



'Tailing Off'

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO FELL



**1st November, 1916
to
31st January, 1917**

November, 1916

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 04. Button, David | 18. Jones, Charles Cornwell |
| 04. Hamblen, Frederick James | 18. Joyce, William |
| 05. Aubin, Clifford | 18. Whetnall, Arthur John |
| 08. Le Gall, Jean Marie | 19. Graham, George H |
| 09. Rabey, Henry Rupert | 20. Carney (Le Cornu), Peter John |
| 10. Niles, Harold | 20. Keyho, James Martin |
| 11. Hanlon, George | 21. Dyson, George Henry |
| 11. Lovell, Harry Le Marchant | 21. Le Roux, Alfred Victor |
| 13. Jewell, Charles John Louis | 22. Thomas, George William |
| 13. Richer, John Henry Louis | 23. Case, Wilfred Nelson |
| 14. Baker, Clifford Philip | 23. Le Breton, Wilfred John |
| 14. Guillot, Georges Louis Denis | 23. Ventin, Arthur George |
| 14. Weygang, Frank Churchman | 24. Barnes, Frank Devonport |
| 14. Winstanley, Newnham Liebman | 24. Corbin, Harold John |
| 15. Frampton, Henry Joshua | 27. Bullock, George Edward |
| 15. Le Messurier, Cecil Cooper | 27. Ferbrache, Thomas |
| 16. Falaise, Edmond | 28. Sandilands, James Orde |
| 17. Livermore, William Henry | 29. Longley, Frederick William |

December, 1916

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 02. Barrette, Edward Frank Joseph | 17. Boulton, Howard Dutson |
| 02. Krimmel, Conrad Frederick William | 24. Barbier, Francis Ernest |
| 02. Larbalestier, Bernard | 24. Gilbert, Charles H |
| 02. Smith, Joseph James | 24. Woodward, Ernest Harold Hamley |
| 05. Rumens, Edward Hartley | 25. Syvret, Arthur John |
| 08. Dawson, Harry | 26. Harvey, Thomas Styles |
| 11. Ord, Matthew | 26. Marquand, Cecil William James |
| 12. Hall, Samuel James | 27. Bougourd, Harold Nelson |
| 14. O'Farrell, Howard Patrick Curtis | 29. Mutton, Harold Charles |
| 15. Ennis, Francis Thomas Charles | 29. Taylor, Frederick James |
| 17. Bennett, Joseph | |



IN REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WHO FELL



**1st November, 1916
to
31st January, 1917**

January, 1917

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 01. Durand, Eugene Joseph | 12. McDermott, Francis (Frank) Joseph |
| 03. Hale, Cecil Douglas | 16. Renouf, Stanley John |
| 04. Quesnel, Percy Edward | 19. Mauger, Walter Frederick Ward |
| 06. Lukis, Leofwin Collings Fellowes | 20. Reckitt, Charles Edward |
| 07. Pommeret, Francis Ange | 21. Le Feuvre, George Philip |
| 08. Le Feuvre, Walter Tom | 22. Chayter, Charles Henry |
| 09. Benstead, Sidney Joseph | 22. Ingrouille, John |
| 09. Brouard, Ernest James (Laddie) | 25. Batho, Percy John |
| 09. Joyce, Frederick | 25. Clayden, George James |
| 09. Le Page, George William | 25. Tardivel, Frank |
| 11. Gallichan, Percy Sidney | 26. Sweetland, Rupert Girard |
| 11. Madell, Herbert Doyle | |

Hello All

York Minster. An odd place to kick off this Journal, although, with the names of Elsie Gladstone and Nellie Rault on the memorial screens listing the women of the British Empire who gave their lives during the Great War, it is familiar CI territory. In some ways, it also has a familiar ring (Sorry, a pun is imminent!), containing a memorial to Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock who commanded the ill-fated naval squadron at the battle of the Coronel in 1914, one which saw the loss of some 23 Islanders. But it was a recent press story, unconnected with the Great War, yet of some relevance to the Group, that prompted this piece.

The story centred on the fact that the Dean of the Minster, a Very Reverend Vivienne Faull (referred to in some accounts as 'Vicious Viv'), has decided to dispense with the services of about 30 volunteer bell-ringers with immediate effect, and to replace them with a similar number of professionals after a rigorous recruiting process. The result is that the bells will remain silent well into the New Year, a disappointment for York residents and visitors alike! Undoubtedly there are arguments for and against the Dean's decision, but that is for others to debate. But, whatever they may be, the recruitment and retention of a professional group will surely increase the annual costs of a functioning Minster, and, no doubt the admission prices also. If so, one can suggest that, hitherto, the Minster's budget had benefitted from willing 'freebie' volunteer support for many years.

In some respects, there are parallels in terms of the 'freebies' value of the Minster's former volunteers and the work carried out by Group members, nowhere more so than the upkeep and maintenance of the website in terms of the service provision, and of the data content. It might be a surprise for some members to consider that the monetary value of the website and its contents (that also excludes data from 'negative' research) very probably exceeds £2.5M.* Imagine the reaction 10 years ago had someone turned up at the States of Guernsey and Jersey, proposing an 'all singing, all dancing' Roll of Honour and Service for £1.5M each? One would suggest that a polite answer in the negative would have resulted. In fairness, it would most likely have been the correct response given that software related projects tend to go pear-shaped as a rule, and become hideously expensive.

But, there is another aspect to consider. There are countless other volunteer groups that carry out work on behalf of communities and give of their free time because of their interests, the challenge, and to associate with like-minded others, all without recompense. In many cases, they can also bring professional skills from their work environment to bear, be it a current or former one. The Group is not unique. Like the volunteer bell-ringers of York, the driver is the enthusiasm that volunteer groups have for their subject and over time, a considerable expertise can develop in their ranks, one that can only be bested by a small number of 'real' experts who enjoy a salary.

Reflecting upon what the Group has achieved, it has provided a more detailed view of the Great War as it impacted the Islands, an unrivalled database of those who served, the identification of men who should have been commemorated by the CWGC, and an advice/research service to those who ask. After twelve years, it is safe to say that in some quarters, our work has been recognised. One such example is the proposed memorial to the men of St Helier, and the *Connétable's* wish for the 600+ names to be listed on it. Who would he have turned to had we not carried out the original staff work based upon an inaccurate Roll of Honour? But, at least Jersey had something!

Yet, there are some who may not fully appreciate the benefits that the Group brings, particularly to the 'heritage industry' and to the Island communities in terms of our service that is freely given. Whilst there is no 'Vicious Viv' to deal with (I think!), there remain some whose Latin is such that they do not understand what '*Quid pro quo*' means. Taking CWGC non-commemorations as one example, where invariably the CWGC requires a copy of the Death Certificate as evidence of a man's death. Understandable really! But, whereas it is very kindly provided at no cost by the Registrar's Office in Jersey, the same cannot be said in Guernsey. In this example, Jersey's arrangement came after an approach to the 'Committee of *Connétables*' with St Helier's *Connétable* taking the lead. There were clearly some Latin scholars on the Committee!

It begs the question though whether the Group is selling itself adequately? Making the case for a CWGC commemoration is invariably carried out because someone had failed to do so at the time, though the reason now is irrelevant. It is not directly benefitting the Group member who may submit the case. Assuming the mantle of addressing non-commemorations and other such activities should not attract costs whereby a Group member pays for clearing up the aftermath of organisational failings a century on! It is something that others in both States, the 'heritage industry' and other similar organisations should reflect on.

*The figure is based upon a fairly conservative charging rate of £25.00/hour, for 10,000 hours/year over 10 years, but excludes expenditure recovery.

The Front Cover

It would be nice to say 'Answers on a postcard', but unfortunately there is no prize for the chosen winner. The picture of five aircraft tails was taken at a recent 'Meet the Fighters' event at the IWM Duxford. There are some closet 'Reggie Spotters' amongst you who will identify which tail belongs to what aircraft type!

Making Allowances!

Down at Kew back in September, I was looking through a number of officer WO Files to understand their Great War service and so forth. However, one individual's file carried a series of letters that bore no relation to the officer's service. Rather, it was a discussion as to what might be done in providing uniform allowances to young officers granted temporary commissions in the British Army, having been previously commissioned in the Guernsey and Jersey Militia. This was serious stuff, the Lieutenant-Governors of both Bailiwicks were rolled out to put pen to paper as well as their opposite number in Gibraltar!

The complaint, raised by Ernest Le Sauvage, was that ex-Militia officers were being denied the allowance which amounted to £47.10s.0d. of which £20 went to cover the uniform, the rest being for 'Camp Kit' that would include a service revolver.

The Treasury mandarins looked skywards, sucked their teeth, and eventually agreed to pay out on the basis that those from Guernsey would receive £27.10s.0d., the reason being, as Sir Reginald Hart advised, was that the Island's officers had received £20 when they had been commissioned into the Militia. Meanwhile, those from Jersey would receive the full amount, the argument being that they were expect to regard Militia service in Jersey as an honour and thus they would have had to pay for their uniforms!

In today's terms, £47.10s.0d. does not sound much, but it is worth c.£1,500-c.£2,000.

Torpedo off the Port side? By Simon Hamon

There are still questions occasionally asked about the incident that occurred off the Hanois lighthouse on the 26th January, 1918 and while we may never fully know the truth about it, in this brief article we can look at the facts that are known about the sinking of the steamship *FIGARO*.



The SS Voreda (later renamed the SS Figaro) arriving in Bristol

The waters around Guernsey were not as far from the ravages of war as one might expect, despite being several hundreds of miles away from the trenches in France and Flanders. In fact, the waters around the Channel Islands were the hunting ground of no less than 27 German U-boats operating in them during the Great War. This was the hunting ground that brought great success to the German Navy with 71 confirmed vessels sunk by U-boats with a combined total gross tonnage of 77,713.5 tons. There were other vessels lost in storms, or who wrecked due to navigational errors and some we have no idea how they were lost. These were dangerous waters that were not intended for the faint hearted, and now that we have some perspective of the losses we should perhaps begin looking at the *FIGARO* itself. Its steel hull was laid down sometime in 1907 by the shipbuilding firm Richard Williamson and Son, of Workington, England, as Yard No. 201. It was to be a cargo steamship and the dimensions were as follows:

- Length: 194.5 feet,
- Breadth: 26.6 feet, and
- Draft: 10.9 feet.

It had a triple expansion steam engine, producing 69 Horsepower (HP) driving a single screw. The Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) was 559 tons. It was launched on the 23rd September, 1907 and was completed in November of that same year. The vessel's registered number for insurance was 124392 and the International signal code was HLSN.

The original name was to be *VOREDA* (the name of an old Roman fort near Old Penrith) and the builders were also to be the first owners keeping the vessel until 1912, when it was then sold to Messrs G Levasseur and Son when they thereupon renamed it *FIGARO*. As a consequence of the war the *FIGARO* was requisitioned in 1915, by the Transport department in France and in 1916 it was armed with two 90 mm French Mle 1877 guns that were converted from field guns to deck guns, and mounted on a substantial eight-legged deck mount. In 1917 the *FIGARO* was sold to the Société d'Importation du Nord et de l'Est, a company registered at 9 place Lafayette, Rouen.



Two 90 mm French Mle 1877 guns converted on the naval mounts ready for fitting to the deck of a vessel these are identical to those on the *FIGARO*. (Simon Hamon)

We know from the subsequent inquest into the loss of the ship that the Captain was Yves Martin, the First Officer was Ange Vettier and the Chief Engineer was Jean Rofars. On Friday the 25th January, 1918 the *FIGARO* sailed at 3.30 pm from Brest, France with a cargo of coal for delivery at Rouen. At the inquest the report from Captain Martin stated:

"At 3.45 am on the 26th when about 3 and a half miles SW of the Hanois lighthouse there was a violent explosion on the port side near No. 1 hatch. No submarine or mine was seen; only a small quantity of blackish yellow smoke came up. The steamer at once began to heel over to port side. I immediately stopped the engines and got out two life boats, but the lifeboats on the starboard side got full of water and sank, the two men in it were saved.

I then got out the third boat and we got away. I saw the FIGARO sink in about 10 minutes after the explosion.”

At the same inquest, the First Officer stated:

“At about 3.55 am, I was on the bridge when the explosion took place, which very much disturbed the water and caused a big splash. There was no rock there. I am sure it was a mine or torpedo, but saw no submarine or anything. The FIGARO began to heel over to port side and went down after about 10 minutes.”

The Chief Engineer added:

“I was in the engine room and the force threw me down. I stopped the engines but the FIGARO had already begun to list to port and I ran on deck, but all there was to see was the ripple of water I am convinced it was either a mine or submarine, it was not a rock.”

Accounts vary with speculation from others about it being hit by an enemy torpedo or mine, but there were no floating mines deployed in the area around that time and no reports from the coastal look outs of one being sighted. The German U-Boat Commanders took great pride in making claims of having sunk a ship and none were made in this case. In fact, the only U-Boat in the area had been the U90 commanded by *Kapitänleutnant* Walter Remy and he had withdrawn back to Germany late on the 24th January, 1918. Local reports suggest that the explosion resulted the boilers blowing up and the survivors came ashore at Portelet, there was no loss of life.

