

Military Ancestors – A Talk
By Stuart Nicolle of the Jersey Archive

(Introduction: For the past four years, the Jersey Archive has undertaken a programme of Saturday morning talks, lasting about an hour, with the title of 'What's Your Street's Story', thanks to the generosity of local businesses who have provided the sponsorship. In a departure from the standard fare of looking at well-known locations such as Halkett Place or Trinity Village, the talk that was given on the 21st November, 2015 looked at Jersey's Military Ancestors.

The transcription of that very important talk is reproduced below, for which we have to very much thank the Director of Collections and Archives, Linda Romeril, and the speaker, Stuart Nicolle, whose kind comments on the day, regarding our Group's work, we also greatly appreciate.

Given the time available, Stuart could only scratch at the surface of Jersey's rich military past which conceals what was the strategic importance of Jersey (and, it should be said, the other Channel Islands) to Britain in its many disagreements with France and others between the thirteenth and the early twentieth century. The military structures such as Mont Orgueil, Elizabeth Castle, Fort Regent, the numerous Martello style towers, and so forth, are a visible, if not always well preserved, reminder of past 'boots on the ground'. But, he has looked at some of the men who filled those boots, heroes and villains all, and provides a too short reminder of Jersey's hitherto longstanding military ethos.

The programme of 'What's Your Street's Story' talks for 2016 can be found via the Jersey Heritage link on this website.)

This morning I am talking about Military records and some of the stories that we can discover when looking at archives relating to them. Now in our short time here I am going to talk about the records relating to both the British Garrisons, that were stationed over here, and the Royal Militia of the Island of Jersey that was obviously a very large part of Island life for a great deal of time. There is a massive amount of material that I could have looked at for this talk but I knew that I'd be told off if I was talking all morning so I have by necessity been concise. (NS)

It is important to recognise the difference between the British Garrisons that came over in order to protect the Island and the Royal Militia of the Island of Jersey, which was made up of the men of the Island.

Because of the Island's close proximity to France, the British Army was garrisoned in Jersey for centuries. Within Edmund Toulmin Nicolle's book about Mont Orgueil details of the Castle garrison from as early as the thirteenth century are recorded. Later on soldiers were garrisoned at other military installations such as Elizabeth Castle, Fort Regent, St Peter's, Greve de Lecq and Rozel Barracks. There are lists of the infantry regiments in the Island that are kept in the Help Desk area upstairs.

Records of soldiers that were stationed in the Island were obviously not kept locally. There are some records online at Ancestry but your best point of call for those records is The National Archives in Kew. Any people carrying out extensive research on members of the military would be advised to look there, they have a fantastic range of information

leaflets on the web to help in your research. Having said that there is also a certain amount that you can find out from the Jersey Archive. (NS)

Just to give you a bit of a background into the organisation of the Militia. The first real evidence of the Island having a formal military organisation was in 1337 when King Edward III ordered the Warden of Jersey to enrol all able-bodied men, provide them with arms and to appoint officers. This is considered by many as the origin of the Jersey Militia. For the next three centuries each parish had its own Company until 1622 when three Regiments were formed, the East, West and North. It was not until 1929 that the Militia was made entirely voluntary when it was reduced to an Infantry Company of 260 men. (NS)

I thought a good place to start was at the last major battle that took place on British soil which was famously the Battle of Jersey. Major Francis Peirson has since been immortalised in Islanders' heads as the catalyst to a local victory whilst losing his life in battle. Here he is in all his glory as portrayed by Philip J Oules.

There are not massive amounts of records that the Jersey Archive holds relating to the Battle of Jersey. However, we do hold a Militia order book for the period. The entry in the order book from the 7th January, 1781 includes the words:

'The Governor cannot sufficiently express his thanks to the regular and militia for their distinguished behaviour, this day which he was released and the Country saved, the Death of Major Pierson is a serious loss in every sense. The last his life exerting himself at the head of a set of Brave Men'. (NS)

Of course, the name of Major Peirson has become synonymous with the Battle. In February, 1781 the States of Jersey met for the first time since the Battle had taken place. It was agreed unanimously that a letter of thanks should be sent to Major Peirson's parents. In April, 1781 Francis Peirson, the father of Major Peirson, sent a reply to the States of Jersey. The correspondence has been recorded in the States of Jersey minute books and are fascinating to read.

