary to support the IWM exhibition so clearly, the topics were constricted to a number of pages. In a

six page Introduction from Julie Summers, there is a brief overview of the CWGC from its inception up until today, and it is useful for those not overly familiar with the Commission's work. My Gallipoli guide from last year, Nigel Steel, provided the Missing Dead of Fromelles Part 1 and 2 and this is where the story really unfolds, Part 1 dealing with the fateful events of 1916.

A frontal attack on a 4,000 yard front, in parts needing to advance 400 yards against well constructed German defences that included concrete pill-boxes, the terrain dominated by interlocking arcs of fire for machine guns to blaze away from the Wick and the Sugar Loaf salients, and with the assaulting Australian and British Divisions composed of raw untried troops, one does get the sense that it was a disaster waiting to happen, irrespective of individual courage. Part 1 includes a sketch from the Official History, and in showing the lodgements made in second-line German trenches by the Australians compared to the British, it goes some way to explaining the number of Australian graves compared to the British at Fromelles.

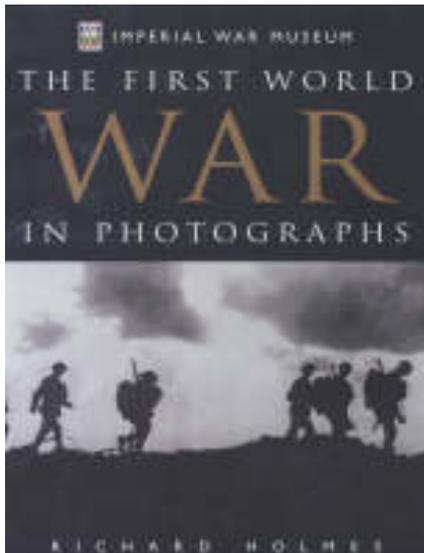
Part 2 looks at the work undertaken to establish that there were dead in the burial pits at Fromelles, and much of this is thanks to the persistence of Lambis Englezos an Australian teacher who started out by doing the arithmetic of the Australian missing. By comparing the VC Corner Memorial with unknown Australian graves, he arrived at the figure of 163 and allowing for a percentage of bodies destroyed by shelling, he took the view that there was a mass grave. He discovered aerial photographs and other material, eventually, after a few trips around the 'bureaucratic buoys', the evaluation of the site turned up remains, and hence the 250 men who were no longer 'lost'.

The next few topics deal with the technical aspects of recovery and maintaining the separation of one set of remains from the next, and also, making sure that artefacts such as a badge or a bible continue to be linked to an individual. This went some way to assist in positively distinguishing an Australian from a Briton, before and alongside formal identification by name. Equipment such as webbing buckles were also useful.

The topic of DNA is covered, and is one of the interview-styled essays, covering five pages. I understood it, I think? Or perhaps not! The interviewee does appear to make the assumption of prior knowledge in the reader, and it would have been helpful if this had been dealt with in a "How to..." fashion as the article blurs general theory with a particular example. A number of the charts used are not sufficiently clear to explain the topic to the layman.

The book ends with a look at how the Cemetery came into being, and also at some of the men who were lost. The Commission (along with the many other organisations involved) has done a superb job giving the timescale that was imposed, and although they have been able to follow the existing design principles of British War Cemeteries in France and Belgium, the site imposed challenges, not least drainage. Interestingly, rather than dig down to create individual graves, the Commission 'built' the cemetery upwards, using gravel at the lower level, then applying soil on top.

Overall, the book is helped by being 'bounded' by the very nature of the Fromelles battle, i.e. limited frontage, limited objectives, the casualties, etc which determined the original research and what followed. Yet, if Fromelles interests you, do get the book which is cheaper on Amazon!



**The First World War in Photographs**  
**By Richard Holmes**  
**IWM (£25.00)**

Having read Peter Tabb's review of "World War I in Colour" above (pages 18-19), I feel a little miffed that I only had a book of black and white photographs to look at, but there were 400!

In having looked through the book, one cannot fail to be impressed by the varied selection of images used. Whereas Professor Holmes' book "Shots from the Front" is focused on the British soldier, this book provides a broader panorama so that every nation is covered.

Many hours would have been spent going through the IWM's photograph collection, and I suspect that this would have been done by the Professor's research team who, given the book's structure, would have rummaged away until they had selected their preferred images. There are some photographs that one sees again and again. That soldier in an Advance Dressing Station near Ypres, arm in a sling and wildly looking into the distance for example, or His Majesty's Land-ship "Hyacinth" stuck in a trench with its nose pointing towards the sky. However, there are more that rarely feature in books and that is most welcome.

