

CHANNEL ISLANDS GREAT WAR STUDY GROUP



Something for the Troops at Christmas!

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Hello All

Well, first of all, my best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year to you all. I am writing this on the 10th, and after four days in London and another four to six days feeling somewhat poorly since, I am working hard to get to getting these in the post by next weekend. Fingers crossed!

This issue's front picture has been taken from an IWM reproduction of the original magazine as is the first article "MacFarlane's Goodwill", which, as you will soon appreciate, proved to be a test of my MS Word spell check. It is a somewhat sentimental article but may remind people of an equally difficult task being performed by British Forces today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Elizabeth Morey supplies us with a piece from the Alderney Society Bulletin on the tunnels and caves under Arras named after our Islands while new boy Steve Bailey (see Membership News) provides a review of two lectures held at the RM Museum, Eastney, Portsmouth. In my working days in the area I went to about five and they were very good, even having Professor Richard Holmes on one occasion. Meanwhile, Paul Ronayne goes off on a slightly different tack, visiting St Peter's Churchyard and the accounts of the first German POW burial conducted on Jersey in 1915, and pursuing the Churchyard theme, Liz Walton recounts her discoveries regarding "The "Lost" Graves of St Sampson's".

Of course the British had men taken POW too, and Mark Bougourd provides a post-internment account by a Guernseyman, Pte Henry, held POW and for another, Pte Bewey, a photograph of King George V's letter welcoming POWs home. Coupled with Liz' article that mentions Pte Le Huray, it casts a different light on the homecoming of those men. Why did Henry return in September? Was it because the Germans regarded him as too wounded to return to the fray and he was thus a small drain on their dwindling food stocks? Le Huray died in Edinburgh yet was buried in Guernsey? Did the family meet the expense of his body's journey? For my part I've thrown in a brief summary of my visit to the Somme in October along with some experiences of the South Staffordshire Regiment while training in Jersey in 1916.

Membership News

We're welcoming three new members this month.

First, Steve Bailey, who lives in the Portsmouth area and is both a regular battlefield tourist and has a considerable interest in the RN of the Great War and the Battle of Jutland. I have known Steve for around 10-12 years and not being one to allow the grass to grow under his feet he kicks off, as mentioned earlier, with a couple of reports on the very good series of lectures held at the RM Museum every Autumn.

Our second recruit is Guernsey-based Max Harrison who originates from Sheffield and is obviously well-versed on the subject of Pals Battalions and

the particular demise of the Sheffield City Battalions around Serre. Max is also interested in the aviation aspects of the Great War.

Lastly, Steve Foote, Guernsey born and bred, but who now lives in Cookham, Berkshire. Researching his family history, he became interested in WW1 as both of his grandfathers and a number of other great uncles and relations fought in WW1. He is particularly interested in the RGLI, of which his great uncle, Major William Henry Foote, was 2i/c at the Battle of Cambrai, and his brother Laurence Foote a CSM. His grandfather served in the Royal Munster Fusiliers, was gassed in 1916, and spent the rest of the war with the Kings African Rifles in Tanganyika and Nyasaland. For more background, you may wish to check out Steve's family website:

<http://history.foote-family.com/ww1.htm>

Meanwhile, through the pressure of his other interests Tony Coleman has ceased being a member. However, knowing of his Medals and Awards interest, we may hear from him again.

Postscripts

This is a brief section to tie up some loose ends from the earlier Newsletters and Journals and to add some photographs in support if appropriate.

Special Constabulary Long Service Medals

I forgot to attach two sheets on this in the last Journal, I haven't this time!

Joey's Story

Liz Walton is still finding out more information on Joey, and has a confirmed sighting at Bourne Park which she is researching. Separately, I have found nothing on Bourne Park as a Training Camp in the Great War, other than by Eddie Parks. Has anybody seen photos?

MacFarlane's Goodwill By Gunner A Terbeege

It was very hard to believe but it was a fact. The morrow was the 25th December. Christmas Day! "Peace on earth, goodwill to all men!" What a mockery those words constituted to the handful of men who occupied the series of shell holes in front of Ypres.

Instead of the village lanes, with their hedgerows lined with clean white snow, there were heaps of sandbags, loose chalk, or cakes of mud. Snow there was none, although it was cold enough for anything. It had rained pitilessly for far the past forty-eight hours, endowing the shell-packed land with the clinging tenacity of an octopus. One associated Christmas Eve with church-bells and carol singing, but their places were taken by the chimes of 4.2's and the musical "zip-zip" produced by energetic machine-gunners.

On one of the rough fire steps were a couple of Highlanders. Their rifles rested upon the parapet over which they gazed from time to time. Water ran off their caps, noses and ears, while their boots seemed to ooze with moisture. The one was a big, brawny fellow of the morose type, but his companion was small of stature and his looks betrayed joviality. "Well, Mac, what be ye thinkin' about?"

The tall Scot grunted "Nowt."

"Noo, Mac, dinna fash yersen. Tomorrow is Christmas, laddie. Jist mind on-it. Bells ringin', plenty o'beer, heaps wee lassies, lots o' dancin', roarin' fire ..."

"Hould yer whist, will ye, Sandy Waterson. Dinna drive a feller mad."

"Noo, noo, ye cross old Scotchman. Bide a wee while. Anither half 'oor and we'll be relieved. Then the dug-out and rum, Mac, real rum. Rum that maketh glad the heart o' men."

"Aye, I ken weel, Sandy, but I'd like to ha' a go at yon blokes to-nicht. Tae think we suffer a' this just acause them sausage eaters o'er yon."

He wiped the wet off his bayonet affectionately.

"MacFarlane, ye blood-thirsty Hielander. De ye ken what the parson in the kirk is preaching the noo. 'Peace on earth, goodwill to a' men.'"

"I ken weel enough. If, I had my way to-nicht they would git peace - a piece of this."

Their conversation was interrupted by the sound of footsteps approaching. Waterson, being nearest, challenged quietly. A password was quickly given and the new-comer turned out to be their platoon officer.

"That you, Waterson and MacFarlane?"

"Yis, sir."

"Good! Well, I want a couple of volunteers to go over on a patrol tonight. The heads suspect a sap is being run out opposite and we have to find out and report. Want the job?"

MacFarlane was all eagerness. He didn't give his pal a chance to reply.

"Yis sir what time?"

"Say, in five minutes?"

"Right, sir."

MacFarlane hugged his friend with joy.

"He' a rale sort, is wee McGregor." He turned to his rifle and bayonet. "If ye dinna bag a Jerry to-nicht, a'll sell ye."

Five minutes later, a cold, wet, but very enthusiastic party of three crept through the barbed wire. MacFarlane took the right, his officer the centre, and Waterson the left.