The wreck was found by Len Galliene and his brother in the 1960s and identified from the bronze letters on the bow, two had dropped off but after a search the two missing were found in the sand alongside and the name *FIGARO* was established. The Galliene brothers and their team recovered some items from the wreck including the two 90mm deck guns' barrels and one still rests outside the Imperial Hotel, their local bar.



The 90 mm Mle barrel outside the Imperial Hotel. (Simon Hamon)

We may never know the truth about what sank the *FIGARO* but we have a permanent reminder to look at while having a relaxing bar meal and an idea what it must have been like to run the gauntlet around the Channel Islands trying to avoid the U-boats during the Great War.

CWGC Non-Commemorations

This last quarter has been very quiet given other events that have been going on in a busy summer, however, having accepted Alfred Handford, the CWGC are looking to erect a headstone over his grave in approximately six months' time.

Accepted

Norcott, Gerald *
 Dustan, John
 Cudlipp, Herbert
 Blanchet, Jean
 Warne, Alfred
 Bailey, Alwyn C
 Leopold, Archibald
 Cheney, Walter A
 Le Morzédec, Henri
 Mutton, Harold C *
 Poingdestre, Alfred
 Jouanne, Auguste F
 Syvret, Edward H
 Lihou, Joseph T
 Le Breton, Wilfred J
 Whittle, Thomas J D'A
 Orange, Walter
 Ellis, John
 Marquis, Jack H *
 Lander, Charles HR *
 Asser, Verney – Non-CI
 Burton, Garnet C
 Helman, John W
 Le Noury, Walter
 Logan, Lionel H
 Ounan, Thomas P
 Turner, William A
 Godfray, Edwin de V
 Rundle, Cubitt S
 Vautier, Alfred P *
 Handford, Albert H
 Donoghue, Arthur J
 Hannis, Alfred W *

Being Progressed

Breban, John
 Quinquenel, John (Jean)
 Lindsey, Samuel WT
 Brache, Victor

Pending

De Ste Croix, Harold P
 Tite, Winter JS
 Troy, Edward J
 Owen, Guy

TBA

Touzel, Walter H
 Ferrer, Armand
 Anderson, Frank B
 Marsh, William H
 Barette, Stanley

Not for Submission

Syborn, George T
 Le Cocq, Clarence E
 De Caen, Raymond
 Malzard, Snowdon
 Mourant, Sydney A
 Baudains dit la Gerche, PG
 Surguy, Sidney
 Pirouet, Charles A

With the CWGC

Marquand, Clarence D
 De Gruchy, Alfred
 Anstee, Laurence WL
 Ruff, William C
 Beckford, Edwin W
Le Messurier, Ira

Rejected by CWGC

Vibert, John E
 Adams, Frank H

* With assistance from the 'In from the Cold' Project Team

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Historic Connections

Taking a somewhat tongue-in-cheek approach, someone recently said to me that the only reason that Hitler's Germany invaded Poland was so that the Channel Islands could celebrate Liberation Day! That indeed may be the case for a few Islanders, for it does indeed seem in Jersey's case certainly, the history books jump from 1781 and the Battle of

Jersey, to 1940 and the German Occupation. Oh, one forgets, Victor Hugo stayed for a few years in between!

To some extent, it may be unfair for the Group to endorse such comment since the Group's own aims are there to take a view of one narrow period in the 20th Century, albeit that the sum of the events between 1914 and 1919 is so vast in its scale to challenge comprehension, even by the most expert of experts! However, whilst there appear to be gaps in the Islands' history, as we know, Islanders have been making their names elsewhere, have been affected by other events, or whose lives have been impacted by someone now regarded as a historic figure.

Amongst the names that have previously fallen into one or other category includes a Schneider Trophy winner in Henri Biard, a Director-General of the BBC in the shape of William Haley, and Allastair McReady-Diarmid VC, who may have been killed by the future author of *Storm of Steel*, Ernst Junger. Meanwhile, others who survived the first conflict did not do so in the second, and François Desvergez readily springs to mind, dying in a Japanese POW Camp in Java due to liver failure due to malnutrition and whatever else, having previously had two major ships, HMS *Courageous* and HMS *Exeter*, torpedoed from underneath his feet!

Recent research has produced a few more names where history and the fate of those men have met. Starting off with Jersey-born Frenchman, Jean Le Carré, who has no connection with the thriller writer John Le Carre, we find that the 24 year old Jean was amongst more than 680 dead when the French Navy's *Léon Gambetta* was sunk in the Strait of Otranto in April, 1915. At that time, the Mediterranean was the main area of operations for the Austro-Hungarian fleet, and it was one of their submarines, the U5, that sank the French cruiser. Sadly, the event was little different to the many other ships lost along with Islanders. In this case, however, the curious connection comes when the U-boat commander is identified as one *Korvettenkapitan* Georg Ludwig von Trapp.

A POW of the Japanese was the fate of Jersey-born Charles Evelyn (or Evelyn Charles) Pinel from St Brelade. Born in November, 1900, he enlisted in the RAF in October, 1918, and with the ink barely dry on his enlistment papers, the war came to an end a few weeks later and by April, 1919 he was in the RAF Reserve and back in civilian clothing complete with flat feet. Having been apprenticed with Jersey Railways between 1915 and 1919, he then went to Swan Hunters at Newcastle for a year or two. He was in Shanghai in 1928 as a partner in an Engineering Consultancy and later was in Hong Kong. In December, 1939 he was appointed as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, an appropriate corps given his background. The Japanese attacked Hong Kong on the 8th December, 1941 and Charles 'celebrated' Christmas Day that year by being taken POW. However, unlike François Desvergez, Charles would survive captivity, and, in due course, was released on the 2nd September, 1945. Three years later he was appointed Major and died in 1977, in Sussex.

The last man, Guernsey-born Francis Stanley Bennett was killed at Gallipoli in late-June, 1915 while serving with the 2nd Battalion, South Wales Borderers. Born in 1888, most likely to a Gunner with the Artillery garrison and a Guernsey lady, we find him having joined the Somerset Light Infantry in 1906, and leaving a year later having purchased his discharge. Then, having moved onto Swansea, he was for a time employed as a porter by the Great Western Railway and would marry a Welsh lady, Lucy Ann Screen. We find them in the Welsh Census for 1911, living at Senghenydd. Francis was now a miner, and probably was either off shift or in the unaffected workings when the Senghenydd (Universal) Colliery

disaster occurred on the 14th October, 1913. With 440 dead, one of those being a rescuer, the disaster was, and still is, the worst ever mining disaster in the United Kingdom. Francis may have indeed been fortunate in his survival, but for less than another two years.



Waiting for news of survivors at Senghenydd - 14th October, 1913

With examples of connections like these, it often seems that history is a funny subject to research, and by that, we are talking 'funny peculiar', not 'funny ha-ha'. One wonders what other stories may emerge in the future?

Author's Note: Talk of history being 'funny peculiar'! A few days after writing the above article, the BBC reported that a Dutch expedition, intending to film the wrecks of ships sunk by the Japanese during the Battle of the Java Sea in 1942, discovered instead that the wrecks, including HMS Exeter referred to above, had gone missing! As the Guardian newspaper indicated, this was probably the work of metal scavengers.

Canadian Service Records

After a bit of a slack period after the last Journal, the Canadian service records have been attacked with renewed vigour, and those names beginning with 'J' and 'K' on the JRoS have now been analysed, while a start has been made on the 'Ls'. As such, the JRoS exercise is about half way through with a pause before returning to the swamp with the Le Couteur family to see whether there might be new additions!

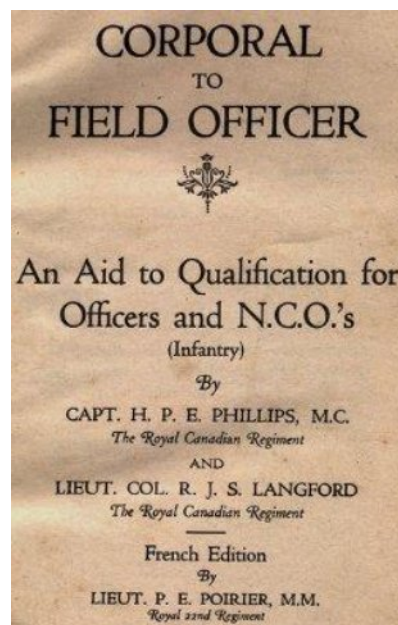
These records, like many others, do throw up surprises and pose questions. Paul Laffoley was discharged with Pulmonary TB in February 1918, and it was expected that his death would be recorded not long after. However, he pulled through, not dying until 1957.

Meanwhile the bulk of the CEF were infantry, although there were the other corps such as the Medical, Pay and Engineers for example. Yet, there was little in the way of organisational 'fat', and one wonders whether this is reflected by a 40% Wounded/Gassed rate among the Infantrymen and the Machine Gunners who made up half of the latest batch?

Flatfooted-ness and other feet problems did seem unusually prevalent amongst Jerseymen who served, and not only with the Canadians as Charles Pinel (See Historic Connections above) showed. In the case of Private Peter Le Clech, a foot had been so deformed and painful that the doctors decided that a little toe would have to be amputated, and the result of that surgery can be seen on the X-ray in Peter's file! The reason? In his case, it was put down to ill-fitting shoes and/or boots from an early age, however, one might ask whether that assessment would have been widely applicable in an Island far less wealthy than it is today?

'Time spent on reconnaissance is never wasted' is a maxim that is very well known in the military. It may be just possible that its source was the book 'Corporal to Field Officer' co-written in 1925 by an Old Victorian, Lieutenant Colonel Robert JS Langford, and which is probably a collector's item today. However, it is only fair and proper to point out that there are some other very serious contenders in the frame as to who may have said it first, including Sun Tzu, Carl von Clausewitz, Erwin Rommel and one Bernard Law Montgomery! George Patton might have also said, but it would have been illiberally peppered with profanities.

Finally, what can one say if they received a fractured jaw thanks to being kicked by a horse? I suspect that it was very little in John Le Cocq's case other than 'Ouch'!



Thomas Edwin Pleace

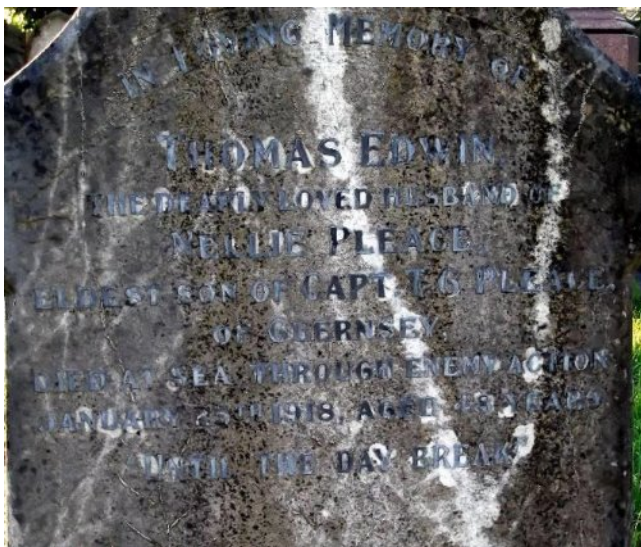
If you look at the CWGC Debt of Honour Register today, you will find the name of 48 year-old Chief Officer Thomas Edward Pleace listed, having drowned when the SS Normandy, an L&SWR Company steamer out of Southampton, was sunk by U90 commanded by *Kapitänleutnant* Walter Remy when about 8 miles East by North of Cap de la Hague on the 25th January, 1918. Furthermore, the Register will tell you that he is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial in London. Most of his entry is correct, however, it does appear that somebody had blundered many years ago.



The Group was recently contacted by a lady with the name of Carole Olding, who is a member of 'The Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery' group whose worthwhile aims in life are:

- To uphold the original purpose of the Cemetery, which is to be a place of reflection and remembrance of the people buried there.
- To support the ecological aims of the adjoining Southampton Common (a Site of Special Scientific Interest), and to treat it with the same care.