The States of Jersey wrote:

'We hope and trust it will in due time, be a powerful motive of Consolation to you on this severe Trial, to reflect that your Son in whom every military and moral virtue shone so conspicuous, finished his Career in the Dawn of Life; in a manner the greatest Heroes have ever wished to finish theirs. He fell, Sir, in the Moment of Victory, saving a free and loyal Island from impending Tyranny and Oppression.'

The florid language continues in Francis Peirson's reply:

'Penetrated with the most perfect Sentiments of Gratitude and Respect, I am at a loss for Words to express properly the lively sense I entertain of the great Honour you have confer'd on me and on the memory of my dear Son by favouring me with such authentick Testimonials of your Approbation of his Conduct on the Sixth of last January.'

I rejoice to think that as the Almighty was pleas'd to cut short his Thread of Life, that he had the great fortune before he fell by his Conduct and Courage and by the noble assistance he had from his Majesties Forces and not less so by the brave Troops of your

Island, to rescue a free and loyal People from the impending Yoke of arbitrary Power too heavy for free born men to bear.' (NS)

It was not only Peirson who was affected by the Battle. Looking at the States minutes in 1806 you find Nicholas Hamptonne seeking reparations for an injury sustained to his right leg on the night of the 6th and 7th January, 1781. The 6th, of course, is the date of the Battle of Jersey.

It would seem from Nicolas's letter to the States that on the night of 6th January he was helping to move a cannon from the Battery of the Castle to a vessel that was going to be patrolling the waters of Jersey for any enemy movement. Whilst moving the cannon he was injured in his right leg by a lever being used for the transportation.

The injury continued to affect him through his life but it was only 25 years later at the age of 68 that he was applying for money as the pain meant that he could no longer earn enough to look after himself. He would have been 43 when the attack on the Island had taken place and it is likely that he was a member of the Royal Jersey Militia called to protect Jersey from the enemy. (NS)

A good source of information which is not used that often is the General Don censuses. In order to gain an accurate number of men available in case of an attack by Napoleon General Don, Jersey's Lieutenant Governor, ordered a census to be taken in 1806 and 1815.

The 1806 census includes the names of the head of household, either male or female, along with their militia rank, and the number of women and children living in the household. It also lists those that are absent.

The 1815 census gives the names of males over the age of 17, their age and position in the Militia, along with the number of women and children within the household. Transcriptions are available from the Open Access shelves within the Channel Islands Family History Society Collection in the Help Desk area of the Jersey Archive.

These can be useful when tracing back your family before the main UK census. (NS)

The UK-wide census is the bread and butter for any family historian but can also prove useful when looking into the Island's military. They serve to capture a snapshot of the garrison in Jersey every 10 years. It is also amazing how many retired soldiers moved to the Island. Of course you had the invalids', and later, a veterans' Battalion which served in Jersey. These were separate Regiments manned with volunteers who had been previously discharged from regular service on account of wounds, age or illness. Being of limited physical capability, the veterans had only a home defence role or light duties only and were ideal for Channel Islands service. (NS)

Parish church marriage records reveal that some soldiers of the Garrison married local girls and a fine example of this is the Priestwood family. The 1851 census reveals that Mark Priestwood, a Royal Artillery Gunner and Driver, was living with Margaret his wife at Elizabeth Castle. Mark was born in Ireland and Margaret was born in St Martin.

A look at the 1861 census is even more revealing. At this point, Mark and Margaret were living at Fort Regent. They had five children who were all born at military bases in the

Island. Barbara and George were born at Elizabeth Castle and Edward, Mary and William were all born at Fort Regent. Margaret's birthplace is also of interest. Rather than just saying that she was born in St Martin it specifies that she was actually born at Mont Orgueil Castle.

This suggests that Margaret's father was also in the military and she settled here as a result of him being posted in the Island. Interestingly in the 1881 census Mark and Margaret's son George had continued in the family footsteps and was listed as being a Sergeant Major of the Royal Jersey Artillery. (NS)

[A further three Priestwoods would serve with the Royal Field Artillery during the Great War, one dying from heatstroke in Mesopotamia.]

The early almanacs are a useful source of information when researching officers in the Militia. There are lists within them of serving officers in the Militia together with their rank, the company that they served with and the date that they were commissioned. There are also details of the officers of the British forces that were serving on the Island. These lists are included in the almanac from 1863 to 1940. There is also a log of notable Island events listed in the almanacs and these can be very useful when researching the Militia as it often has notable occurrences that involved the military listed. (NS)

The letter books of the Lieutenant Governor can be an extremely interesting source of information relating to both the Garrison and the Militia. The Lieutenant Governor was obviously the Commander in Chief so correspondence relating to important military matters in the Island passed through his hands. The letter books themselves start around the turn of the nineteenth century. The first Governor that we have a letter book relating to is General Don who is obviously an extremely important figure in the history of Jersey.