The big Highlander was the first to give the arranged signal. In front of him was a shallow trench. He crawled noiselessly towards this and found it occupied by a German. The latter was apparently guarding the sap for he held a rifle. Mac's eyes glinted with unholy joy. What a chance! He approached within striking distance and raised his rifle to make the fateful bayonet thrust when a Verey light, went up.

He paused in his triumph, for the light revealed one of the most depressed of human beings. Even by the illumination of the star shell the kiltie could see how blue were the features of the German.

"Puir wee divil!" He slung his rifle and tugged at the cork of his water-bottle. "Here, Fritzzy, take a nip' of this."

He supported the form of his sworn enemy and poured rum through the closed lips. He was doing this when his companions came up. Between them they got the reviving figure into their own lines.

After he had gone Waterson turned to the solemn-looking MacFarlane.

"Weel, Mac, how many Jerrys did ye kill? Why, mon, weer's ye bayonet?"

"Here." The tall Highlander pointed to his scabbard.

"But why, Mac? Ye....."

"It's Christmas."

ALDERNEY AND THE WESTERN FRONT

By Terry Gander – Alderney Society

Provided by Elizabeth Morey

***About this Article:** As well as being a WFA member in NZ, Elizabeth, because of her Alderney heritage, is also a member of the Alderney Society. Receiving their bulletin a few months ago, she found the following article which she thought would be of interest. Contacting the Bulletin's Editor, Trevor Davenport, she has obtained their kind agreement for it to be reproduced here. To quote an extract from an E-Mail by Trevor:*

"Both Terry and myself are also military history buffs too as I expect you know from past Bulletins. Terry more guns and armament, while I'm interested in fortification as well. I expect you know Terry used to work for Janes until he retired a couple of years ago, and I've published numerous articles, two books

and a pamphlet on Alderney's fortifications. Unfortunately not much happened during the Great War here, although it was fortified to some extent.”

With that, many thanks to the Alderney Society Bulletin, and please read on.

Perhaps the last place any reference to Alderney might be expected to appear is along the Western Front of the 1914-1918 Great War. Many men from Alderney did serve there, of course, but the name recently reappeared buried in the pages of a military history dating from 1922. That history is named *Work of RE in the European War, 1914-19 - Military Mining*. Such a work is probably the last place where anyone would expect to find any reference to Alderney but nevertheless it is still there.

Exactly why needs a bit of explanation.

Military mining dates back to the Middle Ages when tunnels were dug by a besieging force to undermine the walls of a defended area. The idea was that when a tunnel had reached under the walls a chamber or mine could be prepared into which explosives could be packed and detonated to bring down the walls above and thus create a breach to be stormed. The craft was resurrected during the Great War after it was appreciated that the stalemate of trench warfare had re-created the conditions of siege warfare.

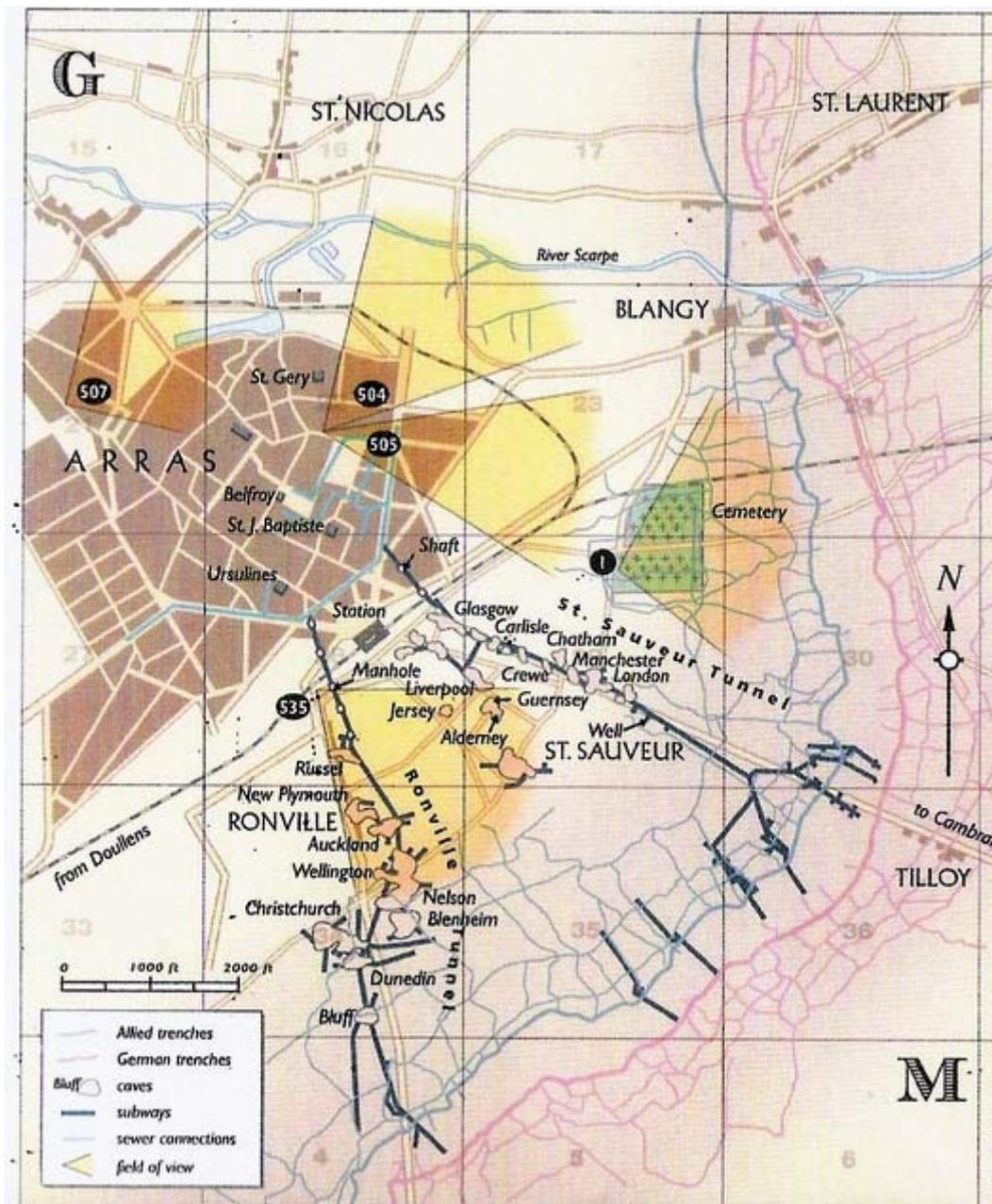
As early as 1915 military mining companies had been formed in France by the British and Germans, the British companies being manned mainly by coal miners and commanded by commercial metal mining engineers. They were formed under the auspices of the Royal Engineers (RE). Further companies were formed using troops from Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Much of the work of these companies was involved with the excavation of mines intended to wreck the German front line trenches at the onset of a major 'push'. Very often, not just one mine was created but a whole series of them, which were to be detonated simultaneously to obtain a spectacular maximum effect. But mines were not the only reason that the mining companies were kept busy. They also created underground shelters for command posts, subways that were safer and less open to observation than trenches, numerous types of dugout and even such things as underground reservoirs.