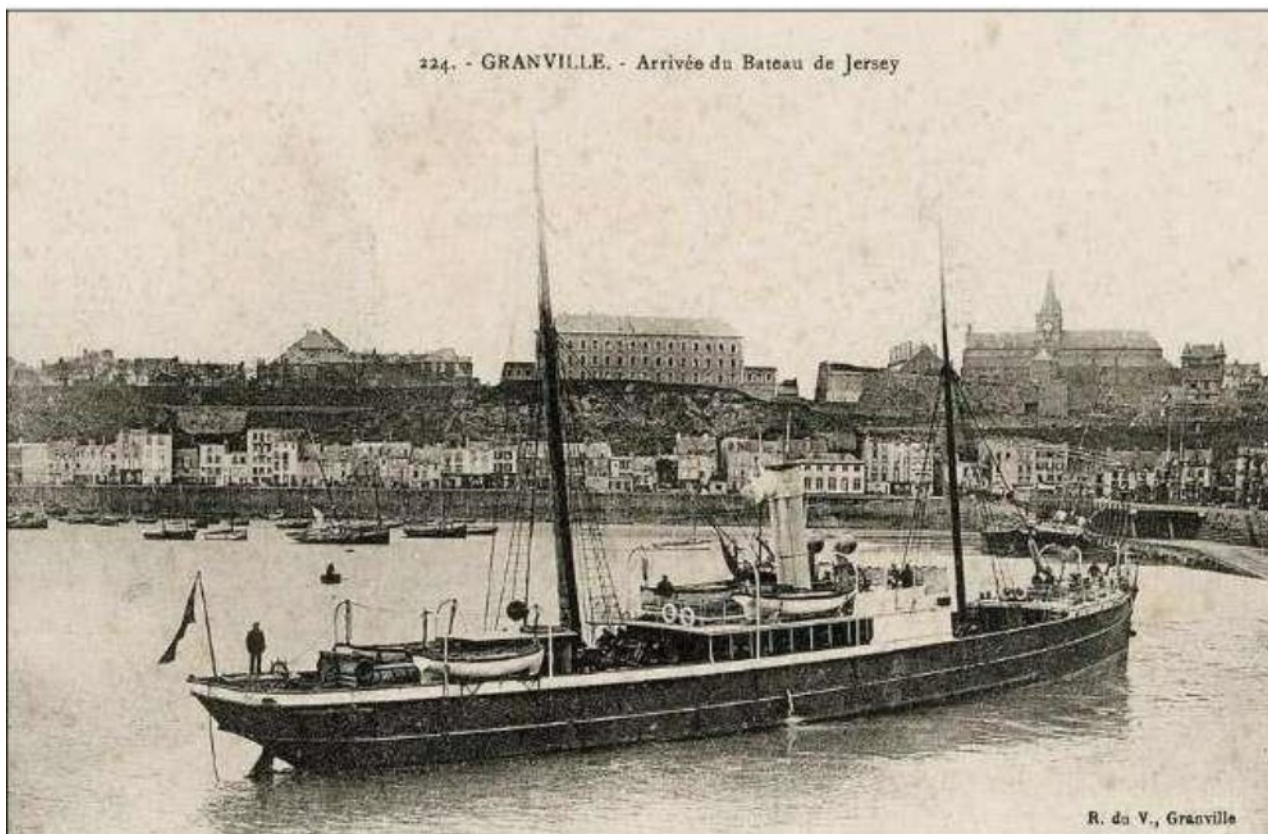
Carole highlighted the fact that a Thomas Edwin Pleace had been buried in Southampton Old Cemetery in 1918 having died through enemy action, while his grave had not subsequently been commemorated by the CWGC. She asked if we could raise this matter with the CWGC and provided some data (the monumental mason's order book entry!) and several photographs, of which one is shown below:



Thomas' headstone is weathered and may have become broken at some point, the inscription, illustrated left, can just be made out as follows:

*In loving memory of
Thomas Edwin
the dearly beloved husband of
Nellie Pleace.
Eldest son of Capt TG Pleace
of Guernsey.
Died at Sea through enemy action, January
25th, 1918, aged 48 years.
Until the day breaks.*

Looking through Carole's material, validating the burial date, the 2nd February, 1918, with the Southampton City Council, and going through Ancestry, FMP and other databases, it quickly became obvious that the CWGC's Thomas Edward and 'our' Thomas Edwin were one and the same, and that someone had not properly noted the correct name in the past, and far more importantly, the fact that his body had very quickly been recovered after the Normandy (pictured below in happier times) was sunk!



Meanwhile, what of his widow? She provided a slight bit of confusion given that she somehow acquired the forename of Ellen to go with Agnes Nora. Three months after Thomas' death she joined the British Red Cross as a VAD Nurse and was based at the Southwark Military Hospital in East Dulwich, London until at least the beginning of October, 1919. She died in a hospital in Wolverhampton in April, 1961, although she was still living in Southampton.

We have now made suitable representation on Carole's behalf that the CWGC carry out the necessary changes to their records, remove his name from the Memorial, and provide a headstone in the Cemetery at Southampton, and all credit for this important discovery must go to Carole. After all, there are just 1,400 graves short of 120,000 in that Cemetery!

Philatelic Matters

Amongst many events for this year's Armistice day, Guernsey Post Office issued its latest set of stamps to commemorate that Island's contribution to the efforts of the British Empire during the Great War. It can readily be seen that all the men, except Kitchener, were sailors. Turning to the 78 pence value that features John Helman (bottom right), reference in the Post Office's Philatelic Bulletin is made to Liz Walton's sterling efforts in having John commemorated by the CWGC.



Readers may notice the signal flags below the Royal Cipher and the stamp prices. Mark Bougourd, who is a former 'flag-wagger' himself, advises us that the flags very fittingly spell out the word 'VALOUR'.

Meanwhile, Guernsey's Post Office Philatelic Bureau has, again, come up with a set of stamps that highlights parts of that Island's 'Great War Story'. As ever, one is left wondering why that approach could not have been adopted by another Philatelic Bureau on an Island about 28 miles away?

45 La Motte Street

There is a small sprinkling of names that are listed in the JRoH which, to be open about, have been incorporated on the flimsiest of evidence as to any tangible link to the Island. At some later stage, a more detailed trawl for data is undertaken, and, if nothing is found to link the person to Jersey at the time of death, the name is removed. This had been the case in terms of the Tregaskis brothers, Arthur and Leonard, who are buried in adjacent graves in Flat Iron Copse Cemetery, adjacent to Mametz Wood. Their consideration was made on the basis that the CWGC Register recorded the address of their father, George Henry, as Stuart Villas in Millbrook. Contact with a gentleman by the name of Lee Howard in the appropriate States of Jersey department showed that there was no record of George before 1919, and along with subsequently reading their WO files, this meant that we do not record the brothers, tempting though as it may have been.

In a similar instance, Captain Harry Charles Baker of the Canadian Infantry was listed on the JRoH thanks to his CWGC entry which shows his name, today, as being recorded on the Vimy Memorial to the Canadian Missing coupled with the following Additional Information':

Husband of Erie Stewart Baker (nee Nesbitt), of 45, La Motte St., St. Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands. Served in the South African Campaign

Harry, was killed on the 26th September, 1916, probably in or near the Regina Trench. Born in Folkestone in August, 1876, he had served as a Sergeant during the South African campaign in the East Kent Company which was part of the Imperial Yeomanry. At a later stage, he had gone to Canada, he was certainly there by 1911, had enlisted in the ranks in August, 1915, and in May, 1916 had received a commission. Within two weeks he was heading to the UK and reached France in early-August, 1916. Looking at his individual background, there was nothing to suggest a link with Jersey.



His wife Erie was nearly ten years his junior and had been born in Canada to Irish and Scottish parents. She and Harry had married in June, 1911 and had a son, Eric Archibald, who was born in December, 1914. After Harry had left Canada, a supplementary census for Manitoba, taken in June, 1916, noted that Erie and Eric were living with relatives in Winnipeg. Again, her background showed no links with Jersey. But, the mother and son disembarked at Liverpool from the SS Metagama in November, 1919 with their next address being with Harry's parents in Folkestone, and where it appears that they would stay in Kent with his family until at least August, 1920.

So, Harry Baker's name was removed from the JRoH. Yet, curiosity into 45 La Motte Street remained unabated, and so Lee was asked if he could shed light on who had owned or rented the property. By return, he provided a list which has been abridged as shown below:

16.11.1915 to 16.07.1927
16.07.1927 to 08.07.1933
08.07.1933 to 22.07.1933

Charles Albert Bois
Flora Peers Davies nee Goulden,
wife of Charles Augustus Davies
Robert Noel McKinstry

Straightaway, two of those three names jumped out and provided an immediate clue! Charles Bois had been, before the Great War certainly, the Surgeon for the Royal Jersey Artillery. Meanwhile, Robert McKinstry would become Jersey's Medical Officer of Health, and would render great service to the Island both during its Occupation by the Germans and into the fifties. Three things stood out. 45 La Motte Street was a doctor's surgery, both men were doctors, and the likelihood of them knowing Erie Baker was minimal. But, what of Charles Davies sandwiched in between, was he also a doctor? The answer to that was yes, and furthermore, he had bought 'Brantwood' in St Martin in early-September, 1919 with a lawyer in London being given power of attorney to do the buying on his behalf.

Born in Warrington in the second quarter 1867, he had qualified as a doctor, and by 1901 was practicing in the Isle of Man, having married Flora Peers Goulden, 2 years his younger, in 1894. After 1903, they 'vanish' from the Isle of Man, and we next find them in the supplementary census of 1906 for Alberta, living in Edmonton. Ten years later they had moved to Calgary, at which point in August, 1915, Charles had offered his services to the Canadian Army Medical Corps who thereupon accepted them. But somehow, he had also lost five years from his age! Now, how did he do that...?

Charles Davies' service records are, at 164 pages/images, quite sizeable, and there is a good reason for this. Most of the pages are records of his subsequent treatment and monitoring, and the reason for this was simple, if a little painful for him. Posted to No 1 Canadian General Hospital at Étaples on the 31st March, 1918, he was on the receiving end of German aircraft bombing the hospitals on the night of the 19th May, such that he was wounded by shrapnel in his side, thigh and abdominal area. Such was his condition, for a time he was on the 'Dangerously Ill' list, thanks to the concern that there was blood in his urine and that a kidney had been damaged. However, after three months it had cleared and he was again up and about. It was also decided that a piece of shrapnel that was still in his body, could remain, and there is an X-Ray in his file showing it! Furthermore, those 'lost' five years now reappeared in the paperwork!

Not long after his recovery, the War was at an end, and he would be undertaking sundry medical duties. In early-September, 1919 he headed back to Canada on HMHS Araguaya as one of the Medical Officers aboard with Canadian troops who were well enough to travel after injuries and illness. This departure came coincided with the purchase of Brantwood and explains the engagement of the lawyer.

Meanwhile, Flora Davies had also been in the UK for quite a while, whilst Charles was in France and elsewhere, staying with her family in Stockport. Nothing is known of her detailed routine and movements, but it is safe to suggest that she had visited Jersey, and subsequently at some point had gone there to take up residence at Brantwood once the purchase had gone through.

At this point, one again wonders as to how Erie Baker came to have the La Motte Street address though it does appear that, somehow, the Bakers and the Davies knew each other. Given that the Davies were in Calgary in 1916, it may be of interest to note that Harry's picture (above) appeared in the Calgary Herald, and both had lived there before Harry went off to War and Erie moving in with her relatives in Winnipeg. Folkestone, where

Erie stayed, was obviously convenient for France, more so than Dover, so perhaps she had met the Davies on a battlefield pilgrimage, or at some Canadian function, and then had been invited over. There are any number of possibilities. As with all these things, the then IWGC would have used Erin's last known address which so happened to be in Jersey.

At some point, Erie and their son, Eric, moved on. we find Erin on the London Electoral Register just before the Second World War with Eric serving in the Merchant Navy throughout that conflict. More interestingly, Erie boarded the RMS Durban Castle at Dar-es-Salaam in March, 1955 bound for London and then on to Jersey! She was in the Island for about a month before then undertaking a round trip to Canada, and then returning to Tanganyika in October, 1955. The Davies would remain in Jersey for some years, and in November, 1938 headed off on the eponymously named SS Umtata (which was unusually sunk twice during the Second World War) to South Africa where, in September, 1944, Charles died. A month later Flora returned to the UK, initially living in Chislehurst, and in 1947 was at the La Colomberie Guest House where she made a will.

Looking back through this article, it has gone some way in helping to understand the Baker connection with 45 La Motte Street, and, as a spin-off, we have found out much about Dr Charles Augustus Smith's war service. It may be that his bomb blast injuries were not talked about whilst he was 'in our midst', but who knows?

But we should return to Captain Harry Charles Baker for one last time, thanks to some quite fascinating information that has emerged as part of this research. With his name listed on the Vimy Memorial, it is obvious that Harry's remains were not knowingly recovered following his death, and Erie Baker, if she had visited the battlefields, would never have seen his grave. Nearly two years ago, the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group submitted evidence that Harry's body was found, and that it was buried in Adanac Cemetery (Grave Reference 4.E.7). This evidence included the Exhumation and Burial Report that showed an unknown Captain from the Canadian Infantry's 16th Battalion being buried there. Along with Harry Baker, two other Captains from the 16th Battalion are listed on Vimy, but these two men were killed more than 20 miles from the Regina Trench area. It is nigh on impossible to refute what is conclusive evidence yet, somehow, the paperwork for Harry Baker and other Canadians, has got lost in an administrative morass!

Up Periscope

Has anybody picked up the fact that two unrelated articles refer to *Kapitänleutnant* Walter Remy's U-Boat, the U90, yet? Of course, you all did!

According to 'Torpedo off the Port side?' we have, '*In fact, the only U-Boat in the area had been the U90 commanded by Kapitänleutnant Walter Remy and he had withdrawn back to Germany late on the 24th January, 1918*'.

Meanwhile in 'Thomas Edwin Pleace' we find that, '*... the SS Normandy, an L&SWR Company steamer out of Southampton, was sunk by U90 commanded by Kapitänleutnant Walter Remy when about 8 miles East by North of Cap de la Hague on the 25th January, 1918*'.

Was U90 homeward bound on the later date? Perhaps not. It sank the French SS Union (GRT 677 tons) loaded with coal from Cardiff and bound for Rouen, 7 miles North of Sept-Îles the following day! So, did it sink the SS Figaro?

Tanks for the Memory – 15th September, 2016

By Roger Frisby



A full-sized replica* of a Mark IV tank, from the Tank Museum at Bovington, took up position in Trafalgar Square exactly a century after the new 'landships' were used for the first time at the battle of Flers-Courcelette during the Somme offensive.