Looking at one of the earliest letter books the kinds of matters that were discussed were issues such as supplies for the soldiers, the upkeep of the army facilities and quarantine. Individual soldier's names are generally not mentioned although some are, particularly when they have excelled themselves or they have got themselves into trouble. The only other times that they are mentioned are when Garrison soldiers are applying for holidays or for extra pay. These letter books are not subject or name indexed but are of extreme interest, especially to a military historian. (NS)

This particular example is that of Aylmer Nevill from General Don's letter book in December, 1808. The entry says it all really as I quote:

'Finding that Aylmer Nevil Private soldier in your Battalion was until he enlisted in a situation of a Gentleman and as I understand he has never been of any use whatever to the Battalion and not likely to be so I am induced to authorise you to discharge him and beg you will send his discharge tomorrow morning to BM Slater who has received my further orders concerning him.' (NS)

Another entry for 9th September ,1808 records the case of Captain Boardman. It seems that Boardman's commission had been bought for him by his uncle and when on Jersey he had run up debts to a number of other officers as well as Amiraux Le Breton and Company. Boardman had written a bill in his uncle's name to the company and had been given leave to go to his uncle and beg for the money to be paid without protestation.

General Don had a resignation letter written up from Boardman so that if his uncle did not pay the debt his commission would instead be sold and used to pay the debts that he incurred. I would not have liked to have been in Boardman's shoes having to go to his uncle for help on the pain of losing his job if money was not forthcoming. (NS)

It was also within one of the letter books that I was tipped off about an incident involving the bravery of some of the Militia's men, when in 1806 Philip Lys was recommended for a promotion to Captain. The letter book stated that he was an attentive officer and showed intrepid conduct when the powder magazine on the Town Hill was set on fire on 4th June, 1804.

On further research using Balleine's History of Jersey and the States of Jersey minutes I discovered that on 4th June, 1804 the Royal Standard was raised to commemorate the King's birthday and a salute was fired. Later that evening, Philippe Lys, the signals officer, heard that smoke had been spotted coming from a powder magazine on the site of the future Fort Regent.

Many fled from the scene but Lys together with Edouard Touzel, a local carpenter, and Private William Penteney of the 31st Regiment broke down the door of the store to see if they could extinguish the flames. The flames charred a barrel of gunpowder but the men were successful in putting out the flames before it could ignite.

Lys, Touzel and Penteney were lauded for their bravery in the States. A Committee was formed to decide how to repay them for their heroism and it was decided that Lys and Touzel would receive an award of 5000 livres, and a pension of 288 livres would be paid to Penteney throughout the duration of his life. They were all also gifted a gold medal to mark their act. Lys continued to excel being listed as a Captain in the Militia and Inspector of Artillery in the 1806 military census so he obviously got his promotion as was mentioned in the Lieutenant Governor's letter book. He was later promoted to Major. (NS)

The rest of the Lieutenant Governor's collection can also prove useful with a series of Militia correspondence dealing with disputes and comments relating to the Militia. In one of these written in 1888, GE Merry wrote to the Secretary of State complaining about the situation that the Militia men found themselves in. He was heavily against the fact that Militia service was compulsory and believed that was to the detriment of the men.

He wrote:

"Men who have not a minute to spare have to rush from their work, sometimes in a state of exhaustion and lose time and frequently their health to undergo hours of drill. And what does it amount to! I have seen a good many military displays in England, but I never saw such a miserable turn out as that on Her Majesty's birthday this week in Jersey."

These letters have been indexed by name and catalogued on the Archive's system. (NS)

I wanted to discover more about the Island's Garrison and their relationship with the local residents. Having looked at indexes in the past, I was aware that there were mentions of some soldiers within the *poursuite criminelles* registers so I thought I would have a look through the early registers to see what I could see.

The *poursuites criminelles* court was set up in 1797 and contains criminal trials held in front of the Royal Court. Obviously at this time there were a number of Garrisons in the Island with the threat of invasion from France still ever present in the nation's psyche.