The St Sauveur Tunnel caves were given British names such as London, Liverpool and Crewe, and so on, but three of them were given the names of Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney. Actually the Alderney cave was joined to the Guernsey cave. All the caves were interconnected by subways nearly two metres high and just over one metre wide, many of them with rail tracks for the transport of ammunition and other supplies and most with electric lighting. Water pipes and other such utilities were also laid on.

One such example of this kind of work could be seen to the south and south-east of Arras in the Third Army area. Late in 1916 a New Zealand mining company was driving a series of tunnels towards the German lines in the

vicinity of the small village of Ronville to the south of Arras when they came across a series of underground caves first created by chalk miners during the 17th Century. The caves and their associated working had long been abandoned and forgotten but their value as underground shelters for stores and personnel was evident. The caves were therefore made useable and were provided with electric lighting and other comforts. As the workings were discovered by New Zealanders each was given a Kiwi name such as Wellington, Auckland, and so on.



More such caves were discovered by another New Zealand mining company working on subway tunnels towards the village of St Sauveur to the south-east of Arras. Following the experience gained from the Ronville Tunnel caves, it was decided to create a more spread out network of caves that, in time, could provide safe sheltered accommodation for 2,000 soldiers during

the build-up to an attack. Not all the caves were used for accommodation. Some were used for the storage of trench mortar ammunition to be used during the pre-attack barrage.

Creating the Arras tunnel and cave network took a New Zealand mining company about six weeks digging through hard chalk at a depth of between 6 to 18 metres. In the event the network does not appear to have been employed, as the German front lines were rendered untenable by artillery fire and no major attack was ever made that made use of the network. What happened to the Arras cave and tunnel network has not been found recorded. One wonders if the Alderney cave is still there.

Editor's Footnote: The use of the underground caves (or boves) is probably better known than Terry may appreciate. The Arras Tourism Office conducts regular tours of those boves under the town from the Hotel de Ville. They were originally excavated to provide material for house-building directly above but as Terry says became used to conceal troops before the Battle of Arras in April 1917. I went on a tour in 2003, and the British "residency" was covered. It was also stated that they had re-entered the New Zealand excavations, and subject to funding, were going to open them for tours in 2006/7. I have seen nothing to that effect since. Elizabeth has also supplied contact details of Arras' archaeologist who has access to this range of tunnels.

The Mixed Fortunes of War

It was Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, a celebrated 4th Century Roman military writer who appears to have come up with the saying "*Si vis pacem, para bellum*", one that appears to have stood the test of the sixteen or more hundred years since. It is readily evident as we see today's television news when, for example, British forces battle to keep a Browning machine gun in action while dealing with persistent jamming through poor quality ammunition, or someone having performed a particularly courageous act says something along the lines of "Well, my training took over...." In the last hundred or more years, the British Army has recognised that, as far as possible, as part of its preparedness for war, its training must be as near to the reality of war conditions as can be made possible. As conscription recedes into the distance, the greater public is becoming less appreciative of the vital and continuing need of those military disciplines and repetitive drills that can mean the difference between life and death for individuals on active service.

Such was the role of the 4th Battalion, South Staffordshire Regiment stationed at St Peter's Barracks in Jersey throughout the war, namely to train and prepare the men who had joined for service at the front. The discipline was instilled into them through many countless hours of marching, parades, billet inspections and fatigues, and woe betide any who stepped out of line, with punishment drills and the potential of a few nights in a chill guardroom cell awaiting. Weapon training was, there should be no surprise here, critical. A man had to be able to use the weapons that would be available to him in his unit, and would learn how to strip, clean and reassemble his rifle, how to charge his magazine, and how to bring it into use with the minimum of time,

while all the time doing so without endangering his own comrades! Those selected for Lewis Gun training were no different in the nature of those activities, but with the added effort of being formed into teams so that the Lewis Gun's rate of fire could be maintained by a steady supply of replenished magazines. Drilling would continue *ad nauseam*. The rifle and the Lewis Gun could be regarded as discriminate weapons in that the user would have to point them towards a target and fire. Short of the barrel being obstructed with mud or suchlike, a bullet would fly out a few milliseconds later heading in the general direction of the target.

Not so the hand grenade, for when it exploded having been thrown a distance, it was indiscriminate, and its fragments would fly in every direction and thus, the user could, himself, become the unintended target! There was unsurprisingly a greater tendency for those learning to handle and throw grenades to be far more nervous compared to the nervousness in learning to shoot for the first time. The thrower had to retain a firm grasp of grenade casing and spring-loaded release lever when the pin was removed before extending the throwing arm and sending the grenade in the enemy's direction in an arcing motion. An inadvertent loss of grip could cause the release lever to fly off, and if the thrower was unprepared, that was when the problems began!

So, the following entry in the London Gazette of 19th May, 1916 might not have been untypical of the time, even though the method of use described therein differs, the principle is the same:

Whitehall 16th May, 1916

The KING has been pleased to award the Decoration of the Albert Medal of the Second Class to Lieutenant Charles Edward Cox Bartlett, South Staffordshire Regiment in recognition of his gallantry in saving life at St Peter's Barracks, Jersey, in February last:-

On the 22nd February, 1916, at St Peter's Barracks, Jersey, one of the men under instruction at a bombing class, of which Lieutenant Bartlett was in charge, was practising with a catapult bomb thrower, and had removed the safety pin from a bomb, holding back the lever with his finger. In placing the bomb in the sling he dropped it, and, in a fright, ran backwards, colliding with Lieutenant Bartlett, who had started to pick up the bomb. Lieutenant Bartlett, however, succeeded in reaching the bomb in time to throw it over the parapet into the air, where it exploded harmlessly. The bomb was timed to explode five seconds after the lever was released. This Officer has already been awarded the Military Cross.

One suspects, however, that any Officers' Mess celebrations with regards to Lt. Bartlett's well-deserved award would have muted, since another South Staffordshire Officer, 2nd Lt Gerald Alexander Dutton, had been accidentally killed a fortnight earlier on the 5th May, the cause being a bomb explosion!