**This replica was first used in Steven Spielberg's blockbuster 'Warhorse'.*



Developed with Winston Churchill's support, it was fitting that his Grandson, Sir Nicholas Soames, was on hand to explain their history.

49 were to be used at Flers in 1916. In the event, only 32 made it to the 'start line' and, of those, only 9 reached the German lines.



Many 'tankies' and 'ex-tankies' were there to enjoy the occasion and were on hand to explain the limitations of the Mark IV and its influence on the Great War.

After a while and under its own power, 'Big Brute', made its way from Trafalgar Square, through Admiralty Arch, to Horse Guards Parade where it joined a current Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank.



This was a lengthy process as its crew had to walk in front laying protective matting and removing it as it passed. It was a lovely warm September day and we were entertained by a marching band until the two tanks were together.

All in all, it was a relaxed occasion with good natured security. In my case, a pleasant pub lunch in a converted Old Admiralty building followed. (See Editor's Comment opposite).

Editor's Comment: Roger was obviously a little too preoccupied with his focal lengths (or was it his forthcoming pub lunch?) to note that he had captured VC winner, Sergeant Johnson Beharry (with the white belt), on camera! 0/10 for observation Roger!

Red Cross Data

A by-product from Carole Olding's input concerning Thomas Pleave was that she highlighted the accessibility of British Red Cross Society data on those ladies and gentlemen who served with the Society in one capacity or another. The link is as follows:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/History-and-origin/First-World-War>

There are approximately 1650 entries when the search field looks for 'Jersey'. Although some of those entries are duplicated (say by 10%), the number of individuals is still sizeable at around 1500 people who nursed and knitted. Whilst Margaret Ashpittel's card, shown below, indicates that she nursed in St Malo and Chelsea, the database also includes those who remained at home knitting 'Caps, Comforter', rolling bandages, or looking after medical stores at the Continental Hotel.

Recd 12 MAR 1919

Surname Ashpittel

Christian Names (C. M.) Margaret (~~Ms.~~, Mrs. ~~Miss~~)

Permanent Address: 3 Headingley, Peel Road, St. Helier, Jersey.

Date of Engagement 1915 Rank Nursing member Pay (1) No (2) Yes

Date of Termination Still serving Rank _____ Pay _____

Particulars of Duties Nurse at (1) Hôpital Notre Dame des grèves, St. Malo, + (2) Chelsea Hosp.

Whether whole or part time, and if latter No. of hours served Whole time

Previous Engagements under Joint War Committee, if any, and where _____

Honours awarded _____

Looking ahead, the data on the BRCS cards will have to be noted, and then matched to the data that is already recorded in the JRoS, and possibly the JRoH although this is thought unlikely at present. We will also need to decide whether the names of the home-based workers, i.e. the storekeepers and the knitters, are included in the JRoS, or as part of the separate record for all BRCS personnel. This will undoubtedly be a sizeable task, and just looking at Margaret Ashpittel's background as an example, one that is likely to have its many twists and turns!

Unknown Islanders

The list of Unknown Islanders known to be buried in CWGC cemeteries remains as shown below:

Guernseymen:

Honnechy Cemetery	II.A.18 II.A.40	II.A.19	II.A.24	II.A.25	II.A.26
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Outtersteene Cemetery	II.E.32 IV.A.53 IV.E.34	II.H.53 IV.E.28	II.H.60 IV.E.30	IV.A.44 IV.E.31	IV.A.50 IV.E.32
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Trois Arbres	II.K.11 II.L.5 II.O.25	II.K.26 II.M.26 II.O.27	II.K.27 II.M.31	II.L.2 II.M.35	II.L.4 II.O.24
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Jerseymen:

Bazentin-Le-Petit	A.3	Poelcapelle	XXII.D.20
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Cerisy-Gailly French	II.A.6	Outtersteene Cemetery	II.H.59
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If you are visiting a cemetery and you spot an Unknown Islander, do please advise of the cemetery and grave details.

Jersey Local History Fayre

Ian Ronayne advises that another Local History Fayre will be held in the Library in Halkett Place on the 27th and 28th January, 2017, at which the Group has been invited to attend. Ian has kindly agreed to be the coordinator, and would welcome other members to be involved on either or both days, and thereby hopefully refuting the accusation that we're just Saturday Soldiers! Please contact Ian directly if you feel that you can give support.

Captain Harold Ackroyd VC Commemorative Service

Ned Malet de Carteret advises that this will be held at Ypres on the 11th August, 2017, and would welcome being joined by Group members who might be in the vicinity. Please contact Ned directly for further details of arrangements on the day if you are interested.

WW1 Battlefield Tour, 4th to 8th September, 2017

By Steve Foote

The Guernsey Society are planning a follow-up to our successful 2013 tour of the WW1 Battlefields to coincide with the centenary of the Battle of Cambrai. We have once again teamed up with [Battle Honours](#), the award-winning battlefield tour organiser, to produce a tailor-made tour which will take in the major activities of the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry and the Guernsey Irish Companies. Non-members welcome. If you would like to join us, or

would like further information, please contact Keith Le Page (keith_le_page@guernsey-society.org.uk).

Billy Doos Notes from France

Encore Verdun! It seems that the memsahib and I are visiting there so often, that the car can find our gîte without any input from us! Thankfully, after what had seemed to be nine months of almost continual rain in the UK, and certainly during our two weeks on the Somme back in June, the sun shone. On one excursion, we headed over to the east of the battlefield, and on the way back crossing the hills, the visibility was such that one could readily appreciate the advantage of having the high ground to dominate an enemy below. The trip would see us visit **Le Mémorial de Verdun** given that it had opened informally back in February and formally with all the pomp that France could muster in May, given the presence of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande. A separate article on the *Mémorial* follows.

Les Villages détruit: Among the features of the Verdun battlefield there are the *Villages détruit* of which there are about a dozen in all, ranging from Hasumont-près-Samogneux, the northernmost, down to Fleury-devant-Douaumont. With the exception of Cumières-le-Mort-Homme, all are on the right bank of the Meuse, and as their name indicates, they are villages that were destroyed during the fighting in 1916. Following the War, the decision was taken not to rebuild them, the reason being that the areas had been so polluted by gas and other noxious substances that the risks to any returning villagers would have been to grass. What can be seen today are the traces of the building foundations with posts inserted here and there saying that such and such plot was where the *Boulangerie* was for example. I suspect over time, that the risk has diminished and it is regarded as safe to walk around these sites (as long as you do not stamp your feet I would suggest!).

But, at the sites that I've visited so far, there has been some reconstruction in the shape of small chapels. Unfortunately, those that I saw are currently locked up, and used as store house for chairs and marquees that are brought for use when a mass is held annually, the one at Douaumont being scheduled to take place in late October, a couple of weeks after we had left. However, looking at the chapel in Fleury-devant-Douaumont we saw the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, wearing a blue cloak with the twelve golden stars that mirrors the flag of the European Union. The statue is pictured below for which apologies as to the shrubbery in the way. The English version on nearby sign read:

'We invite you to ponder one instant before Notre Dame de l'Europe enshrined in front of the Chapel in 1979. Here at the converging point of heartbreaks and sufferings the Europe Blessed Virgin's calm face, emerging from her cloak, as a wound emerges from mud, as life rises from death and hope revives from despair, is the soothing and willful symbol of reconciliation through a brotherly construction.'

Other than to say that I find the politicisation of religion in such a way to be repugnant, I will say no more.





Whilst wondering around Fleury-devant-Douaumont we spotted this sorry looking chap pictured left. He was hewn from the stump of a fallen tree. As to his sad features, they are probably appropriate given that the remains of 26 French soldiers were found in the vicinity back in 2013.

Forts and Ouvrages: As ever, Fort Douaumont continues to be 'the' Fort to visit by parties, and it is often a job to park the car with six or seven coaches filling the place. More generally, it seems that there were far more coach parties doing the rounds of Verdun than in previous years. However, the builders are in! Much of the clear space in front of the fort is fenced off and there are diggers and other construction equipment in front of what was the Fort's original level one if not two storeys below the current public entrance. No signs were visible as to what is proposed, but the guess is that the old gateway will be restored. Not too far away, there is the *Ouvrage de Froideterre* (pictured below) and can be accessed even though the *Défense d'entrer* signs abound. In many respects, the inside has many similarities with the CI's German bunkers.



To emphasise that point, members may like to use the following link to get a better idea of the *Ouvrage's* layout and its history. It could even be a good restoration project for someone with a little cash to undertake!

<http://www.lesfrancaisaverdun-1916.fr/fortifications-froideterre.htm>

The *Ouvrage* is worth a brief look provided one is prepared to flout the *Défense d'entrer* notice boards and takes appropriate care to avoid mishap, though of course, the *Ouvrage de la Falouse*, south of Verdun is in much better condition with its small museum and mannequins.

Romagne 14-18: This is a curious little museum that is lodged in the village of Romagne-sous-Montfauçon, itself a few hundred yards from the western entrance to the American Meuse-Argonne Cemetery. To many, it might look as if it contains nothing more than a pile of rusty and corroded scrap metal however, on closer examination one will spot dog-tags, mess tins, old weapons and the many other items that the US 'dough boys' carried with them as they fought their way from a few miles north and west of Verdun to Sedan and Dun-sur-Meuse. The Museum's website is shown below:

<http://www.romagne14-18.com/index.php/en/>

Set up by Jean-Paul de Vries, I originally visited it about 15-18 years ago, not long after it had opened. J-P spends a lot of his time trawling the fields, and about 8 years ago had his work appear in a BBC programme on the 'Last day of WW1' that featured Michael Palin back in 2008/2009. The Museum is well off the beaten track, and can be a little hard to find for those who are navigationally challenged, but it is worth visiting. Furthermore, it is an oasis of civilization if one is gagging for a nice cup of tea!

Lighting Up Time: The memsahib and I are not normally night birds when in France (or anywhere else for that matter!), but having been out at a Chinese restaurant in Verdun with my brother and his wife, we noticed one or two war memorials that were illuminated as we passed through villages. 'Our' village had no wish to be outdone as the following picture shows. One might think that the French were not so daft in coming up with their *tricolore*, as it lends itself to light projection far more easily than does the Union Flag!



Food for Thought?

The British Army's 'rifle strength', i.e. infantrymen, was 19,130 at the beginning of August, 2016. On the First Day of the Somme the Army lost 19,240 soldiers killed in action (KIA)!

Ronayne Writes

Jersey Contingent Memorial, the unveiling ceremony at Guillemont: In September I had the enormous privilege of taking part in the unveiling of a monument to the Jersey Contingent, and all those from the Island who had fought and died during the Great War. The ceremony took place in the village of Guillemont, the location of the Contingent's battle on the Somme in September, 1916. The monument, a roughly hewn stone of Jersey granite, stands in the northeast of the village, on land donated for the purpose.

The inspiration for the monument was a visit to Guillemont three years earlier, when I had escorted the BBC Jersey journalist, Chris Stone, around the Contingent's old battlefields. Chris was moved by the fact that nothing existed to recall Jersey's part in that battle, or in any others. On return, he involved the ex-States of Jersey Deputy, Colin Egge, who was then instrumental in designing the monument.

Chris was at the ceremony, having become a firm friend of Guillemont's mayor, Didier, while arranging for the monument's placement. Sadly, Colin's ill-health prevented him from attending.

Also there was a contingent of Jersey's great and good. The Lieutenant Governor, the Bailiff, the Assistant Chief Minister, the Dean of Jersey, the Connétable of Trinity, whose relative John Vibert had died at Guillemont, and who today lies buried in the nearby CWGC cemetery. Ken Soar, the Honorary Colonel of the Jersey Field Squadron was also part of the group, along with Major Charlie Montgomery, the Squadron's Commanding Officer, and a number of Squadron members who looked resplendent in their tradition red uniforms (see below, photograph courtesy of the JEP).



Preceding the Jersey monument's unveiling was another ceremony, this one in Guillemont Church. It commemorated the actions of 16th (Irish) Division, whose memorial stands in the village. A very large crowd was present there, including representatives of the British and Irish governments and military parties from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic (see below, photograph courtesy of the JEP).



Following the ceremony at the church, most people then walked the short distance to the new Jersey monument. Following speeches and poems, including one from yours truly, the unveiling took place. A core of granite cut from the centre of the stone was ceremonially removed by two members of the Field Squadron, for its return to Jersey and eventual incorporation into another monument planned for St Helier's Royal Square. It was a very moving moment, symbolising that although those who died lie a long way from home, their hearts will always be in Jersey.

After the ceremony, it was again back to the church where the villagers had laid on food and drinks for everyone. There was also the opportunity to take the Trinity Constable to visit the grave of his relative.

The official Jersey party was subsequently whisked to the Ulster Tower, for a guided tour of Thiepval Wood conducted by its guardian, Teddy Colligan. Then back to the centre for a splendid buffet spread laid on by Jersey. Sitting in the back garden, in the warm evening sun, overlooking the Ancre Valley and Newfoundland Park, with a mix of people from Jersey, Ireland and France was a sumptuously surreal experience, one that will be hard to forget.

Now – what about next year...

Talk at the Jersey Festival of Words: Also in September I took part in the second Jersey Festival of Words, giving a talk on the battles of Guillemont and Ginchy and the role of the Jersey Contingent.