To be honest I had not realised that the *poursuite criminelles* records were going to be such a goldmine. The early books are full of the various misdemeanours of the Garrison including crime and desertions. On the very first page, Captain Erasmus Brown of the Loyal Cheshire Fencibles is in front of the Court for injuring Lieutenant Moffat in a duel. It is not the last time that the Loyal Cheshire Fencibles are mentioned in the book. They certainly seemed like they had a good time whilst they were in the Island. Incidentally the early *poursuite criminelles* cases are currently being put online as individual cases available for subscriber's to view. (NS)

In September, 1797 another scandalous affair involving the Loyal Cheshire Fencibles was discovered. A local girl, Marie du Bois, the wife of Mr Brasford who was absent from the Island, was discovered during the night within the barracks of the Loyal Cheshire Fencibles. She was said to be acting in a scandalous and debauched manner - I'll leave it up to your imagination what she was up to! She was imprisoned by the Court for a month. (NS)

A major court case started in the same month. Stealing was a major problem within the Island as a result of the soldiers not being paid particularly handsomely and trying to supplement their income. Looking through the Lieutenant Governor's letter books it was often mentioned that there had been a spate of thieving near the army barracks and that the honorary police suspected the troops were involved.

In 1797 James Collings and Thomas Parbut of the Loyal Cheshire Fencibles stood accused of stealing a number of items from the house of one Charles Gruchy. The items stolen included linen and shirts. Their barracks were searched and they were caught red handed with the items concealed in their haversack. They were found guilty of the offence and it was decided that they had been so brazen in breaking in and that the crime was so premeditated, with them having to climb over walls and break the lock of the door, that they should be executed.

However, that was not the end of the story. In November, 1797 it was reported that Collings and Parbut had escaped their fate by climbing over the wall of the prison. But their bodies were eventually found in St Ouen's Bay, the men having drowned whilst trying to escape the Island. (NS)

Reading the court books it is clear that crimes committed by the Garrison was a major problem. There is actually a request within the first register from the Court to the Commander in Chief that some of the soldiers that are held within the prison are moved to the Castle as there was not enough room to accommodate them all within the Prison. (NS)

One of the best tales of the difficult relationship between Islanders and soldiers is that involving Lieutenant John Williams and Jean Le Brun. Le Brun came home from work early and was understandably somewhat perturbed to find Lieutenant Williams of the 88th Regiment in bed with his wife. Not solely content with that, Lieutenant Williams then attacked Le Brun with his sabre, causing injuries to both Le Brun's head and stomach.

To further compound matters Williams returned the next day and menaced Le Brun with a baton forcing him to flee from his house. When considering this case in context with that of Collings and Parbut who were sentenced to execution for stealing, you may think that the sentence meted out would be considerable. Surprisingly Williams was only fined 50 livres for the offence. (NS)

The *poursuites criminelles* books also record inquests into the death of people. A most unfortunate incident was recorded as having taken place in 1852. John Forbes, a 20-year old Scotsman who was a soldier of the Artillery Depot Station at Elizabeth Castle, died in St Helier. He was found drowned. The date of his death and this postcard gives clues as to what may have happened to the unfortunate soldier. He had drowned on the night of 1st or 2nd January, 1852. This suggests that he may have gone into St Helier in order to celebrate the New Year and having imbibed too much alcohol and feeling the worse for wear attempted to return to his base at the Castle. As Islanders well know the tides around Jersey are some of the most dangerous in the world and he must have been caught by one of these. He was not the only one who has succumbed to these and there are other soldiers within the court books who also died in this way.

Alcohol could lead to all kinds of misbehaviour. In 1798 Sergeants McCarthy and the appropriately named Bender of the 58th Regiment forced their way in to the house of Charles Nicolle. Whilst there they told Nicolle's wife Esther Hamon to provide them with wine to drink. She told them that they were not in a pub and when they refused to leave she was mistreated and then called to Francis de la Mare and then Philip Nicolle for assistance. The two Sergeants threw wine into the eyes of de la Mare, they hit Nicolle with a stone, and then threatened the Islanders with a bayonet. Both Sergeants were eventually sentenced to 8 days in prison on a diet of bread and water. (NS)

It was not only the crimes of the garrison that were recorded within the confines of the *poursuites criminelles* registers. People who did not conform to the Law in regards to the militia can also be found mentioned within the court records. Most of the time this was due to not appearing for drill practice.