Mixed fortunes indeed for the South Staffordshire Regiment!



***“Whatever happens, we have got
The Maxim Gun, and they have not.”***

There is no such thing as Bad Publicity

Those few lines of Hilaire Belloc are somewhat apt when applied to the above two photographs of the Jersey Militia (in I suspect around 1907-10) which were provided by one of Ian Ronayne’s contacts, a Mr Stan Journeaux. With the increasing degree of publicity regarding our work on the CI and the Great War, this material now seems to be leaping out almost daily. Ian has sent me several other photographs which I have “on hold” and Liz has new material regarding the French seaplane base, including a marvellous aerial view.

Portsmouth Lectures By Steve Bailey

Archaeology of Armageddon: Great War Archaeology

This was the title of a lecture by Andrew Robertshaw, Head of Learning, Interpretation and Public Programmes at the National Army Museum. The lecture was held in the very fitting Mountbatten Dining Room at the Royal Marines Museum in Southsea with a life-size portrait of Queen Victoria gazing down on proceedings. The first in the museum's Autumn series of lectures. Held at 1 p.m. on a Wednesday afternoon, I was very surprised that it was so well attended, upwards of 100 people.

After a delay of some several minutes whilst the IT was made to work, Andrew began. He introduced himself, as well as his "day job" he is also frequently seen on TV in things like the "Trench Detectives" and occasional specials made about the Great War. He has also published a book on The Battle of the Somme and has another coming out soon based on 10 years worth of work in Belgium and France each Spring. To mark the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme he lead the team who put in place special exhibition at the National Army Museum that will be there until next February, so there is still time to go and see it.

Andrew swiftly introduced a subtitle to his lecture, "Identification of Great War Casualties". He then went on to explain.

As a teacher earlier in his career, he often got to accompany parties of school children on battlefield tours, it was after one of these that the revelation came to him that what most of us do today is a tour of battlefield monuments and memorials, not the battlefield themselves. He then became determined to explore the actual battlefields.

His first archaeological work was in the back garden of Avril Williams guest house in Auchonvillers in France, where after excavating a British trench enormous amount of evidence were uncovered spanning the period 1915-1918, including 10,000 rounds of unused ammunition, less than 50 rounds of used ammunition and most of all, huge quantities of food and food containers. It was very apparent that the soldiers of the Empire were not living on rations alone and either due to a thriving black market, gifts from home or a bit of both, they were very well provisioned.

As part of the BBC "Trench Detectives" series, Andrew lead a team tasked with finding the dugout held by Wilfred Owen and his platoon during the Battle of the Somme, a spot where he reputedly wrote arguably his best known poem "Dulce Et Decorum Est". Owen and his men had been sent to hold a part of the German front line known to the Germans as the Heidenkopf and to the British as the Quadrilateral Redoubt.

Andrew explained the hazards of working on a dig where there are likely to be unexploded high explosive and gas shells, all of which apparently caused the

BBC's safety officer a degree of harassment. Anyway, armed with British Trench maps of the time, known to be accurate to within 5 or so metres, they began their dig. Headquarters for the dig was a nearby chapel kindly provided by the local French authorities, the chapel had been built in commemoration of French dead at the Battle of Artois in 1915, an important fact we'll return to later. Initially they went straight down onto a trench but it didn't seem to conform with the British maps. Fortunately, German trench maps were then made available, these turned out to be extremely accurate and it became clear they had come down onto a trench dug by the Germans when they recaptured the Heidenkopf and not on to their original trenches they had targeted. However, in doing so they had uncovered the remains of three dead soldiers and now were faced with attempting to find out who they were. Before the bodies were removed from the ground though, much evidence was uncovered. At 7.36 on the morning of 1st July, 1916, the Germans exploded a number of mines that were intended to impede the British attack. Chalk thrown up from these explosions covered two of the dead soldiers as did a foot and a half of what had once been top soil. Hence it was apparent that these casualties predated 1st July, 1916. The third appeared to of been buried after the Germans had exploded their mines.

The first of the casualties was in a shallow grave, laid on his back, his head was missing, long since removed by ploughing, but, he was in full uniform, he had his boots on, full ammunition pouches, a plaque from a store in Stuttgart and most importantly of all, most of his identity tag survived. Using the facilities of University College London, the team were able to restore the identity tag and very fortunately, although most of the official information was illegible, he had scratched his name and address on the back and this was legible. He was identified as Jakob Hoeness, a private in the Wurtemberg Regt.

The second body, buried in a foetal position, also turned out to be a German, later identified by his pay book as Albert Thielecke, a senior NCO in the same regiment as Jakob. Both men had died defending the Heidenkopf from French attacks on 13th June, 1915 and had been buried by their comrades.

The third body, also buried on his back, was a British soldier. Identification turned out to be impossible. British ID tags of the time were made of fibreboard, a material that decays much faster than the German zinc tags. From his uniform though they were able to identify him as a soldier of the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment, who were only in this area for one day, 1st July, 1916, it was therefore determined he was killed on the first day of the Somme, buried by his comrades and is one of the 85 King's Own men listed on the memorial at Thiepval. One last intriguing clue to his identity though, in his pocket he was found to be carrying a **Guernsey** coin [In fact, "our" **Jersey** Penny – Ed].

Andrew and members of his team then travelled to the small village outside Stuttgart where Jakob Hoeness originated and were successful in tracking down his living relatives and later also tracked down the living relatives of

Albert Thielecke. The two families then organised the first memorial on the Western Front dedicated to British **and** German soldiers.

As an aside Andrew mentioned that if you see the BBC Trench Detectives programme, I personally have, the “entrance to Wilfred Owen’s dugout” they uncover in fact turned out to be the entrance to one of the German mines that criss crossed the area on four levels. A year later the team went back and did indeed discover Wilfred Owen’s dugout but you won’t see it on the BBC!

There’s lots of information about this on the National Army Museum website and generally on the web.

I will be attending a further lecture at the Royal Marines Museum on 15th November entitled “Ghosts of Jutland”, with a report to follow [And here it is – Ed].

Ghosts of Jutland

This was the title of a very entertaining and professionally delivered lecture by Nick Hewitt, Interpretation Officer on HMS Belfast.

Once again the lecture was delivered in the very imposing Earl Mountbatten dining room at the Royal Marines museum in Eastney. Again, upwards of 100 attendees for a 1 p.m. Lecture, testimony to the popularity of and interest in such events.

