

NOT COMMEMORATED

Introduction

In creating Jersey's digital Roll of Honour over the last seven or eight years, the Group has endeavoured to identify all of those men and women who died whilst still serving, who later died as a result of their service, or, if they were civilians, died as a result of enemy action such as a U-boat sinking or a Zeppelin attack. In a number of cases, the dividing line between non-commemoration and commemoration can become blurred, such as the loss of a merchant ship's crew in 1919, say. In that example, was the ship lost as a result of the normal hazards associated with going to sea, or did it strike a drifting mine?

When originally setting out on the task of creating the digital Roll, the starting point was the *Jersey Roll of Honour and Service* (JRoH&S) that was produced by the States of Jersey in late-1919, and down the years that had been the source of the oft-quoted figure of 862 Great War dead. However, very soon the Group's analysis proved this figure was incorrect, and a further 700 names have since been added, using the following criteria:

- Jersey born
- Jersey parents (one or both)
- Residents (British Empire)
- Residents (French and other nationalities)
- Service in the RMIJ including the Permanent Staff
- Schooling in Jersey
- Died in Jersey while serving in the RMIJ, the Royal Jersey Garrison Battalion (RJGB), or in other Jersey based units

It is believed that, as a result, the digital Roll is a far more accurate document than the 1919 version, but even at the time of writing (December, 2010) new names continue to be added, this resulting from data becoming more widely accessible from Archives and other sources. Any claim for 100% accuracy would be, therefore, presumptuous but the Group has gone along way to counter the 'fog of war' that plagued the researchers of 1919!

In having added the 700 names referred to, a number of names have also been excluded, and in so doing, the same, or indeed greater, level of analysis has been applied to establish the correct outcome. Take the example of the Tregaskis brothers, Arthur and Leonard, both Lieutenants with the Welsh Regiment who were killed on the same day during the first week of the Battle of the Somme, the 7th July, 1916, and who are buried alongside each other (graves V.G.1 and V.G.2) in Flatiron Copse Cemetery near the village of Mametz. Their entries in the Commonwealth War Grave Commission's Debt of Honour Register note that their parents were George Henry and Julia Ann Tregaskis and gave their address as 1 Stuart Villas, Millbrook in Jersey.

So far, research has shown that neither brother was born or attended school in Jersey, nor were their parents. The only criterion that might be satisfied was

one of residency. However, as far as can be determined, at the time that the two men were killed, their parents were not yet resident in Jersey, and only became so in 1920 or 1921. This is not an unusual problem in that the addresses of parents or other relatives were those recorded by the CWGC a few years after the Great War and would not have noted any prior family moves.

Excluded Names

Henry Arthur Barnes: The 1919 JRoH&S lists an HA Barnes who came from St Helier, served in the Royal Navy, and who was killed on an unspecified date.

The only HA Barnes that can be identified is 207024 Able Seaman Henry Arthur Barnes who was born in St Helier, Jersey on 8th March, 1884 and who commenced his service with the Royal Navy on 2nd November, 1899 as a Boy 2nd Class, joining HMS St Vincent. This identification is based upon his service record held at the National Archive at Kew.

According to his service records he served on various ships and a number of shore establishments until his 30th birthday on 8th March, 1914, when he was transferred to the Royal Fleet Reserve at Portsmouth. On 2nd August in the same year he was recalled for service, serving on HMS Victory I and HMS Vernon when it seems that he was "Short Demobilised" on 26th February, 1919. After that, it appears that he returned to HMS Victory I on 9th April, 1921 before being finally "Demobilised" on 4th June, 1921.

It is assumed that HA Barnes is Henry Arthur Barnes, thus it is obvious that he was not killed and should not be included in the Roll of Honour.

Roland Stanley Ross: The 1919 JRoH&S lists lists a Roland Stanley Ross, who came from Grouville, as having died with the Canadian Army in September 1917 but does not give a date, rank or unit. He is commemorated on the Parish of Grouville's War Memorial.

An inspection of the CWGC records has not revealed that he is commemorated by that organisation. However, an entry in Jersey's Evening Post during the first fortnight of October, 1917 reports that 27 year old Roland died on the 29th September of that year. According to notes summarising the entry, Roland Ross had been with the "First Canadian Contingent", his "Health failed under training", and he had been "Returned to Canada". The article identified his parents as a Mr and Mrs James Ross of Tiptree House, Grouville, Jersey.

Previously, an entry in the Evening Post of 1st July, 1908 recounts that Roland SD Ross was in a hospital in Port Said having fallen into a hold while aboard the SS Windsor on 20th June, 1908, and suffering from a broken wrist and injuries to the spine. The article identified his father as a Mr James Ross of Grouville and that Roland was his fourth son. It has been confirmed that

James Ross, and his wife Elise Jane, lived at Tiptree House and that Roland had been born in 1890.

In trying to discover more regarding the circumstances of Roland's service, and his subsequent discharge and death, the appropriate Canadian agency was contacted with the following response being received:

"In reply to your e-mail inquiry of 7th July, 2008, I wish to advise you that information about those who died as a result of military service, including cemetery details, can be found in online databases on the following websites:

Veterans Affairs Canada: Canadian Virtual War Memorial
www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/

Commonwealth War Graves Commission: Debt of Honour Register
www.cwgc.org

There are no references in those databases to the name Roland Stanley Ross.

As you mentioned, there is no reference to that name in our Soldiers of the First World War database for the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

A search of the indexes to various Canadian First World War records produced only one reference of possible interest to you. On 10th September, 1914, an individual named Roland S Ross, age 25, tried to enlist with the 1st Canadian Contingent at Valcartier, Quebec, but was rejected because he was "too near sighted". Those records do not contain any other personal details, such as date and place of birth or next-of-kin, so there is no means of knowing if this relates to the person you are attempting to trace.

If it is the same individual, there are two possibilities. He may have tried again to enlist elsewhere, but used a false name, in which case we would have no means of knowing under what name he enlisted unless the regimental number is known.

Alternatively, the information published in Jersey was incorrect, and that he did not serve overseas. Perhaps the story of his being rejected as a volunteer was altered in the telling of the story to family members so that it eventually evolved into "having poor health and being returned to Canada."

It has been assumed that Roland in the foregoing Canadian account is the same man and if that account is correct, he did not serve in the military even though he clearly endeavoured to do so, and that the Evening Post report is inaccurate. There is no evidence that he adopted a false name, while his older brother, George Donald would serve with the Canadian Army Medical Corps. On that basis, his name is regrettably excluded from the Roll of Honour.