But, although a picture can convey a thousand words, books such as this do not 'work' without an underlying thread, and just assigning text to a photograph would not do. So, Professor Holmes provides a terse, if not novel, insight into the War at the various stages, starting with the build up to War and ending with the aftermath. In between, the War's chronology is strictly followed. He adopts a highly disciplined, top down approach so that each year has an overview, and in the pages that follow, key events or topics are explained with their supporting images. Gallipoli in 1915 gets eight pages for example, while the Italian Front in 1916 just three pages. With such a vast subject, getting the balance right is essential, and with the structure, and the combination of words and photographs, the book does 'work'.

There were undoubtedly far more photographs taken than could ever be published, and so selection will always be hard. Where I am saddened though, is that with the passing of time, we lose the opportunity to identify particular faces in a group of men, but that is the nature of things. The book may be worth obtaining, but not necessarily at its RRP of £25.00 for a hardcopy version.

**Battlefield Visit with a Difference**  
**Accompanying a Go France WW1 Tour**  
**By Ian Ronayne**

What me? Join a Go France World War One tour as a guest speaker? Take a party of people from Jersey and Guernsey to the battlefields of the Jersey Company and tell them what happened there? Are you serious?

They were. At the start of the year, Go France, the Jersey based specialist short break tour operator, asked if I would be willing to accompany this year's trip to the battlefields of World War One. And, to help attract participants, would it be OK to link my book to their forthcoming tour. Naturally, I said yes – to both. And so, in early June, I found myself heading north through France once again on a coach with about forty others from Jersey and Guernsey en-route for the first night's stop at Amiens.



**Visiting the Sunken Lane outside Beaumont Hamel**

An excellent lunch and dinner on that first day had helped start bonding the group, whose backgrounds, ages and level of interest in World War One varied. Everyone was looking forward to the first day, which took in the museum in Albert, Lochnagar Crater, the Devonshire Cemetery, Mametz and Delville Woods, Guillemont and Ginchy and the windmill at Pozieres. Our excellent tour guide, John Barry, led us through most of the sites. My contribution came when we stopped at Guillemont Road Cemetery and I relayed the story of the Jersey (and Guernsey) Contingent's involvement in the fighting there. A little daunting, a little rushed, but they seemed to take in what I was saying, and were pleased to have come to a spot on the Somme with a clear Channel Island link. And I was certainly pleased to take them there.

That night's stop was in Arras. Another excellent meal followed by a very disappointing evening watching football in a bar (England versus Algeria ... no need to say anymore!). The next day, John led us to the Thiepval Memorial, Ulster Tower, Newfoundland Park, Beaumont Hamel and Vimy Ridge, before the coach headed north to Ypres for the Menin Gate ceremony. A meal in the Grande Place followed before heading back to Arras for the final night. On the next day, we returned to St Malo.

To sum up, it was a real privilege to accompany the tour, and great to meet so many nice people. Go France have a good reputation for their trips - good locations, excellent hotels and first class meals. I can honestly say they lived up to it. And I realised that being a 'tour guide' is certainly not as straightforward as it might seem. You might know what you want to say, but it sometimes just doesn't seem to come out in the right order! Still, there is always next time...

**Postscript:** And there was a next time. A few weeks later, I accompanied a group of Normandy veterans to France for a two-day tour of the landing beaches and inland battle sites. While Go France booked boats, hotels, coach and restaurant, I arranged the itinerary, acted as tour guide and gave the commentary. What a fantastic experience it was to accompany these eight veterans, their partners, family and friends to the battlefields of their youth. Now this was a real honour and privilege. One I would definitely like to repeat.



**Ian Ronayne (on the left) and Normandy Veteran Clive Kemp at Pegasus Bridge in Normandy. Having Landed on D-Day, Clive spent the next six weeks very near to Pegasus Bridge.**

### **Coutart de Butts Taylor**

I have been in the process of tidying up my talk on Coutart and finalising my Power Point presentation, and after this Journal 'hits the streets', will look to apply the final bit of 'spit and polish'! But Peter Tabb's comments of photographs taken during the Crimean War in his review of 'World War I in Colour' above are very appropriate. Googling on the off-chance for 'Chaplains, Crimean War, Taylor', I came across a photograph, taken by a Roger Fenton, of a group of Chaplains that included Coutart's father, the Reverend Haydon Aldersey Taylor.