Most of the time people could not be bothered to drill and this was why they appeared in the Court records. Going on camps and drilling when one had to do a job during the week was tiresome for many people. A somewhat comical occasion is recorded in the Court records of the 28th November, 1797. A report by Philippe Le Maistre, a Lieutenant of the Artillery Company of the South West Regiment, was presented to the Court. In it he stated that whilst on patrol on the night of 26th November he approached one of the Towers around the Island. He was not challenged on his way into the Tower and, once inside, he found Thomas Jean Le Boeuf, the Chief of the Guard, and the rest of the Guard completely asleep. It may seem comical now but obviously at this point, when the threat of invasion from France was still there, it was extremely serious. Le Boeuf was threatened with prison but it was decided that for the benefit of his family he would be fined 20 livres. (NS)

Sometimes, however, people refused to drill on moral grounds. This became an issue for the Methodist Church in Jersey in the 1790s when Methodists started to refuse to drill for the Militia on a Sunday. This became more acute at this time as the perceived threat from France was increasing and the emphasis on the importance of military service was becoming stronger. All men between the ages of 17 and 65 were expected to serve in

the Militia. When Charles Blampied of Trinity refused to drill in 1794, he was imprisoned for eight days. He experienced further spells in prison when he refused to participate in drill training and was imprisoned for an entire month in 1796. Ironically, Blampied's relatives were Huguenots and they had originally come to the Island in order to flee religious persecution in France.

Other Methodists also felt the strain of being brought to book for refusing to train on a Sunday. Jean Lucas, Pierre Le Sueur, Jean Sinel, Thomas Baudains and Philippe Perchard were all imprisoned for various lengths of time for defaulting on their military service. (NS)

This is a slide extracted from the *poursuite criminelle* register of the case involving Francois Balliaut. He was reported for refusing to carry out his military service on the basis that as a Methodist preacher he should not be expected to carry arms.

Tensions increased with Joseph Brockhouse, an English Methodist who came to the Island, being deported from the Island and the Constable of St John seeking justice against Jean Vaudin for his part in an evening meeting. The Constable claimed that it was a disturbance to the good, loyal and peaceable members of the parish and that the meeting encouraged people not to drill on a Sunday. (NS)

Matters came to a head at the end of 1798. The States introduced a Law stating that any person who refused to serve in the Militia should be banished from the Island. The Methodist Church protested vociferously and sent a petition to the Privy Council citing the examples of Guernsey and Alderney where a separate corps of men who did not want to train on the Sabbath Day had been formed. The English Government found in favour of the Methodist Church and refused to ratify the Law and the Methodists were allowed to drill on a different day. (NS)

In my research I found another example of military and religious views clashing. In 1817 a case was brought against James Elliott for refusing his military service. He was banished from the Island for his refusal to serve. The court case mentions no mitigating circumstances but the prison records give a clue as to why he was resolute. In brackets next to his name it was noted that he was a Quaker. With the Religious Society of Friends being a pacifist religion this would explain why he refused to serve. (NS)

However, appearance in the Court records for the militia were not limited to refusing to drill. On one tragic occasion mentioned within the Court Records members of the Militia appeared as a result of them being overzealous in carrying out their task. In September, 1797 William Scarborough, Jean Dumaresq and Francois Perrot were on guard duty in St Helier. Upon hearing somebody approaching they challenged them three times. Having received no response, Scarborough shot and wounded the offender.

Unfortunately, it was not an enemy, as Scarborough thought, but the Chief of the Guard, Jean Binard. The wound led to Binard's death and Scarborough was put on trial for murder. He was eventually found guilty of murder without premeditation and was sentenced to 15 days in prison. (NS)

Dissension within the ranks could sometimes be an issue for the Garrison in the Island. One stark illustration of this comes in a document held at the Jersey Archive. This is a printed book relating to the court martial of Major E Vavasor of the Royal Invalids in July,

1798. He stood accused by Lieutenant Thomson, who had charge of St Aubin's Fort, on a number of different charges. These included treating Thomson with indignity and contempt, insulting him, giving an order to deprive him of the command of St Aubin's Fort, improper and unmilitary conduct, drinking excessively and ungentlemanly behaviour during his command at Elizabeth Castle. Major Vavasor denied all charges. (NS)

It is fascinating reading the narrative of the story with various witnesses brought forward to corroborate or contradict the charges. Reading the account, it seems clear that there was tension between Vavasor and his superior officer Lieutenant Colonel West. It seems that West was determined to see Vavasor found guilty.

Evidence was given that West had gone to St Aubin's Fort for the sole purpose of taking one witness, McDonald, privately aside to tell him that when he got called to give evidence he was, *'to speak the truth and nothing but the truth.'* It would seem, however, that this was the truth in West's eyes.