Nick began his lecture setting the naval context, Britain’s unchallenged supremacy of the seas from Trafalgar (1805) through until The Great War. The Kaiser’s wish for battleships to rival his Uncle, King Edward VII, a wish he intended to fulfil by his appointment of Grand Admiral von Tirpitz. British tactical complacency bought on by so long a period of supremacy and British technical supremacy which Nick credited to First Sea Lord “Jackie” Fisher, with his introduction of the Dreadnought and Battle-cruiser ships designs.

Nick then went on to describe the Naval Arms race that developed between Britain and Germany, a race clearly won by Britain who by 1914 had 31 Dreadnoughts and 10 Battle-cruisers to Germany’s 21 Dreadnoughts and 8 Battle-cruisers. In Nick’s view, Germany lost the Battle of Jutland at this point by simply not matching the British in numbers. He did point out though that Germany achieved this building feat whilst also maintaining the largest and strongest Army in Europe.

Nick also made clear his views on the debate that has raged since the Great War over the design of Battle-cruisers. They were designed to be heavily gunned and extremely fast (by shedding armour plate) ships that would be able to run down and sink enemy cruisers. They were not designed to function as ships of the line, i.e. auxiliary battleships.

Nick then moved onto talk about naval strategies. The British strategy was simple, namely to use the RN to impose a blockade of German ports and by

doing so, deprive Germany of vital war materials. It had long been decided that a close blockade in the style of Trafalgar was no longer possible so the plan was to close the Southern end of the North Sea with minefields and submarines whilst the Grand Fleet would rest at Scapa Flow, thus preventing the Germans from breaking out of the North Sea to the North Atlantic. Tirpitz had built the High Seas Fleet for one purpose only, to defeat or at least severely wound, the Grand Fleet. German ships were designed for North Sea operations only, they had limited range and many small compartments, this latter making them very capable of taking damage and still functioning but making them very uncomfortable to live in, hence when in port crews would leave ships and live in barracks. British ships by contrast were designed to patrol the oceans of the world, this meant they had to be comfortable to live in which meant bigger living areas, this led to them being less able to sustain damage than their German counterparts. The Germans for their part were compromised from the start. Tirpitz had intended that the Germans would move toward parity with the British by a combination of the use of mines, submarines and overwhelming force against isolated RN units and when near parity was achieved, the High Seas Fleet would sally forth to meet the Grand Fleet and if not able to defeat it, would damage it so severely as to make it almost impotent and hence severely weaken Britain's power. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on your perspective, at the outbreak of war the Kaiser forbade Tirpitz from risking his precious Dreadnoughts until near parity was reached with the British. By 1915 Tirpitz was gone having never been able to reach near parity and thus challenge the RN. His successor, Eduard von Cappelle, became the Navy Minister with Admiral Reinhard von Scheer Admiral of the High Seas Fleet. Scheer was a more aggressive foe and was soon able to persuade the Kaiser of the need to use the High Seas Fleet more aggressively.

There had been a number of minor actions in the North Sea prior to Jutland, Dogger Bank and Heligoland Bight to name two such. The two navies had drawn very different lessons from these encounters, for the British it was the need for rate of fire above all else, a lesson most keenly learnt by Admiral Beatty's Battle-cruiser squadrons, for the Germans it was the need for flash protection throughout the ships.

Early in the war a German cruiser had run aground in the Baltic and was attacked by Russian Cruisers and eventually destroyed. The Russians managed to recover German Naval Cipher books and passed a copy onto the Admiralty. The Government then established a chain of listening posts along the East Coast of Britain to intercept German naval radio signals and a special group known as "Room 40" whose job it was to use captured Cipher books to decode German Naval signals. Nick Hewitt likens this intelligence coup to the much better known "Enigma" and Bletchley Park activity of WWII in terms of its importance.

Nick then described the main antagonists and their dispositions prior to the Battle of Jutland. On the British side, Admiral Jellicoe was Commander in Chief of the British Fleet and Commander of the Grand Fleet based at Scapa Flow. Admiral Beatty was his subordinate (and rival), he commanded the

Battle-cruiser Squadron based at Rosyth. Beatty's Battle-cruisers had recently been heavily criticised for their gunnery accuracy and so several of the Battle-cruisers were at the Admiralty gunnery range for practice and so Beatty's force was supplemented by the 5th Battle Squadron consisting of the five super Dreadnoughts of the Queen Elizabeth class, the most powerful ships either side deployed during the Great War.

On the German side, the entire High Seas Fleet was based at Wilhelmshaven, the Battle-cruisers commanded by Admiral Hipper and the overall fleet command held by Admiral Scheer.

Early in 1916 the Germans came up with a plan, Admiral Hipper's Battle-cruiser Squadron would put to sea to act as bait and tempt out Admiral Beatty's Battle-cruisers and Admiral Jellicoe's Grand Fleet. Beatty's Battle-cruisers based at Rosyth would arrive first and would be engaged by Hipper's Battle-cruisers who would lure them onto the guns of the High Seas Fleet, it having secretly put to sea a short while after Hipper. Meanwhile, German submarines would wait in ambush outside of Scapa Flow and sink as many of Jellicoe's battleships as possible. In this way Scheer hoped to annihilate Beatty's force and then be able to face a depleted Grand Fleet.

This is where Room 40 came in, German radio traffic was deciphered and Room 40 essentially put together the German battle plan. Both Beatty and Jellicoe sailed hours before the German Fleet. Initially Beatty played his part as scripted, he led his Battle-cruisers and the recently attached 5th Battle Squadron and engaged Hipper. The initial action was Battle-cruiser to Battle-cruiser but when the 5th Battle Squadron joined in, the Germans began to take a fearful pounding. The RN though lost 3 of Beatty's Battle-cruisers all due to poor precautions against flash from exploding shells that caused catastrophic magazine explosions. When the German High Seas Fleet arrived, as planned, Beatty turned and "ran" North. By this time Hipper's Battle-cruisers had lost one ship and the rest were so severely damaged as to be largely ineffective. Scheer gave chase and pursued Beatty North. In doing so he fell into the trap laid by the British and ran headlong into the guns of the Grand Fleet. A short and very sharp action ensued during which time the Germans took a heavy pounding. Realising his mistake Scheer made an about turn and fled in the opposite direction. For some inexplicable reason Scheer ordered an about turn again and sailed back into the British guns and for another 10 minutes, took a pounding, before reversing course one final time. Inconclusive and confused actions took place throughout the night but by morning the Germans had successfully slipped back to port at Wilhelmshaven.