Talk on Jersey's 'First World War Guns': In October I gave a talk to the Channel Islands' Occupation Society on the last British coastal artillery batteries in Jersey. There were two built in the early 20th century, a 4.7 Inch Battery at Elizabeth Castle and a 6 Inch Battery on South Hill. Both were harbour defence units, designed to protect St Helier from enemy raiders. Prior to the War, both were manned by members of Britain's Royal Garrison Artillery, with support from 'D' Company of the Jersey Militia's Royal Jersey Artillery, who manned the South Hill guns during the war.

Both had also been taken over and modified by the Germans during the Occupation, so CIOS members were aware of them from that period, although I hopefully enlightened them on their earlier history.



**The Cartridge rooms of both Batteries
(Above and Right)**



Commonwealth Connections: Another talk in October was to the Jersey branch of the Commonwealth Society, which held its annual dinner at the Greenhill Country Hotel. They asked me to speak about Jersey's military connections, and I covered Islanders serving in the then Empire's dominions during the Great War, namely Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa (**Ed:** Newfoundland?)

Talk at Georgetown Methodist Church: The most recent talk for me (a lot of talking!) was at Georgetown Methodist Church as part of a Remembrance Day evening. I covered Jersey and the Battle of the Somme.

St Helier War Memorial: I am currently doing some work for the team that is planning and creating the St Helier War Memorial, which I understand will be unveiled in 2018. They are making progress, with the next milestone being clearance of the site opposite the Cenotaph, where there is presently a pagoda surrounding an old electricity transformer.

Forthcoming Talk: On the 15th March, 2017, I will be giving a Société Jersiaise lunchtime lecture on the Prisoner of War camp at Blanche Banques.

Flag Return Ceremony in Dublin: I am travelling to Dublin on the 10th December for an official ceremony to hand back the Irish rebel flag fragment taken down from Jacobs Biscuit Factory following the Irish Easter Uprising. A member of the Jersey Contingent, John Le Provost, had fought in the city and claimed the scrap as a souvenir, sending it back to his family in Jersey. I covered this story in a JEP article, and was amazed to hear from the grandson of Rifleman Le Provost, David Blake, who amazingly still has the flag and accompanying letter.



Subsequently, there has been contact between David, and also Jersey and Irish representatives about returning the flag. Organisationally, everything is now in place, with the ceremony scheduled for the 11th December at the Glasnevin Museum. I believe that the Chief Minister and Assistant Chief Minister will be present.

In the footsteps of Angela Merkel and François Hollande Le Mémorial de Verdun at Fleury-devant-Douaumont

After several years of the *Mémorial* having been shut so that it could be redeveloped by expanding the building's 'footprint', adding another floor to the existing structure, and, from what I can recall that was not present in earlier visits, to provide large lashings of digital technology, all at a price tag of 12.5M Euros, the memsahib and I returned! Initial impressions? An 'improvement' that was sadly distracting, disappointing, disconcerting, disorientating, even disastrous, and one that runs the risk of injury to some visitors who are less able to navigate around due to a physical or visual health condition. I found out some days later that whoever had come up with the 'improvement', had apparently done so, with *Le Mémorial de Caen* in mind.



Before the Improvement

In fairness, at the outset it should be noted the outside area is better laid out with ample space for coaches and cars, especially with drivers and passengers getting on and off without having to cross the road past the *Mémorial*.

But, whereas the original entry to the *Mémorial* was at the ground level, access is now gained at the basement level via a large foyer block that has the ticket desk, a shop, toilets and a large information centre for the Meuse *département*. The décor follows Henry Ford's maxim about having any colour as long as it's black, and this persists onto the two museum levels (the Upper and Lower Ground Floors). The black is overdone for, having washed my hands in the 'Gents', at first I could not find the hand-drier as it was also black, blending, chameleon like, with its surrounds! The shop is a wasted commercial opportunity, seemingly more focussed on top end books that are priced in the 55-65 Euro range, rather than those a third, or less, of that. Similarly, they should look at stocking those little items that appeal to youngsters and which retail at around 4-5 Euros. Given that, it was no surprise that the shop was empty even with two or three coachloads of visitors wandering around.

Looking at the map handed out at the ticket desk, it appears that the information centre has the largest floor area resulting from the redevelopment, and in that respect, it is a waste of space. With more thought, it would have been far better to make use of it as the cafeteria which is lodged on the Second Floor.



The Mémorial Today

Entry to the museum proper is up a flight of a few stairs, and through two turnstiles, whilst those in wheelchairs can take a lift that is dedicated for upward trips. Another lift is dedicated to those travelling downwards! The Gallic logic of a lift not transporting people in both directions escapes me, whilst, in the event of a fire and a power cut combined, there is no guarantee that those wheelchair users could reach safety! As to the turnstiles, one swipes the ticket, and entry is gained. However, it is a 'one-shot' ticket that cannot be re-used, as I discovered in recovering the memsahib from the Lower Ground, even though the ticket's validity is for the day in question!

Once in, the visitor is faced with the proverbial Stygian gloom given the black walls and dimmed lighting. Those who recall the *Mémorial* from before the 'improvement' may

remember that everything was far better lit, and certainly on the Upper Ground, there was some natural light streaming in. It does seem that many modern museums are following the pattern of becoming claustrophobic Black Holes of Calcutta where the philosophy appears to be to create a sense of discomfort to the visitor. The sense of claustrophobia is also greatly increased in direct proportion to the number of coaches that may be parked outside. In this, I am reminded of Libeskind's design for the IWM North with its dark and dimly lit areas and sloping floors. One goes to a museum to look and learn about people, artefacts and events, not to get eyestrain, and not to risk taking a tumble on a less than obvious step! I saw an older chap nearly take such a tumble and thought 'Better watch that' when I go there. And of course, I forgot to!

The ascent from Lower to Upper Ground is by a flight of stairs, with a stair well that is almost completely darkened. Health and Safety, '*Santé et Sécurité?* Something has clearly become lost in the translation while the Stygian Gloom persists! Many of the displays are not quite visible with shadows being cast upon them. The mustard pot pig wearing a pickelhaube and the sign above it was one such an example. On occasion, the display cabinet structures can also obstruct the view, and this was particularly annoying with '*Le Dernier Adieu*' painting which merited a far better display for visitors to appreciate it.



The Pickelhaube Pig

Emerging from the Upper Ground Floor, the visitor is faced with stairs up and down. Going down throws the visitor at the mercy of foyer staff once more. Going up, the First Floor is bypassed as that is the Administration Office level, and one is left with a Second Floor which houses a classroom, temporary exhibition hall and a small cafeteria which only serves sandwiches and such like. One wants a drink? Machines dispense liquid refreshments to passages of Handel's Water Music!

There are outside terraces, but apart from the Ossuary bell tower the panoramic view is one of tree tops, the Verdun battlefield having been very effectively forested after the War by the French equivalent of the Forestry Commission!

The price tag of 12.5M Euros is a lot of money in anyone's language, and one has to ask where did it actually all go? The Historial at Peronne, although it has some drawbacks, is the benchmark I use. It is well lit and spacious, it has a cafeteria that serves drink and food, a shop that sells items with prices to suit all pockets, and above all, artefacts that are clearly visible. Overall the *Mémorial* fails to match the Historial. There are few, if any, new artefacts however, given the constraints of lighting and layout, there is still a lot to be seen and appreciated.

What caught my eye was Général Mangin's uniform and the helmet affair that looked as if it had been stolen from the film set of Jules Verne's '20,000 Leagues under the Sea'. I later appreciated that it was an early flame thrower and head protection combination, but on reflection, the Jules Verne idea was not so wide of the mark while pickelhaubes were too good to waste when the coal scuttles came into use!



'Le Dernier Adieu'



A Nightmarish Vision on the Battlefield!



'Le Boucher's' Uniform

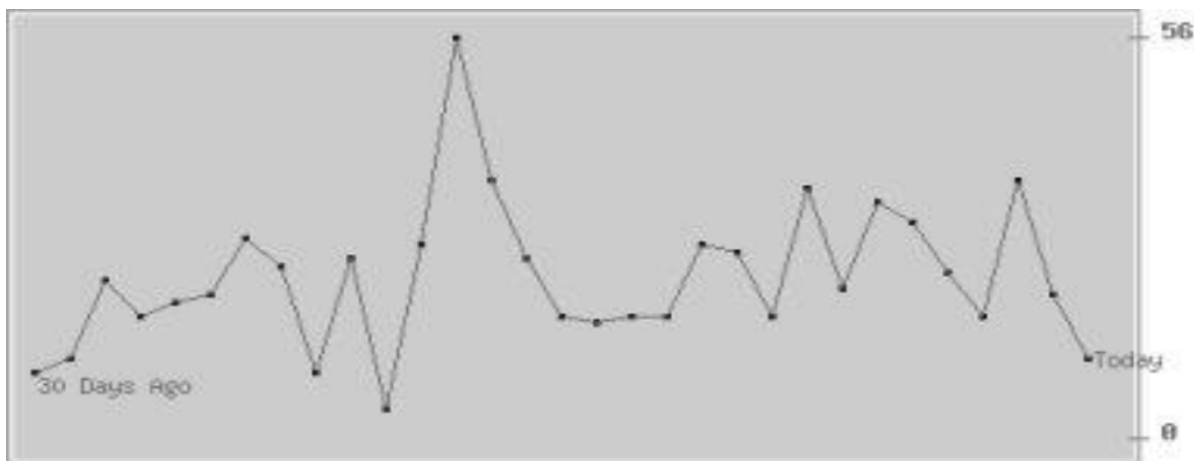
I mentioned *Le Mémorial de Caen* earlier. We had visited it once, back in 1992 I recall, not long after it had opened, and I am sorry to say that we were unimpressed, however 24 year old impressions were not relevant in this case, and I will undoubtedly visit *Le Mémorial de Verdun* next year when in Verdun once more. There will be one or two members who may think that I am into my 'grumpy old man' mode in criticising this museum, but people pay good money, travel quite a distance in many cases, and turn up to learn of those events and the men who were involved a century ago. They should not be faced by a poorly lit claustrophobic building, with inadequate signage and access/egress that poses a heightened health and safety risk to the less able, all to satisfy the vanity of the designer(s). Will some of the deficiencies have been resolved by this time next year? I hope so, but I doubt it!

The article obviously reflects one set of views, so it would be useful for anybody else who visits to tell the Group what they think. The floor is yours!

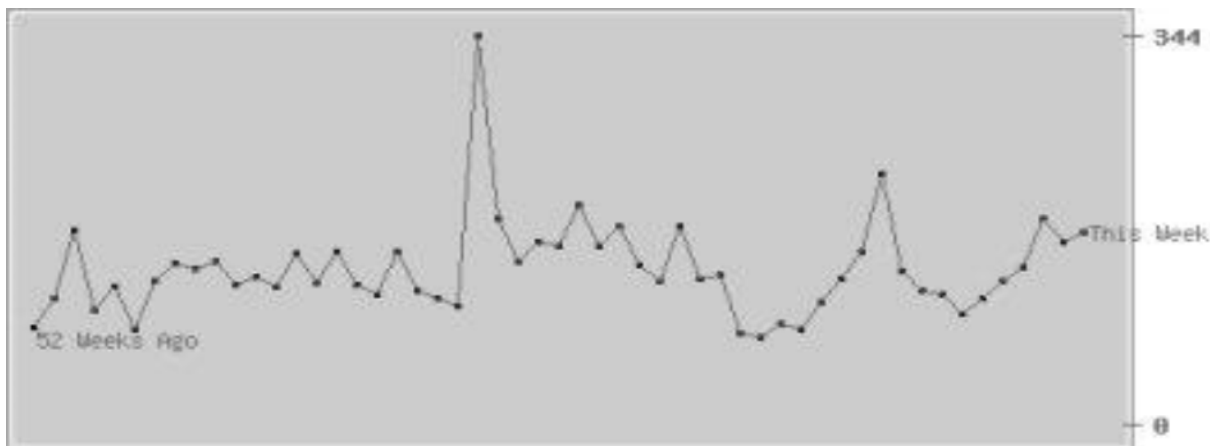
Website Workings By Roger Frisby

The total number of website visits has now reached 63,050, an additional 2,200 visits since Journal 62.

Recent Website Visits:



The Past Month



The Past Year

The Rolls of Honour and Service:

With regards to our respective Rolls of Honour and Service, the statistics for changes to our numbers since mid-August are as follows:

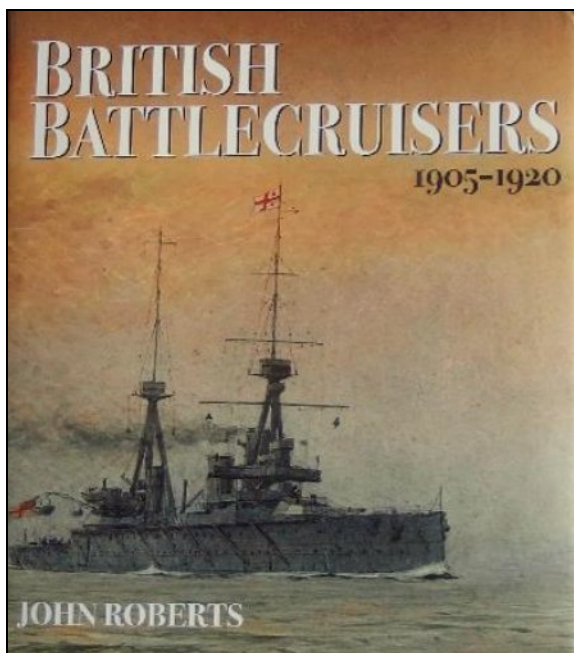
- Guernsey Roll of Honour – 1491 names (An increase of 8)
- Guernsey Roll of Service – 6658 names (An increase of 74)
- Jersey Roll of Honour – 1681 names (An increase of 2)
- Jersey Roll of Service – 7648 names (An increase of 40*)

Note: * Not 90 as indicated likely in Journal 62.