Vavasor was very clear in his defence and what he thought of the charges that had been brought against him. He said that:

'... the prosecution originates solely from malice, pique and resentment; and not from the laudable motives of his Majesty's service.' (NS)

Major Vavasor was found not guilty of all charges and a letter was published at the back of the proceedings from Sir Charles Morgan, Judge Advocate General, who had seen the proceedings and laid them before the King. In the letter Morgan quite clearly shows his contempt for the events saying that if it was not for Thomson's age and, *'a consequent imbecility of both MIND and BODY'* he would have been punished for bringing the case to a court martial in the first place. He was also less than impressed that the case was brought by Thomson and not West making mention of the fact that if the superior officer was not impressed with Vavasor's conduct it should have been him and not Thomson who had brought the case.

Vavasor, obviously delighted with this verdict, decided that he wanted the proceedings of the Court Martial to be printed and distributed to relevant people although interestingly in a footnote it was noted that the Deputy Judge Advocate in the Island refused to provide him with the transcripts and that local printers on the Island refused to print the text. Political machinations in the background were still trying to stop him from advertising his case. (NS)

Sometimes it was not just the behaviour of individuals that was problematic but that of an entire regiment that was condemned by Island authorities. It was good to see the soldier's drill, knowing that the Island was protected, but actually as we have seen, soldiers could get bored easily and this often led to issues. (NS)

In the St Helier Parish Assembly minutes for April, 1841 it was noted that the 46th Regiment under Major Garrett were in the Island and that on more than one occasion police from the parish had been grossly insulted. In fact, soldiers had been guilty of grave and criminal premeditated assaults on both the police and members of the public. The Parish Assembly urged the Constable to take this to the States to intervene with the

Governor to make sure that this behaviour no longer continued and that the previous good relations with the Garrison be once again restored. (NS)

However, there was not always non-stop tension between the local populace and the guards garrisoned in the Island. Just two years later in 1843 the Parish Assembly wrote of the behaviour of the 59th Regiment, who had been stationed in the Island. In stark contrast it recorded:

'That this Assembly have heard with regret of the approaching departure from the Island of the Depot 59th Regiment and feels it to be their duty to record their sense of the excellent and praiseworthy conduct of its officers, non-commissioned officers and Men, during the time it has been stationed here.'

The Assembly sent a copy of the commendation within the minutes to the Lieutenant Governor so that it was recorded how much the local authorities and populace appreciated the good conduct of the 59th Regiment. (NS)

The next two sources that I am going to talk about are the nominal rolls and pay lists of the Militia. We hold the nominal rolls of the Royal Jersey Militia from 1902 to 1934, which includes men's names who were serving and those who were exempt from serving. We also have the monthly pay lists of the Militia from 1913 to 1917. (NS)

The nominal rolls have lists of men who should be serving in accordance with the Militia Law. They basically have the names of the men together with their address. At the end of the list there are lists of men who were exempt from the militia-normally this is on the grounds of ill health. As you can see by this list it is a list of men who were exempt from the West Battalion as decided by a Medical Board which had assembled at St Peter's Barracks on the 31st January, 1916. These have not been indexed on the computer so searching through you may find the name of your relative. (NS)

During the First World War some Jersey men joined up voluntarily in 1915. The British military left the Island and the Island's Militia were responsible for the defence of the Island. In 1917 conscription was brought in. The militia monthly pay lists cover the period from 1913 until 1917 when conscription was introduced. (NS)

They have details of each recruit's name and rank along with how much they were paid during the month. They also have the signature of the person when they have collected their money. The monthly Militia pay lists are divided into Battalions and some of them have been indexed on the Archive Catalogue. (NS)

The Jersey Archive also holds some records relating to the Royal Jersey Militia in the period just before the Second World War. Compulsory service was ended in 1929 and the strength of the force was reduced to just 260 men. Every recruit who wanted to join had to fill out an attestation form. The kind of details that appear on the form includes names, addresses, dates of birth, occupations, physical fitness and the next of kin. These have been indexed on the OPAC by name and there are 587 in total. 193 of these men ended up leaving the Island just before the commencement of the Second World War in order to fight for the British forces and served in the 11th (Royal Militia Island of Jersey) Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment throughout the Second World War. (NS)

Here is an example of the attestation form of Arthur John Beck of Wesley House, Gorey Village, which reveals that he was only 18 in 1939 and all of 5 foot 3¾ inches tall! It is sobering to think that people, as young and small as he was, were signing up to go and fight for their country. (NS)

It is easy to forget the human aspect of the First World War when looking at the official records. One of the most affecting collections held by the Jersey Archive is the series of letters written by Bernard Faulder to his mother. Bernard was a soldier who served during the First World War. This series of letters is within the Faulder Collection (Jersey Archive Reference: L/C/09), which was kept by Nellie May Faulder, née Le Cocq, who married Bernard's brother. He was born in Essex and some of his family later moved to Jersey.