Whilst the British lost more men and more ships, with the exception of HMS Queen Mary, they were obsolete vessels or destroyers (of which type the RN had in abundance) and their loss was not really felt. As Nick pointed out, a measure of victory is who retains the battlefield. The RN had clearly done so. It was also the case that the day after the battle Jellicoe was able to report he had 24 battleships ready for action. Scheer was not so lucky. It was many months before his severely damaged ships were read for action. British Naval Strategy remained unaffected by the battle, the blockade was intact. Scheer

lost his enthusiasm for surface action after Jutland and the High Seas Fleet put to sea only once more during the war, to sail to Britain to surrender.

Nick Hewitt has a special exhibition at HMS Belfast IWM, London in recognition of the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland. It will run until February 2007.

A German's Funeral in 1915 **By Paul Ronayne**

When looking through some old local papers in the library I came across a report about a funeral of a German POW. He was buried in St Peter's Churchyard and, as I live only a couple of hundred yards away from the Church I found myself sometimes thinking about the events which took place ninety one years, the funeral being at the time an unprecedented event in the Island's history. So I thought I would write an account of the funeral based on a report in The Morning Star newspaper.

Carl Brundig a German sailor died on the 24th August, 1915 at the Don Bridge detention camp, (the paper reports that he died at the Don Bridge detention camp, I'm not sure weather the reporter meant the POW camp at Blanchés Banques or weather a detention camp did exit at Don Bridge at that time, can anybody help?) and was buried in St Peter's Churchyard two days later. The paper led with such headlines as 'Funeral of a German Prisoner', 'Impressive Scenes at St Peter's' and 'Ex-Sailor from the "Mainz" Buried with Military Honours'. The paper described the burial as unique in the Island's modern history.

Carl was a stoker on the German light cruiser Mainz, sunk by the British Navy at the battle of Dogger Bank in 1914, Carl was taken prisoner and ended up on a POW ship moored at Ryde in the Isle of Wight. After a short stay on the POW ship he was transported to Jersey with about fifteen hundred other POWs in March 1915, where they were imprisoned at the camp at Blanchés Banques in St Ouen's Bay.

It was reported that the deceased had been a great favourite with the other prisoners at the camp, and Colonel Haines, the Commandant at the Blanchés Banques POW Camp acceded to the request of quite a number of them who wished to be present at the funeral.

The body was first taken to the mortuary at St Peter's Barracks, then shortly after 2:30 pm on the 26th August a body of some thirty Germans prisoners, preceded by a firing party of fourteen men drawn from the Hants and Berkshire Reservists, (who at the time formed the camp guard and headed by their own band), marched up between lines of guards with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets arrived from the camp then halted in front of the hospital at the Barracks. Of the thirty odd POWs present were several Petty Officers in white drill uniform and at the head of the column there was eight of the deceased comrades from the "Mainz" carrying wreaths, who on arrival proceeded to the mortuary and after some delay reverently carried the coffin to the waiting

hearse, where the firing party presented arms and the band struck up a mournful tune.

The coffin bore the following inscription:

Carl Brundig
Alter
21 Jahre
24 Aug Gestorben

The firing party then advanced, and with reversed arms, slowly headed the cortege out of the barrack square and then took the road to St Peter's Church to the solemn strains of Chopin's Funeral March. When they were well clear of St Peter's Barracks the pace quickened to the ordinary marching step, but even so it was reported that the funeral procession did not reach the Church till just before 3 pm.

It is also reported that the public did not generally know the actual hour of the funeral and therefore comparatively few people were present near the Churchyard, and at the direction of Col. Haynes the Churchyard wall was cleared of on-lookers.



Carl Brundig's somewhat weather-worn Headstone by the eastern boundary wall of St Peter's Churchyard – a Heritage-driven refurbishment project?

The ordinary Church of England Burial Service was conducted by the Rector the Rev F De Gruchy, and the lesson was read by the Rev B Yandell who

officiated at the POW camp. After the service the procession re-formed and paced slowly towards the grave situated in the extreme western corner of the Churchyard. The coffin was draped with a German flag, covered with wreaths, and on the top Carl's navel cap had been placed. It is reported that there was almost breathless silence as the Rector, in low tones, read the Committal prayers, and the blue-garbed bearers slowly lowered the coffin into the grave.

The Rev Yandell then to the surprise to all there repeated the prayers in German for which afterwards he received great thanks from the prisoners present. After another prayer came the sharp words of command to the firing party to fire three volleys over the grave. The prisoners and their escort then marched back to the camp and the day's events came to an end. The paper reported the undertaker as being Mr. HW Hinds of 66 New Street, St Helier.

The funeral was reported with great gusto in the local press, maybe because it took place relatively early in the war. In contrast a funeral of a German which took place a year later seems to have been reported with less enthusiasm by the paper, maybe as a result of greater casualty lists and a belief that the War would drag on for some time to come, claiming even more lives. Time would prove them right. I'm not sure what happened to Carl's body after the war, whether it returned to Germany or if it was re-buried in France after the Second World War with all the other dead Germans from the Occupation. Again if any one has some thoughts please let me know.

(Editor's Note: Paul has since confirmed with St Peter's Verger that Brundig's remains were removed to France in 1961)

The "Lost" War Graves of St Sampson's By Liz Walton

Just inside St Sampson's churchyard, on the wall that borders Church Road there is a plaque that commemorates eight Guernseymen who died as a result of the Great War, and were buried in the cemetery. They were, in order of date of death:



- G/3362 LCpl William Blampied Mahy, (but listed by the CWGC as William Blandfield Mahy), 9th Bn Royal Sussex Regt, who died on 26th November, 1915 at Norfolk War Hospital, Thorpe, Norwich, of wounds received at Loos on 27th September of that year. A report in the Guernsey Weekly Press of 4th December, 1915 notes that hundreds of people lined the route from his home at Delancey to the church, and that he was buried in the churchyard with full military honours.