The combined loss of lives across both Bailiwicks was over 3,000, although there is a small percentage of names that, due to their family circumstances, feature in both Rolls of Honour. We can now display photographs of their headstones or memorials for the vast majority of them. A remarkable and valuable achievement by many Group members with some external assistance.

In a situation similar to the Rolls of Honour, there are also family dependent duplications in both Rolls of Service, as well as resulting from other miscellaneous errors. Even so, the current figure of over 17,000 combining all four Rolls is quite impressive, and will undoubtedly increase.

Book Reviews



British Battlecruisers 1905 -1920
By John Roberts
(Seaforth Publishing - £35.00)
Rreview by Peter Tabb

STRANGELY enough this is not strictly a book about the Great War but given the part played in the conflict by the ships of its title, particularly in 1916, anyone (like your reviewer) who finds ships fascinating will want to add this book to their Great War bookshelf. John Roberts, a design engineer, is one of the best-known authorities on warships of the dreadnought era and as well as being a very well-researched writer he is also an accomplished draughtsman, illustrated by his contributions to the 'Anatomy of the Ship' series, notably the volumes on HMS *Hood* and HMS *Dreadnought*.

This is not a book for the casual reader looking for tales of derring-do by these greyhounds of the ocean. More it is a detailed analysis of each one of what was inevitably a doomed class of vessel, the brainchild of First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John (Jacky) Fisher with the enthusiastic support of First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill.

In 1906 Fisher had astonished the world's navies, particularly the burgeoning one belonging to Germany's Kaiser, with the introduction of *Dreadnought*, the first all-big gun fast battleship powered by Charles Parsons' revolutionary steam turbines albeit still fired

by coal. At a stroke the battleships of every other navy were rendered obsolete. *Dreadnought* at 17,500 tons, was fitted with ten 12-inch guns in five turrets (eight capable of being fired in either broadside) and 27 12-pounders as secondary armament. Her turbine machinery gave her a speed of 21 knots, a rate significantly faster than her contemporaries.

Dreadnought never had to try herself in battle since she was refitting at Rosyth during the Battle of Jutland and by then, such had been the progress of battleship design, she was already virtually obsolete. She was transferred to the Reserve Fleet in February, 1919 and scrapped in January, 1923.

However the 1908, saw the launch of another of Jacky Fisher's great ideas. HMS *Invincible* at 567 feet was almost hundred feet longer than *Dreadnought* and she mounted eight 12-inch guns and initially 18 12-pounders although these were replaced with 16 four-inch guns before commissioning. Although longer, *Invincible* was more than 200 tons lighter than *Dreadnought*. Powered by Parsons' turbines (still fired by coal) *Invincible* exceeded 26 knots on her trials much to Fisher's delight. After a little humming and harrang at the Admiralty, *Invincible* and those that would follow her were classified as battlecruisers.

Fisher's concept was simple, battlecruisers were designed to overtake and outgun any vessel they could catch and match the guns of any vessel capable of catching them. In particular, the battlecruisers could hunt down commerce raiders on the high seas, the Navy's principal role being to ensure the safety of Britain's worldwide merchant fleet. To meet this criterion and because they were not initially designed for fleet action, their armour protection was significantly weaker than that on the battleships.

Invincible was the lead ship of a class of four vessels, *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, *Indomitable* and *Indefatigable*, which was followed in 1911 by the *Lion* Class, namely *Lion*, *Queen Mary*, *Princess Royal* and *Tiger*. HMS *Australia* and HMS *New Zealand*, originally built for the navies of those countries and taken over by the Royal Navy, were modified *Invincible* Class battlecruisers. The *Renown* Class, comprised *Renown* and *Repulse*, and entered service in August, 1916, incorporated many of the lessons learned at the Battle of Jutland (although not enough of them). Followed by the *Courageous* Class, i.e. *Courageous*, *Glorious* and *Furious*, the last being fitted with a single 18-inch gun in its after turret, and all ultimately being modified into the first aircraft carriers.

As each Class was introduced in order to meet Fisher's requirement for speed, the ships grew in size to accommodate their more powerful engines and the fuel needed to fulfil what was still perceived as a world-wide role. They also carried larger guns, 13.5-inch with a greater range. However, by comparison with battleships of the same era, their armour protection was still much lighter. The ultimate expression of the breed, *Hood*, was 810 feet long and weighed more than 41,000 tons and was fitted with eight 15-inch guns. She was intended to be the first of a class of four ships but her three sisters were not proceeded with due to post-war budgetary cuts.

The battlecruiser was the subject of considerable controversy prior to the Great War when many saw them as very expensive vessels which could not carry out any obvious role that had not already been fulfilled by conventional cruisers. Nevertheless, they caught the public's imagination and gained a reputation as the 'glamour' ships of the Navy (*Lion* and *Tiger* were known as the 'Splendid Cats'), a reputation initially enhanced during the war by being under the command of the charismatic Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty.

In the early days of the Great War battlecruisers were involved in a number of skirmishes, the best known, and best example of the type of action visualised by Jacky Fisher, was the Battle of the Falklands Islands in December, 1914 which followed the sinking with all hands of two conventional cruisers, HMS *Good Hope* and HMS *Monmouth*, under the guns of the more modern German armoured cruisers, SMS *Scharnhorst* and SMS *Gneisenau* at the Battle of Coronel off the Chilean coast. An enraged First Lord ordered HMSs *Invincible* and *Inflexible* to the Falklands, under the command of Vice-Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee. Sturdee was ordered to prevent the German ships from bombarding the Falklands (whose only defence was the antiquated pre-Dreadnought HMS *Canopus*) and to sink them before they could go marauding anywhere else. In the ensuing battle both German vessels were sunk with heavy loss of life but despite overwhelming firepower, the battlecruisers' 12-inch guns outmatching the Germans' 9.2-inch pieces, it took almost 1,200 12-inch shells to sink the Germans during a five-hour engagement. Sturdee's excuse for so many misses was that the battlecruisers' funnel smoke had consistently obscured the targets because of the necessity of staying out of range of the Germans' guns to avoid damage to his ships. Although it was perceived that *Good Hope* and *Monmouth* had been avenged, and Sturdee returned as something of a hero (Churchill had intimated that if he did not sink *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* he might as well not bother to return at all) no-one made the comment, that was later made by Admiral Beatty at Jutland at the destruction of three of his battlecruisers, that there might be 'something wrong with these bloody ships!'.

John Roberts' work is not a detailed history of the lives and deaths of the battlecruisers. Towards the end of the book (which is coffee-table size) he details a summary of each battlecruiser's service. The entry for *Queen Mary* is quite brief and ends with the simple note '31st May, 1916 – Sunk in action at Battle of Jutland'.

Rather this a book for the reader who is interested in details and minutiae of these 'glamour' ships and likes to know that, for instance, replacing the planned 18 12-pounder guns on *Invincible* with 16 4-inch guns added 65 tons to the vessel's weight, while increasing the vessel's complement from 708 to 755 officers and men actually added another 10 tons.

The chapters cover the Origins of the classes, Design and Construction 1905 -1914 and the Battlecruiser Revival which finally led to the *Hood*.

John Roberts makes brief mention of Germany's battlecruisers but does not labour the point that they were much tougher ships than their British counterparts because they were designed for operation in home waters so could devote the space designated in the British ships, with their worldwide role, for machinery, fuel and personnel to armour protection and although the German battlecruisers were massively battered at Jutland by the Royal Navy's 5th Battle Squadron (the most modern of the British battleships) during von Hipper's 'death ride', they all managed to stay afloat.

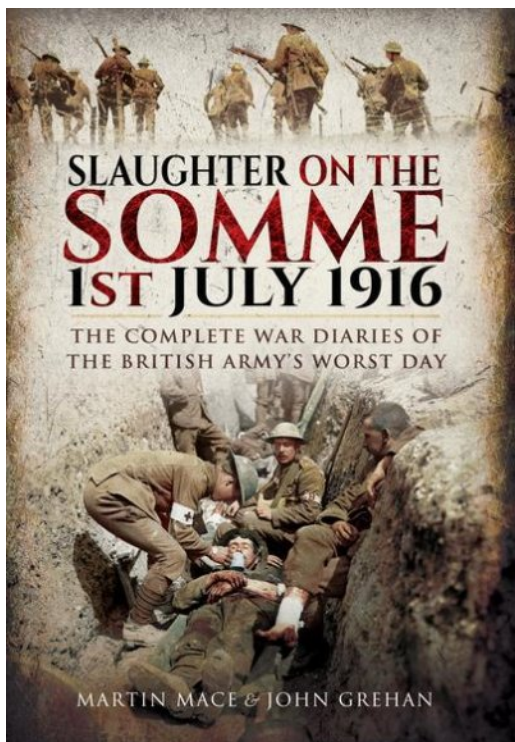
Curiously enough the concept of being fast enough to evade a stronger force and strong enough to overcome a weaker one fast enough to catch it was the ethos which led Nazi Germany in the 1930s to develop the 'pocket battleship' whose 11-inch guns gave it the punch of a battleship and whose diesel engines gave it the speed of a cruiser. The 'pocket battleship' *Admiral Graf Spee* carried the battle honour 'Coronel' on her superstructure in commemoration of the victory at Coronel of the German Pacific Fleet commander Admiral Graf von Spee. Germany also developed battlecruisers in the 1930s, the *Scharnhorst* and

Gneisenau, but despite achieving speeds of 33 knots in almost any weather, these two vessels had massive armour protection and in the case of *Scharnhorst* required a whole Royal Naval fighting group to overwhelm it with 14-inch shells and torpedoes on Christmas Day, 1943.

What ultimately emerges from the mass of John Roberts' technical data is that as a ship of war the battlecruiser as developed by Jacky Fisher and espoused by Winston Churchill was doomed, being too expensive for its perceived worldwide role and unsuited, because of its poor armour protection, to fleet action where its 'unique selling proposition', its speed, counted for little. The destruction of *Invincible*, *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary* at Jutland proved that there was 'something wrong with our bloody ships' but unfortunately what was really wrong was not truly understood and although for many years the *Hood* – 'the mighty 'ood' - was the largest and theoretically the most formidable warship in the world, she suffered the same fate as her three older sisters when she met *Bismarck* in the Denmark Strait in 1941.

British Battlecruisers 1905-1920 is lavishly illustrated with many photographs, plans and Roberts' characteristic drawings that any aficionado of the 'Anatomy of the Ship' series will be well familiar with.

(Editor's Note: I'll do a bit of name dropping here to say that I was embarked on board HMS *Intrepid* (officially a Landing Platform, Dock(LPD)) a couple of times in the Far East during the 1970s when Doveton Sturdee's grandson, Captain (later Admiral of the Fleet) William Staveley was in command).



Slaughter on the Somme
By Martin Mace and John Grehan
(Pen and Sword Books, 500 pages)
RRP £16.99, Paperback (2016)

Having bought this book in a discount shop for the princely sum of £6, I wonder where it fits in the greater schemes and actually what I am reviewing apart from a great deal of work to transcribe the handwritten Battalion war diaries of 100 years ago. The title is eye-catching, but so was Agatha Christies' 'Death on the Nile'. One feels that it was chosen because no one had previously thought to use it! The book provides a snapshot of that fateful day for each Battalion, sometimes no more than three or four lines, for others for more, yet there is nothing from Brigades and higher formations where one might expect to find more of the larger picture. Or was there one?

It can be seen that there is a varied quality in the documenting of events, and this surely indicates on how each Battalion's command structure fared. More officer casualties might mean a less clear idea of what actually happened, so any feedback up the chain of command may have been patchy, and slow, given the damage to telephone lines above and below ground. As an example, the War Diary for the 1st Bradford Pals is no more than

a collection of statements and interviews given that at 7.30 the assault began and with ‘... the loss of all officers, no detailed narrative was possible.’

It may be that Mace and Grehan have conveyed the sense of this, albeit by omission? But, given that, there are more than 170 Battalion’s worth of work, ‘Slaughter’ is a considerable undertaking given that the original War Diaries are invariably eyesight tests! (That implies no criticisms of the original authors, a century ago, scribbling under conditions far worse for them than for the Editor in his centrally heated chateau today!).