The Reverend Taylor is the fourth from the left, standing in the doorway, while the photograph, one of many hundreds taken by Roger Fenton in the Crimea, probably dates from 1855. While, the March, 1855 edition of "The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal" would carry the following comment from a Reverend Robert Freeman, written on 11<sup>th</sup> January, that:

*"I have been much delighted with the quiet earnestness of the Rev H Taylor, who has most severe duties, which he performs with a hearty zeal that deserves every commendation".*

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

The latest amendment of the JRoS was uploaded during July, and now lists 6731 names, although there are some duplicates and possibly some erroneous entries.

Work has started on the St Helier Baptisms list, and with some 246 pages to review, progress will be slow as parents as well as godparents have to be considered. Yet, after a dozen or so pages, two new names have appeared on the JRoH, although it is unlikely that this rate of discovery can be maintained. Meanwhile GRoH data continues to be upgraded and amended.

Both RoH are having photographs added to.

## Faces Remembered

Ian Ronayne has been sent some photographs of men believed to be the Jersey Company's George and Edwin Wickers. Can you help with identifying some uniform features?

There are two photos named as Edwin. One is clearly of him in Militia uniform. The second, however, is of a different uniform, featuring the 'snake belt' which he believes was issued to active service troops, but has buttons that do not seem to be RIR. A braided cord is also worn, does that signify a sniper or signaller?

The one named of George may wearing a Royal Irish Rifles uniform, is that the harp and Jersey shoulder tags? He too has a braided cord/lanyard.

From the information Ian has on them, Edwin trained as a sniper and was invalided out in early 1917 having lost a leg. George was signaller, and later served with the Royal Irish Fusiliers.



**George Wickers**



**Edwin Wickers – In the Militia**



**Edwin Wickers**

## Talks at the WFA

The constraints of living on islands with small populations such as Jersey or Guernsey means that the chance for frequent talks on the Great War (or indeed many other special interest subjects) are limited, given the ease of travel and the numbers that could present as particular topic. The WFA North Lancashire branch to which I belong holds a monthly talk, and it is unsurprising to see both speakers and audience making the journey from places such as Stockport, Bradford, Penrith or Blackpool, with round-trip distances of 80, 90 or more miles. Of course, the weather can pose a problem as last December's speaker Clive Harris found out earlier in 2009 when the trains from London were snowbound!

However, with the fixture rearranged for that month, he was able to talk on: "The Greater Game – Sportsmen who fell in the Great War", coincidentally the subject of a book that he had written. A month later, and one of our members, Andrew Brooks, provided the talk on: "British Internees in Holland and Switzerland, 1914-18".

It is clear that book authors such as Clive Harris have researched their material to the n<sup>th</sup> degree, as evidenced by Michael Senior who had written "No Finer Courage" and would speak about the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry and Fromelles in April. Those who saw the Channel 4 programme on Fromelles might note that a far proportion of the programme's content, particularly in respect to the Liberty family and the village of Lee, was based upon his work. The preceding speaker in March needs no introduction as speaker and author, but I'll mention anyway that it was the IWM's Peter Hart talking of "Suvla Bay", even though he had not written a book about it. Yet! In fact he has a book: "Gallipoli", coming out next February, and he will undoubtedly persuade me to buy a copy and which will get reviewed for June!

"Punishment in the Great War" was another topic of interest, presented by ex-sailor Bill Martindale from the Cumbria WFA branch. He recounted standing on the quarter deck of a ship, rather terrified, while a junior rating was stripped of his badges, kicked out of the Navy, and dumped off at Plymouth railway station with a rail warrant for a single journey homewards. It was a tale of such confusion that I was E-mailing other attendees, afterwards, to establish whether Bill and the miscreant were one and the same man!

All these talks have proved fascinating in terms of diverse aspects of the Great War, and it is difficult to say what stood out the most. A presentation by a lady called Denise North must be very close to the top of the list with her talk on: "The rebuilding of Ypres". As we all know, Ypres was badly shelled during the Great War, its Cloth Hall burnt down, and the cathedral and the surrounding houses flattened. Following the War, there were those such as Churchill, who had seen that Ypres should remain as it was, as a memorial to the Empire's sacrifice, an understandable yet incorrect view given that it was Belgian soil. Ypres was rebuilt through the use of drawings of the various pre-war buildings, and most were replaced 'as was' with the new dates of 1922, 1923 and so on shown in the faces of the buildings.