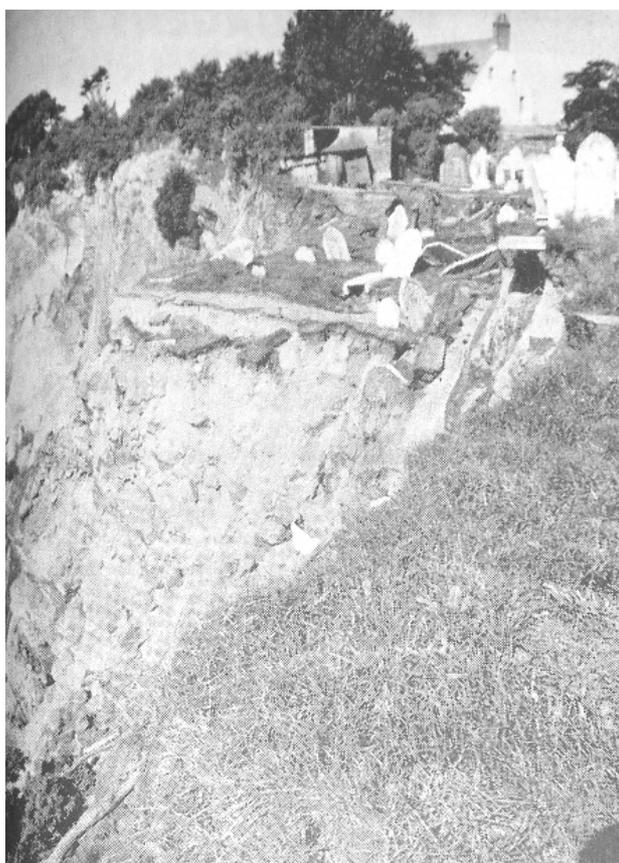
- 1167 Pte Douglas Nicolle, 1st Bn RGLI, died 19th March 1917, aged 36.
- 12 LSgt Francis Henry Le Quelenec, 1st Bn RGLI, who died on 5th May 1917 at the Castel Sanatorium, aged 42, after having been “dangerously wounded” in the face and head in June of the previous year when serving with the Royal Irish Fusiliers. He was the stepfather of Sgt Le Prevost, listed below.
- 3788 Pte Walter J Sands, 2nd Bn RGLI, who died following an operation at the Victoria Hospital, Guernsey, on 1st November 1918, aged 18.
- 251 Pte Henry Edward Le Huray, 2nd Bn RGLI, who was taken prisoner of War at Cambrai on 1st December 1917, and returned on 1st December 1918, only to die on 6th December 1918 at the Edinburgh Military Hospital, aged 25. He had spent most of the previous year in hospital in a camp at Schneidemahle, Posen, suffering from pneumonia and dropsy.
- 9278 Sgt Frederick George Le Prevost, A Coy, 1st Bn Devonshire Regt, stepson of LSgt Le Quelenec, who died of broncho-pneumonia at the Military Hospital, Fort George, on 18th February, 1919, age 25.
- WR/28617 Cpl George Edward Walden, 321 Quarry Coy, RE, who died of pleurisy and pneumonia at the Military Hospital, Fort George, on 5th March, 1919, aged 52. He was on 28 days dispersal furlough and was taken ill as soon as he arrived on the island.
- 49 Pte Leon Perrodou, 1st Bn RGLI, who was invalided to England on 12th December 1917, following the battle of Cambrai, and died on 12th July 1919, aged 19.

All are commemorated on the CWGC website, as well as being listed on the stone plaque, and their place of burial is given as St Sampson’s Churchyard, Guernsey. Also, newspaper reports of the time describe the funerals as taking place there, with full military honours. However, despite many searches and efforts to read sometimes indecipherable headstones, I was only able to find the grave of Pte Perrodou, which is marked by a standard CWGC headstone and lies approximately east of the church.



Perrodou’s Headstone

A visit to the Sexton's hut, and inspection of the burial records showed that all of the men listed had definitely been interred in the churchyard, but that Perrodou was the only one who had not been buried in the area consecrated in 1914. St Sampson's Douzaine stated that they had no record of what had happened to the missing graves, but directed me to Mr Ernie Noyon, a former undertaker and Churchwarden, who told me that they had probably been dislodged when there was a huge rock fall from the South West corner of the cemetery into Manuelle's Quarry (now Longue Hougue reservoir), in the 60s.



The landslip in 1969

Searches of the newspaper archive at the Priaulx Library reveal that the Guernsey Evening Press of Saturday 30th August, 1969 carried the headline "Graves Plunge 250 Feet!" It goes on to describe how a landslip at the NE face of Manuelle's quarry at Longue Hougue had sent dozens of graves sliding into the 250 ft deep quarry. A stretch of the quarry face more than a hundred feet in length disappeared into the quarry. The sexton, Mr Alfred Guilimoto, said that more than 25 graves had fallen from one section alone. The same newspaper, on Monday 1st September, reported how "Graves gape open, and tombstones lie jumbled and smashed in the aftermath of Friday morning's quarry landslide".

However I have as yet been unable to find out exactly which graves were destroyed as the cemetery registers do not seem to record this and the Douzaine has no further information. A further article in the Guernsey Evening Press of 9th September, 1969 reports the rector of St Sampson, Reverend Streeting, as saying that no attempt would be made to find and re-bury the remains from the fallen graves, as they were "still in consecrated ground, as tons of earth from the churchyard had fallen with the tombstones and human remains". He went on to say that they were buried in thousands of tons of rubble, and that it seemed most unlikely that they would ever be moved.

The story took another turn this year, however when I was told by Paul Cheetham, Keeper of the Castle, that there was a CWGC headstone somewhere in Castle Cornet. They were said to have been donated to the Museums Service for safe keeping in 1981 by the then Rector of St Sampson's. The Guernsey Museums Service Social History Officer kindly

opened the castle out of season for us, and locked inside the Sally Port Magazine deep inside the Castle we found the headstones of Sands and Walden. These standard CWGC grave markers have been concreted to the floor, and bolted to the walls inside the Magazine.



**Inside the Sally Port Magazine at Castle Cornet
Roger Frisby with Camera, Mark Bougourd making notes**

An accompanying plaque states that “In 1967 (sic) part of the graveyard at St Sampson’s church collapsed into an adjoining quarry. Because of the risk of further collapse, all the human remains in the graveyard were re-interred in another part of the cemetery. These stones, considered to be of historic interest, were placed in Castle Cornet for safe keeping..... War Graves Commission stone WR/28617 Corporal G E Walden Royal Engineers 1919, War Graves Commission stone 3788 WJ Sands, Royal Guernsey Light Infantry 1918.”