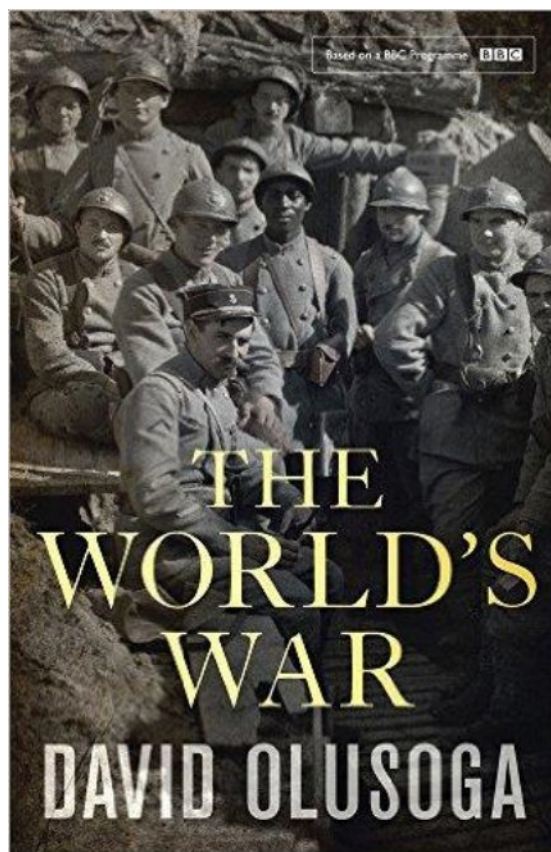
The book therefore can be nothing but a reference work to be dipped into as and when. If a particular Battalion is being researched by a Member, then it is probably better to download copies of the original War Diaries from the National Archive (the War Office 95/-series) for £3.45 per section of data upwards of 50Mb. Furthermore, there should be other information to hand such as regimental histories and maps. ‘Slaughter on the Somme’ although it makes no attempt at cross-referencing the WO 95/- Series source documents is, however, a handy reference book.

The World’s War
By David Olusoga
(Head of Zeus, £20.00)

This is a book that was based upon the BBC’s two-part series of the same name that was originally screened back in August, 2014. The blurb refers to the book as being a sweeping narrative, and at 424 pages of text, with a further 18 of notes, one feels that the result does not quite match that blurb, and it is possibly a step too far for the author to achieve. Yet, there is material in the book, which did not feature on the BBC back in 2014, which does push the boundaries out in that direction.

The narrative may be regarded as sweeping, but it does not necessarily flow, and there are, quite often, times when a return to the beginning of the paragraph or sentence is needed. Often, interest and focus can be lost. On occasion, one reads the same material on two different pages, and it is as if a revision was not followed through.

Before discussing material, one should get the general criticisms out of the way, and none more so than that the author occasionally resorts to turning the maxim of ‘A picture is worth a thousand words’ on its head. Thus, as in cases such as the Sikhs parading through Marseille (see right), he describes the scenes without the photograph being included. One is left screaming at the author ‘to show the blasted picture’!



hen, a particular foible of mine, the use of Americanisms such as 'labor' or 'z' in lieu of 's' in words such as 'globalisation' occurs every now and again. Noah Webster has a lot to answer for!

The blurb informs the reader that the author is a specialist on colonialism, slavery and racism, and these three elements are implicit throughout the book. Each of the major protagonists, Britain, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia and the USA had empires of varying sizes and practiced colonialism to various degrees, where, the white man's superiority was paramount. With regards to the inhabitants of India, the British had seen the continued importance of the Indian Army, leavened after the Mutiny with British battalions alongside those Indian units that had remained loyal to the crown. But, they had also come up with the 'martial races' theory in that some Indian races, those from the mountainous regions, would prove to be better, more hardy, soldiers than those from the other races who were plain-dwellers. Pre-War recruiting followed this theory and the despatch of the Indian Corps, which was the formation most prepared at the time, to augment the BEF would put the theory to the test. As First Ypres became a memory and all sides settled into trench warfare, it became progressively noticeable from censor reports that many Indian troops were increasingly becoming demoralised in the letters sent to family back home. The 'martial races' theory unsurprisingly took a battering and recruitment tailed off. Having recruited in the hills, the British would now seek men from the lowlands. Trench conditions and equipment were two obvious factors, whilst leave, or the lack of it, was another. The British meanwhile would try to address dietary and religious needs, while for those injured, every effort was made to care for them. However, when convalescing, those approaching fitness were subject to restrictions on 'walking out' and would have to be escorted by British officers and other ranks. No wine, women and song it seems.



In France, a similar theory, that of *les races guerrières* took hold, and this would lead to *La Force Noire*. There was much similarity with the British theory, but whereas the Indian Army's role had been seen as policing and defending India, *La Force Noire* was to be seen by some as France's military fist. The French powers that be watched in dread as Germany's population increased while their numbers were not, and could only muster 4.5M men of military age compared to a German figure of 7.7M. One of the chief proponents of the theory was General Charles Mangin (left), known to his friends and foe alike as '*Le Boucher*', and he had seen the French colonies in Africa, apparently more than had the British with theirs, as the prime source for France's military manpower.

However, this was not a new concept as the French had been recruiting from the colonies since the 1820s, and in 1857 would establish *Les Tirailleurs Sénégalais*, taking volunteers as well as buying up supplies of black slaves! Mangin propounded that the black African soldiers were the most warlike and would be best suited to being shock troops, with this leading to objections from across the French political spectrum, and from Germany who regarded the prospect of a black French Army (*La Force Noire*) being deployed in a future European war as 'damned unsporting', believing, as it did, that black troops were little more than savages. Germany's objections had the opposite effect to that which they had desired, and the French now thought, as the author drily notes, that 'Mangin was onto something'.

However, whilst *Les Tirailleurs* may have been regarded as shock troops, they fared no better against the machine gun's bullet than did the normal French troops! As to Germany, for all its objections about the unsporting employment of black troops, it would not have clean hands, certainly not with General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck's East African guerrilla campaign where he employed some 12,000 black Africans in his Askari companies. Yet prior to that, they had also mobilised a lesser number in German South West Africa.

***Les Tirailleurs Sénégalais* (pictured right)**

Within these three empires and the USA there had been opposition to arming and equipping the black Africans with weapons. After all, the Empires had relied on the myth of white supremacy and now to encourage them to fight alongside whites, and to encourage them to kill the enemy's white soldiers was anathema.



The barriers, so carefully constructed to maintain the white/black separation would erode, and this would undoubtedly provide problems to the white administrators when the war was over. South Africa, in particular, very firmly insisted that its contribution of black troops, the SA Native Labour Corps, would not be used in a combat role, and while in France the SANLC was, in effect, 'lock away at night' as were the Chinese labourers!

The author reminds us that a War that was European at its outset, soon spread far wide and wide. The Kaiser for example, with the help of the Ottoman Empire, sought the cooperation of Muslims in Turkey, Arabia, Africa, India and elsewhere to wage a *jihad* against Britain and France. The Chinese, having allowed its men to be engaged as labourers, joined the Allies in 1917 as did Cuba, Panama, Liberia, Siam and Brazil, even though the contribution in manpower was no more than a few thousand, while Peru and Uruguay also broke off diplomatic relations. Of course, the entry of the USA would have the most impact.

For all of President Woodrow Wilson's high-minded liberal principles, black Americans fared no better than their African cousins. The US military sent out what purported to be a guidance paper, but in reality was almost an edict, to the other Allies as to how the black Americans were to be treated. It was the export of US segregation. They were to be barred from where white populations might gather socially, in *estaminets* for example, and fraternisation was to be discouraged, not least with white members of the fairer sex. Black and white Americans were to be kept completely separate where billets were to be provided. But, such 'guidance' was politely acknowledged and largely ignored.

Segregation existed in the military in that there were no mixed units where black and white served alongside each other, although white officers might be given command of a body of black soldiers, the opposite of that, i.e. a black officer commanding white troops, was not allowed irrespective of seniority. In a variation of the British 'martial races' theory, the US Army regarded the great majority of black troops who were drafted in as intellectually too

poor to be in the front line where it is was seen that the War had become too difficult for them in technological terms. Thus, most were employed in labour units, about 170,000 of whom who never left the US, while a similar number would reach Europe and perform similar work, particularly at the ports of Brest, Bordeaux and St Nazaire. There would be 9,000 men at the end of the War who would find themselves employed on grave registration duties at Romagne-sous-Montfauçon.

Though most black Americans would serve as labourers, the military saw fit to form two 'coloured' US Army Divisions, the 92nd and the 93rd, with the first remaining under US command and the latter assigned to serve under French orders. Both would perform well, the 93rd in particular, having benefitted from the superior training and equipment that was provided by the far more experienced French. The author highlights the fact that the 92nd meanwhile had 'enjoyed' bad publicity after a failed attack at Binarville with senior white officers only too ready to 'pass the buck' for the outcome on their soldiers. This is similarly described in Edward G Lengel's book 'To Conquer Hell', but it must be stressed that there are one or two reference books in the Lengel and Olusoga Bibliographies that are common.

Poorly treated by their superiors, black soldiers would literally be whipped during training for example, their homecoming was just as unwelcoming. The Ku Klux Klan had re-emerged, there were beatings and lynchings, and black soldiers, proud of their service, were soon discouraged, physically, to divest themselves of their uniforms. The author offers no criticism of these events, but the reader is only too well equipped to see that the immediate post-War period was a shameful one in US history.

Looking at the book overall, as mentioned earlier, it is not quite sweeping enough, and there are omissions, the Indians in Mesopotamia being one such glaring example. It does, however, show how the Empires sought to maintain their positions of power in terms of the whites being the superior races whilst the Africans, the Afro-Americans, and the other coloured races were treated as inferior in varying degrees, some far mercilessly than others. The idea of *les races guerrières*, and other such concepts, enjoyed their adherents, but the reality was that these ideas were phony, and where an African was regarded as intellectually inept, an Empire's policy was not conducive to do anything but reinforce that.

Yet for all the criticisms and comments ('labor', Yuk!), there is still a lot of meat in the book in which one can sink one's teeth, and it offers a different, yet broader, perspective on one aspect of the Great War that a focus on the RGLI or the Jersey Contingent could ever achieve. So, it gets a recommendation that it should appear on Members' bookshelves, if not borrowed from the local library. Overall, it is a book that is worth reading.

The Jersey Archive

The final talk in the 2016 'What's your Street's Story' series is at the Archive between 10.00 and 13.00 on the 17th December and looks at La Rocque. If you wish to attend, please book by ringing 01534 833300, or emailing: archives@jerseyheritage.org

Guernsey Commemorates the Battle of Verdun By Liz Walton

Russell Doherty, Alan Cross and I had the privilege of attending a short memorial to British and French victims of the Great War on the 19th October, 2016. The event, which also

commemorated the end of the Battle of Verdun, was attended by the French Ambassador to Great Britain, Mme Sylvie Berman as part of her first official visit to Guernsey.

Verdun was the longest battle of the war and left approximately 800,000 soldiers of all nationalities dead and wounded. French casualties were particularly heavy with over 160,000 Frenchmen being killed. Among these were several Guernsey reservists who had been called back to their units in France when war was declared.

The ceremony took place at the Bailiwick Memorial at the top of Smith Street, St Peter Port. Mme Berman was accompanied by officials from the French Embassy in London and senior politicians from the Manche region of Normandy. Mme Odile Blanchette, the Honorary French Consul was also present as were the Bailiff of Guernsey, Sir Richard Collas, the Island's President of Policy and Resources Committee, Gavin St Pier, Minister for External Affairs Jonathan Le Tocq, Minister for Education, Culture and Leisure, Paul Le Pelley, and other dignitaries. Honoured guests included ex-service men who had been awarded the Légion d'Honneur for their services during the Second World War.

Guernsey Military History Company members Russell Doherty in the uniform of the 247th Regiment d'Infanterie (the St Malo Reserve Regiment) and Martin Le Page dressed as a member of the 71st Regiment d'Infanterie (St Brieuc) were in attendance. They acted as wreath bearers throughout the ceremony. The wreath laid by the French Ambassador contained cornflowers or bleuets, the French flower of remembrance as well as red roses and white chrysanthemums while the one laid by Guernsey's Bailiff was a traditional poppy wreath. Prayers for the fallen of all countries were said in French and English and two minutes silence was observed. The service, though short was very moving, especially given the presence of the two poilus.





After the ceremony CIGWSG members Mark Bougourd, Russell, Alan and I had a chance to catch up on research matters over a coffee before some of us left for a delicious lunch at La Frégate where Mme Berman was the honoured guest.

Further Guernsey News By Liz Walton

Poppies: Guernsey's Lieutenant-Governor and his wife came to see the poppies while they were at the Priaux Library. Sue Laker, the Deputy Chief Librarian and I showed them round. He asked lots of questions about the poppies project and also showed a keen interest in Guernsey and the Great War in general. The poppies are currently in the Town Church until the end of November, this being the first time that all 1500 of them have been there.



Walter Henry Marquis: I recently went to the Foulon to see the CWGC install a new headstone for

<http://www.greatwarci.net/honour/guernsey/database/marquis-jh-foulon.htm>

However, they were unable to install it as it contained an error which wasn't noticed until after they had put in the foundation. It will be sent back to France, corrected, and then installed at a later date.

The 'Salvationist': I was recently interviewed by the 'Salvationist' magazine about my aunt Ada Le Poidevin who went to France with the Salvation Army in 1917. She worked in various rest huts in the camps then stayed on until 1923 working with their Graves Visitation Service. They produced a well-illustrated and informative article which appeared in the current issue.

An RGLI Memorial at Masnières: For some time discussions have been under way, led by Guernsey's Bailiff, that have included a number of interested people, including Russell

Doherty and myself. With the Bailiff's agreement, Project Les Emrais has been established and its details can be found via the following link:

<http://coliver3.wixsite.com/lesemrais>.