Denise produced a great many 'then and now' views of these buildings as well as where new buildings have been erected and incorporated a few of the old features, and there are even a few post-Great War 'Prefabs' still in situ! Interestingly, if a property is to be modified in some way, it seems that the façade is not affected, and

is indeed just the, a façade! The old building behind can be pulled down and a new one built up behind! Slightly more concerning was the discovery during the talk that the Hotel Ariane is on the site of the abattoir! I shall certainly look at Ypres with a fresh pair of eyes in future, thanks to Denise.



Finally, during March I attended a presentation at the parish church in nearby Kirkby Lonsdale on the Reverend Theodore Bayley Hardy, VC, DSO, MC (pictured left). The presentation turned out to be a DVD video of an account about his life that was given by various speakers. Although born in Exeter, he was educated in London and latter was a master in Nottingham. I discovered that there was a local connection in that he became the Headmaster of the Grammar School in nearby Bentham, and later the parish priest at Hutton Roof, also nearby, before, like so many other priests, volunteering to minister to the troops. There was much of interest in the DVD, although there was also a sense of amateurism with some of the presenters rather stilted in the delivery.

Setting that aside (if only because I could do no better), Hardy's story came over well, and he was that combination of ordinariness and heroism that merited the awards that he received. There is a well known photograph (featured in Richard Holmes' "Tommy") of him receiving the VC from King George V with his daughter Elizabeth, who had spent the previous night cleaning his boots, watching on. I had not known that the photograph is taken from a short clip of film, while the VC award ceremony took place during the King's visit to France in August 1918, and covered in "The King Comes Calling" (Journal 27).

### **Out and About**

#### **Looking Back:**

Undoubtedly a very quiet two months with holidays for many of us.

Roger Frisby continued to undertake the occasional UK photograph trips. Cyril Vallois visited cemeteries at Southampton and Haslar to add to our RoH pages.

Ian Ronayne's battlefield tours which have been covered earlier.

#### **Looking Ahead:**

I'm in France and Flanders from 22<sup>nd</sup> September until 10<sup>th</sup> October. Because of the tight timescale to the next Journal on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, I'd appreciate inputs as soon as possible. Before that, there is the Caernarfon talk on the 4<sup>th</sup>, while my notes for 'Clarrie goes to War' have unfortunately stalled.

Liz Walton is currently occupied on writing her book that looks at Guernsey in the Great War, and feels that she now has a clear enough outline and enough draft material to start sending to possible publishers so that is the next step.

## Odds and Ends

**Administrative Matters:** The Email that advised you that the Journal on the website contained a notification of recent changes to both Roger's and my Email addresses. Please amend your contact lists/address books as you may require. Thanks.

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Roger Frisby: [rogerherts@gmail.com](mailto:rogerherts@gmail.com)

**The War Illustrated:** In recent weeks somebody very kindly gave me this eight volume set of weekly magazines. While the covers, especially the spines, are not in the best of condition and the pages are touch yellowy, they are a useful asset and I suspect was published by the Northcliffe Group. One cannot help notice the bias, with the German invariably being referred to as Hun, Boche or Teuton, and his actions are always beastly, frightful or devious. The Allies are, of course, brave, heroic and upstanding! There was undoubtedly an intention to keep the nation's spirits up, so I should not knock the propaganda too much.

Quickly skimming through the volumes, of those that I've managed to get through, I have been able to pick out a few Channel Island faces in the Rolls of Honour, which, given the scale, only include officers. One such face was that of Guernsey-born Lieutenant William Maingay Ozanne of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. However, after finding that he was not in the CWGC Register, it has been established that he did indeed survive the War, ending up as a Major-General in WW2! No doubt his inclusion in the War illustrated would have amused him for many years after, though with a tinge of sadness as another Ozanne, Captain Edward Graeme Ozanne, had been killed some three months before the picture of William featured.

If there is suitable material for future inclusion in Journals, I will try to include it, but this will depend on the quality of reproduction.

## Enfin

A very brief end to this Journal which I hope that you still find interesting. Thank you.

Regards  
Barrie H Bertram  
15<sup>th</sup> August, 2010

## Journal Issue Dates For 2010

Planned Issue dates for the remaining Journals in 2010 are as shown below.

| Issue | Month         | Articles To BB   | Posted Web/Mail  |
|-------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| 33    | August 2010   | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| 34    | October 2010  | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| 35    | December 2010 | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 15 <sup>th</sup> |

As in previous years I will advise if there are any changes for individual issues as publication dates approach.