There are over thirty letters in the series starting in January 1917 with a letter recommending Bernard to Lieutenant Browne as a good man to join 'the Guards'. The letters are filled with the mundanities of everyday life and his progress in the army.

Bernard's feelings come through very clearly in his letters, and this makes it very easy to relate to and sympathise with him. His early letters are very evocative of a young man away from his home and family for the first time. Bernard obviously missed his family and looked forward to reading their letters, *'I am trying to be jolly while I am here, and it is a letter from home that helps to do that'*. He asked for items from home such as a family photo, and his mother sent him sweets and cakes to cheer him up.

Like anyone away from home, Bernard's letters contain accounts of his day to day activities. Sometimes he described his duties, such as digging up the ground for planting vegetables, and sometimes his leisure pursuits, such as going to Hyde Park with a friend for tea.

In a letter written on the 28th of May 1917, Bernard mentions that, *'There were a lot of chaps back from the front last night, and I spoke to several of them'*, so he probably had some idea of what would be waiting for him when he was sent to the trenches. Despite the grave situation, Bernard always tried to remain optimistic, trying to reassure his family, and perhaps himself, that he would be all right. In his first letter home he tells them that, *'all the chaps here think that the war will be over soon'*. Seven months later, whilst waiting to find out when he would be leaving for France, he writes, *'you must not get downhearted as I feel sure I will come home safely again'*.

It is very easy to imagine the concern of Bernard's family as they read his letters and waited for the next one to arrive, especially after he was sent to France. In a letter dated the 10th August, 1917 he tells his mother:

'... our draft goes on Monday or Tuesday for certain, do not worry Mum, God will take care of me, and I intend to be as brave as I can'.

His last letter was written to his mother on the 20th November, 1917. He wrote:

'You must not worry if you don't receive any letters from me very often as we are now on the move... We are on our way to the trenches and I suppose we shall get there tomorrow.' (NS)

The final letter is addressed to Mrs Faulder from a Corporal JR Lindsay on the 17th December, 1917. It reads:

'I have just got you address and so I thought I would take the opportunity of writing you, to tell you of the sad news. On the 25th of last month your son Bernard fell by my side and the platoon joins with me in sending you their deepest sympathy as he was a very active young soldier and did his duty bravely. I must say that we lost fairly heavy that day.' (NS)

[16478 Private Bernard Saville Faulder of the 2nd Battalion, the Scots Guards was killed during the Battle of Cambrai on the 25th November, 1917. His remains were never knowingly recovered for burial, and his name was recorded on the Cambrai Memorial to the Missing at Louverval]

Obviously November is a month that has special resonance when talking about the military with Remembrance Day falling within it, and the Archive holds the records of the Jersey Branch of the Royal British Legion where the commemoration of Remembrance Day and a fundraising appeal was discussed with the earliest minute book going back as far as 1922.

I do not know how many people are aware of it but the Jersey Archive has been working with World War One historian Ian Ronayne for the last year or so and will continue to do so for the next few years with a blog about the First World War. This World War One blog can be found at the Jersey Heritage website. The address is on the bottom of the next few slides.

There are already over 70 small 'bite size' posts and a new one is released every Monday and will continue to do so until 2018. The posts are scheduled to coincide with events that were happening in the Island 100 years previously and Ian has used Archival documents and newspaper accounts in order to put together a narrative of what was going on in the Island and how the war was affecting islanders all those years ago.

I'm going to quote several posts now as they are always interesting and I would urge you to check them out yourself and keep coming back to see when more are added. (NS)

The **4th August, 1914**: Following the expected news of Britain's declaration of war on Germany, British military reservists have been leaving the Island this week to rejoin their regiments and ships. They carry with them the best wishes of Islanders for victory and hopes of a safe and speedy return.

After the considerable turmoil of the last few days, the Lieutenant Governor has proposed important steps to calm matters. Addressing the States Assembly, he requested that Members grant him new wartime powers to take control over a number of local affairs. These include the import and export of essentials, the ability to remove undesirables from the Island and control over food and fuel pricing. These measures would assure the wellbeing of Islanders and the military garrison in the weeks ahead.

General Rochfort has also asked that the Royal Court register a number of Orders-in-Council dealing with matters such as trading with the enemy.