The Project was registered in Guernsey as a charity under the title 'The Royal Guernsey Light Infantry Charitable Trust' on the 2nd November and is numbered CH543.

It was discussed with the French Ambassador on her recent visit to Guernsey and was apparently well received with the Ambassador commenting that these types of initiatives were not only important for both communities, but helped cement our joint cultures and experiences. The French authorities in the area are also keen to support the project and discussions are ongoing. I will also keep the Group updated as the project progresses. As the Bailiff is unfamiliar with the proposed site, he has been supplied by me with some photographs.

The Battle of the Lys: I am making enquiries about whether anything will be done about the battle of the Lys as it always tends to be overlooked.

An unknown Somerset Light Infantry officer

A recent exchange with the Curator of the Somerset Military Museum indicates that no one has yet looked at who the above officer might have been. A bit disappointing.

In the Media - Around the Press and Television

The wearing of poppies: Is it becoming more noticeable that the wearing of poppies has become a ritual of meaningless compulsion rather than an act of personal remembrance? Furthermore, are they being worn far earlier than before? It struck me that the casts and presenters of many television programmes are obliged to wear them irrespective of their own views on the matter. Football teams are paraded around the centre circle with an embroidered poppy on their team shirts, 'Strictly' dancers meanwhile have beautiful bejewelled brooches. Whether embroidered or bejewelled, it is the club or the programme that has provided those poppies with a 'Thou shalt wear...' word in the ear. As to their early wear, I have spotted a few October appearances, and am now left wondering whether they will soon be on sale in August, on the shelves alongside the Christmas crackers!

It did seem that the English and Scottish Football Associations made a meal of this at their match on the 11th November at Wembley along with repeating the two minute silence nine hours after the first one which saw most people pause in the streets, in supermarkets or at home. To compound the problem, the FIFA has declared that the wearing of poppies is a political act that in the case of these two FAs will mean some form of punishment! If that was not sufficiently cuckoo, the Welsh FA may be taken to task because some spectators turned up that day wearing their own poppies! A political act? Does no one listen to the national anthems that are sung?

Crosses of Remembrance: For many years individuals have been able to buy these little crosses, planting them in a field of remembrance or alongside a loved one's headstone. For the first time this year the Royal British Legion was selling these 'planters (is that the

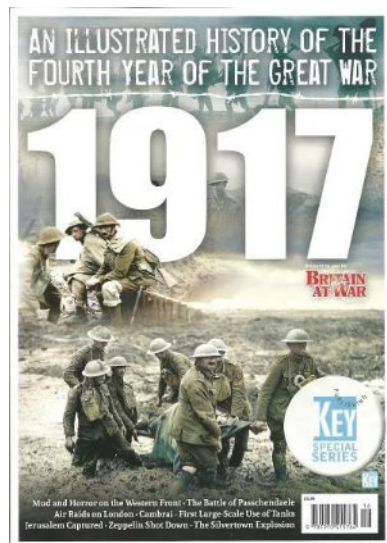
right term?') along with the Star of David, the crescent and other religious devices acknowledging those of the different faiths who served alongside their Christian comrades.

1917: Key Publishing Ltd has recently released their latest magazine in their Great War series for 1917 shown right. It may be obtained at your local paper shop, but failing that, it can be ordered, priced at £5.99 via the company's website:

www.keypublishing.com

Furthermore, previous years' issues are still available, some at reduced prices.

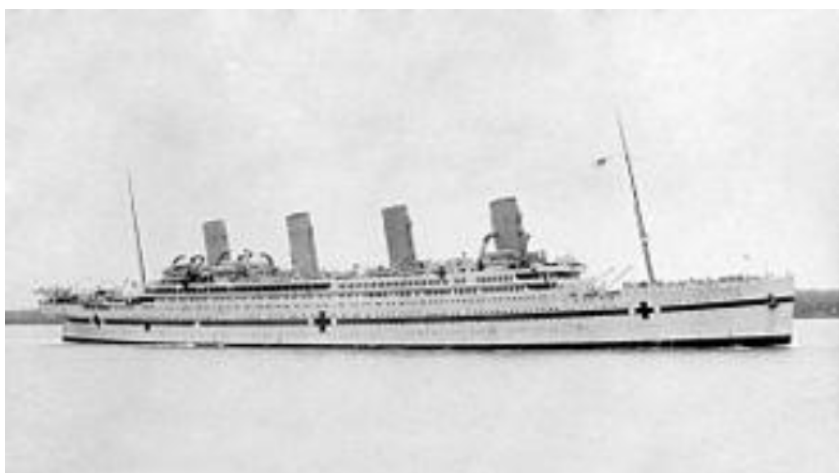
Although 1917 is generally seen by most solely as the year of Passchendaele, the magazine looks at a diverse range of subjects, including the capture of Jerusalem, Cambrai and the tanks, Air Raids on London, Zeppelins, Silvertown, Kut El Amara, Arras, Vimy and the start of rationing.



The Barnbow Lasses: In December, 1916 an explosion occurred at the No 1 National Shell Filling Factory at Barnbow in Leeds with the result that 35 ladies out of a total of some 16,000 were killed. For a time the news was suppressed, thanks to security and censorship, yet according to the Times back in October, the ladies are only now going to be commemorated. This is a little odd, given that there was a news item a few years ago that reported the dedication of a memorial to these ladies.

Spanish Flu: Members will be pleased to know that the demographic effect of Spanish Flu apparently no longer has an impact on UK population thanks to the baby boomers of 1920!

Two Sinkings: On the 21st November, 1916 the *Britannic* one of the RMS *Titanic's* two sister ships (the other was the *Olympic*) being used as a hospital ship, sank in the Aegean Sea, having struck a mine. Although there were just over 1,000 survivors, the death toll was 30 of whom 5 have known graves. As such, the ship is now internationally seen as a war grave for the 25 others.



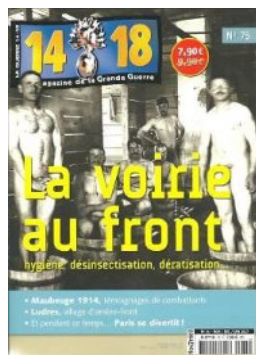
HMHS Britannic

However, the Greek government is seeking to turn the wreck site into a 'divers' theme park', their rationale being the parlous state of their nation's finances! (Reminds me of that old chestnut 'What's a Greek urn?') It does seem rather inappropriate. Incidentally, I seem to recall that was a Jersey doctor aboard, and a trawl through old notes is needed.

The second sinking is a funnier story. A few months ago, a cable ship, carrying out work off Wigtownshire on the west coast of Scotland, discovered the virtually intact wreckage of

a U-boat, most likely the UB-85 (although the UB-82 may have also been lost in the area), having been sunk on the 30th April, 1918 by HMS *Coreopsis*.

It appears that the UB-85 had been caught on the surface and, according to its commander, *Kapitänleutnant* Günther Krech, it had been damaged, and was thus unable to submerge. All well and good, the crew survived, but claimed the commander and his men when they were being interviewed by the British authorities, that damage had been caused by a sea monster that had attacked the U-boat and which they had sought to fend off by firing the pistols at the beast! Scotland ...?



French Magazines: A year on, I remain delighted with my subscriptions to *Tranchées* and *La Guerre 14-18*, and have renewed them for a further two years. By coincidence, the latest *Tranchées* also has a look at the loss of the *Léon Gambetta* (see page 10) in an article on French Naval operations in the Adriatic. *La Guerre 14-18* meanwhile, looks at the setting up of rudimentary facilities for showers and delousing. All good clean material!

The CI Family History Society Daniel Benest

The CIFHS were out in force on the 31st October, 2016 at the Jersey Archive where members heard Linda Romeril talk about some of the records that are being scanned and posted online in respect of the Great War. Summarising her talk:

- Linda first spoke of the approved plans to extend the archive building with greatly increased record storage capacity.
- She told members that Jersey Heritage had commissioned CIGWSG member Ian Ronayne to write an online blog of daily events and news items, with an emphasis on what occurred locally, 100 years ago.
- She mentioned that week on week, there are more Great War records becoming available to view online. These records include the docketts of individuals travelling to and from Jersey, stating where they had come from or were going to. The scrolls that held this paperwork were found under the flooring at the approximate location of the old Harbourmaster's office at Liberty Wharf in the late 1990s. Unfortunately, many of the documents were too mouldy to be saved due to the totally unsuitable location in which they had been stored (and forgotten about!).
- She also spoke of the Military Service Act Tribunal records and findings relating to contested conscription that largely date from 1917.

I am sure that the above sources of information will reveal the efforts of Jersey men and women that served during the war years whose endeavours have gone unrecorded by the CIGWSG hitherto, prompting adjustments to the JRoH and the JRoS.

Editor's Note: Daniel is 'spot on' as to the value of the travel records (see third bullet). I have been using a number of transcripts for about ten years and, Albert Handford (see

page 9) was recently identified as a 'CWGC Non-Commemoration' thanks to that data. The availability of the Tribunal records is 'new news', although there are accounts, many of them hilarious, of the Tribunal discussions in the Evening Posts of that period. Particularly funny was the appeal by one chap who said that he could not go as the Army's food would upset his delicate stomach! (It never hurt me!).

Out and About

Looking Back: Barrie Bertram was in Verdun as covered by 'Billy Doos' (see page 21) and 'In the footsteps of Angela Merkel and François Hollande' (see page 27).

Looking Forward: Barrie Bertram, the Somme (June, 2017), Verdun (September, 2017).

Odds and Ends

Jersey's Militia Pay Lists, 1914-1917: As ever, work remains painfully slow if not static on this task.

Journal to Website Transfers: There are a lot of articles appearing in past Journals that could also feature on the website with a limited amount of editing. A repeat call for authors to give thought to see what might feature on our site and supply fresh copy?

The Muratti Vase: John Treleven's lists of Muratti players have still to feature on the website. Hopefully this will be resolved in the next few months.

Stop Press

We have just heard from the CWGC that they have accepted that Thomas Pleace's full name was Thomas Edwin Pleace and not Thomas Edward Pleace, and their Debt of Honour Register has been amended accordingly. The next stage of the process is for them to acknowledge that Thomas is buried in Southampton, and that his entry on the memorial at Tower Hill can be removed.

Enfin

As ever, thanks go to those who have contributed their inputs, both large and small, to this Journal. However, those thanks are repeated sixty-two times for the inputs that have all gone to make the earlier Journals, I hope, a success.

Unfortunately the Journal now goes into 'suspended animation', like the Sleeping Beauty awaiting for some great ugly frog to plant a big smacker on her lips (that's possibly a poor analogy now I think of it?)! Meanwhile, how are Group Communications to be maintained? Hopefully by all of us making use of Facebook and the CI Great War link established by Roger and Jason. This will require no more than your current Email address and a password to set up, and one or other will give approval. More detail is proved on the next page.

Finally, I would just reiterate my thanks for your support over my 12 years as Editor.

Kind Regards
Barrie H Bertram
30th November, 2016

CIGWSG Communications

Unfortunately, and just as understandably in this busy day and age, no one has come forward to take on the role of Editor of the CIGWSG Journal. This follows the announcement in Journal 62 that I would no longer be fulfilling that role as of Journal 64 in the New Year. Effectively, the Journal will be in 'suspended animation' as of 2017 unless someone feels that they would like to have a go. But, the show of maintaining communication between members must go on as they say, the question being how to achieve that?

There are two elements to answering that question. The first is that the website, the 'jewel in our crown' so to speak, will very clearly continue to be maintained and, it is hoped, progressively expanded with additional research 'papers' and data, by including them either as part of the drop down menu, or by incorporating the material in the Member's Area. This will be determined on a case by case basis. There are some elements that have regularly appeared in Journals, one such example being the CWGC Non-Commemorations 'progress board', that should now feature on the website, and these will be transferred.

As a reminder, you will recall that the website recently underwent an upgrade and, with it, the need to contact Roger Frisby about changing Usernames/Passwords as follows:

*Our webserver provider has upgraded their software. This has affected the password protected parts of our website so you will no longer have access to these unless you send me a new username and password. You can use your current username but your new password will need to be at least eight characters, include lower and uppercase letters and at least one number. You are also permitted to use the characters ! \$ @ & ? * ^ . I have to add all names manually but I will do this as soon as I can. Apologies for this but it's outside of our control.*

The second element is the use of Facebook. We intend using that for blanket communication of transient information, such as Group news, discussions, trip reports and comments, whilst avoiding a 'death by Email' approach. Taking the CWGC Non-Commemorations' situation, a simple line statement to say that a person's case has been submitted for consideration could be one such example. To achieve that, an embryonic 'group' has been set up for the CIGWSG by Roger Frisby and Jason Cronin, and it can be accessed by using your Email address and chosen password via the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1696126187277672/>

From my early experience as a Facebook learner, it may take a little time to master, and I've still work to do with my 'area' figuring out where a lot of people appeared from. But, there are experienced users in the shape of Roger and Jason who will surely be able to advise. At the same time, they will welcome your feedback.

Hopefully, a combination of website enhancement and Facebook use will keep the level of CIGWSG communication up to scratch. In that, Facebook will enable transient information to reach Group members far earlier than every three months when it could be irrelevant.