In the meantime, a decision has been taken to cancel this year's Battle of Flowers in view of the situation. It comes as the exodus of holidaymakers, with more than 1,000 departing since war broke out. (NS)

The **16th March, 1915**: After weeks of excited speculation, the first German prisoners of war arrived in Jersey this week. On the 20th March a ship bearing just under 600 of the enemy arrived in St Helier Harbour. Two days later another batch of around 400 joined them.

In the days beforehand, the local authorities had tried to keep the date and time of the prisoner's arrival secret. But it was obvious from the preparations underway both in the POW camp and at the Brighton Road military hospital that something was imminent. As a result, a crowd of onlookers were present when the prisoners arrived, despite the early hour.

While Islanders have been curious about the enemy prisoners, many people's feeling towards their camp in St Ouen's Bay has been one of envy. Local contractors employed in its building and fitting out have reported that camp is a model construction. There are very well equipped kitchens, wash rooms and laundry facilities. The huts are heated, and supplied with quality mattresses and bedding. What's more, the whole facility is lit by electricity – at a time when most people in the Island have no access to such modern power. (NS)

The **28th September, 1915**: News reached Jersey this week of the death of Kenneth Strickland Dunlop, the youngest son of Dr and Mrs Dunlop. Tragically, Kenneth is the third son that they have lost in action since the war began.

Kenneth, who was 33, was living in South America when war broke out, but immediately returned home to volunteer for military service. The former Victoria College pupil received a commission into the South Staffordshire Regiment, spending some time training with its 4th Battalion presently stationed in Jersey. During that time, news that his brothers Julian and Frederick had been killed came through.

In recent days, the parents, who live at Belgrave House, Great Union Road, received an official War Office telegram announcing Kenneth's death as well. Tragically, the Dunlops also lost two other sons killed during the Boer War of 1899 to 1902.

It seems that Kenneth fell on the 25th September, the opening day of the latest British offensive [the Battle of Loos] in France. He is just one of many Jersey soldiers killed in this and earlier 1915 battles, with families across the Island affected by the loss and the need to settle their deceased relative's affairs. (NS)

Obviously many Jersey residents fought in the Second World War as well as the First. Second World War Service records are still held by the Ministry of Defence and so you would need to apply to the MoD to see those records. Those records from 1920 onwards for both Officers and Other Ranks, including those still serving, are retained at the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow: <https://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records>.

You also need to get the permission from the person or the person's next of kin if the records are not yours. (NS)

There are a number of other places that you may want to try in order to discover more information relating to the military. The Garrison registers of baptisms, marriages and burials spanning the period from 1784 to 1817 can be found within the St Helier Church records. They have also been transcribed by the Channel Islands Family History Society. It is also worth checking the normal baptism, marriage and burial registers, particularly St Helier. As soldiers integrated into Island life a great deal of information can be discovered within the church records.

There are also quite a few wills and testaments of soldiers who died here whilst serving or who moved here once they retired. These have all been name indexed and can be viewed on the Archive Catalogue so it is certainly worth looking up the names of particular soldiers.

One of the 'tricks of the trade' in tracing a particular soldier back is to know which Regiment they are serving within and these records can give you clues as to these details. A few years ago when we were tracing back the Shenton family we found it impossible to find out any more information from The National Archives without that vital piece of information. Once we found the detail in a baptism record of one of his children we were then able to find out more about their life in the army.

The Le Couteur family collection also includes information from Sir John Le Couteur's letter books about the militia in the Island in the eighteenth century. (NS)

If you have family members who served in the French military the records are not always easy to find. French Military records are held by the Army and Navy Historical Services in Vincennes. Records do survive from as early as the seventeenth century and may include personal information that would be useful for family history. I have found out through research on the Internet that archivists in Vincennes will sometimes answer written requests although not always and you need to include the exact name of the person, time period, rank and regiment or ship.

It is also important to note that all military records in France are closed for 120 years from the date of a soldier's birth. This means that most of the records of soldiers from the First and Second World Wars will be closed. Most young men in France were required to register for military service and conscription records can be found at most departmental archives although once again these are not indexed. There is a website that I found with details of the dead from World War One which I include on the bottom of this slide: <http://www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/> (NS)

Here are some useful websites that you may want to use when looking into the history of your military ancestors. I would particularly commend the work of the Channel Islands Great War Study Group who have done a phenomenal amount of work researching the history of the Island and Islanders who fought in the First World War. (NS)

Here are some suggestions of where to go to from here. (NS)

I hope that this gives you an insight into some of the military records that we hold here at the Jersey Archive and some of the stories that can be discovered by delving into them. If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. As I said if I don't get a chance to answer then please email me.

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