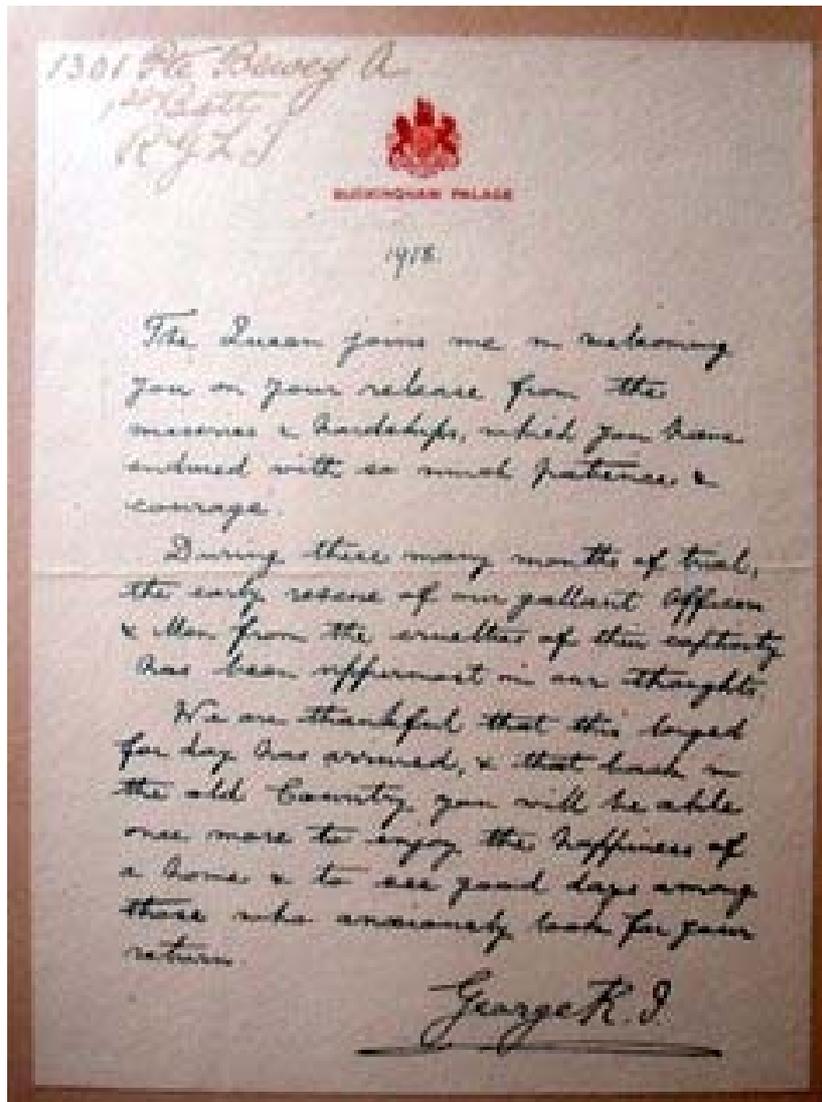
This would appear to contradict other information from the time of the quarry collapse, and further investigation of this is needed. However, this shows up why it is important to record all war graves and memorials accurately. Misinformation soon spreads, and the facts become lost, eventually making the memorials themselves, supposedly there in perpetuity, impossible to trace. It also raises the issue of whether a locked part of a building which is only open to the public by payment of an entry fee, at certain times of the year, and is inaccessible to anyone who isn’t very fit, is a suitable place for CWGC headstones. I leave this open for further discussion.



Sands' Headstone in the Sally Port Magazine



Today's view of the former Quarry from St Sampson's Churchyard



Welcome Home Private Bewey

Guernsey Prisoners of War Provided by Mark Bougourd

The above picture shows the standard letter put out to all returning POW on behalf of George V, in this case for 1301 Pte A Bewey who returned to England on Christmas Day 1918. I'm not sure what the technical name for reproducing these was called at the time, but there is an example of an unaddressed one in the IWM.

Meanwhile, the following report is an account of 1526 Pte John Henry's treatment while a POW following his capture at the Battle of Cambrai and is contained in file WO/161/100/453 Report No. 2544. It seems to indicate that he was well treated medically within the resource constraints that the Germans were experiencing in 1918, and clearly the report of food being sought at the railway stations in September must have contributed to intelligence on the continuing ability of Germany to prosecute the war.

The fact that food was not provided for the overnight rail journey between Celle and Soltau may sound brutal, but the "crow fly" distance is only 26-27 miles.

Name, Rank, No and Regiment	HENRY, John, Private, No. 1526 Royal Guernsey Light Infantry.
Home Address	Vazon, Castel, Guernsey
Place and Date of Capture	Cambrai, 1 st December 1917.
Nature of Wound, if any.	Shrapnel in shoulder.
Le Cateau Hospital.	I was taken to a hospital at Le Cateau and my wounds were dressed at once.
1st to 28th December 1917.	I was placed in a bed with a straw mattress and was supplied with two blankets. The food was quite decent and we were attended by German doctors, but I had to undergo no operation. My wounds were dressed twice a day with ordinary bandages. The orderlies here were good, and the whole time I remained in this hospital I was in bed.
Journey. 28th to 31st December 1917.	On the 28 th December I was removed in an ordinary train to Celle, arriving there on the 31 st December, and during the journey they gave us good food. I was removed from the train on a stretcher to a lazaret, and there were about 23 in my ward. The beds here were also good being supplied with a straw mattress, two blankets and a sheet. A German doctor, <i>Dr. Ellerbruck</i> , attended me. He was a good doctor and he saw that

my wounds were dressed every day by an orderly, but they had to use paper bandages. I know that one of the orderlies who attended to me was a Canadian and named *Gamble*. The Sanitary arrangements in the lazeret were good and there was a bathroom.

The food here was quite eatable, but I could have done with more. Each day at 7 o'clock they gave us coffee and a slice of bread, at 9:30 they gave us another slice of bread, and at 12 some soup; at 3 o'clock we had another slice of bread and some coffee, and at 6 o'clock we had two slices of bread and sometimes soup.

During the month of January I was able to get up and walk about a bit, and before I left the camp I was able to walk quite well.

We were allowed to write to letters and four postcards a month, and I also received letters from home, and I know that the letters I wrote home were received. I received Red Cross parcels, but some had certain articles removed, usually either soap, tea, sugar or cigarettes. I also received Red Cross bread parcels irregularly.

**Journey.
18th – 19th June
1918.**

I was never able to do any work. I remained here until June, and on the 18th of that month I left for Soltau, travelling by ordinary train, and reached that place on the 19th. We were given no food during the journey.

**Soltau.
19th June to 2nd
September 1918.**

On arrival at Soltau I was taken to a prisoners' camp, which was composed of wooden huts. There were about 80 beds in each hut. Each bed had a mattress and two blankets. In my hut we had almost all English prisoners with one or two French and Belgians. I do not know either the name of the Commandant or assistant commandant. On my arrival at the camp I was examined by the doctor, who marked me of for no work and told me to put in an application for exchange, which he said he would support. The food here was very poor and we English prisoners could not have lived without the parcels we received through the Red Cross.

The grocery parcels came very regularly, but the parcels of biscuits very rarely.

The sanitary condition of the camp was bad, but there were baths supplied to the prisoners. The huts were

cleaned by orderlies, and in my hut there were two Englishmen as orderlies when I left. Entertainments were allowed in the camp, and several of these were got up by prisoners while I was there. We also had plenty of books supplied to us.

The treatment of prisoners I consider to have been very fair, and I never saw any cruelty by any of the German NCO's and I got my letters regularly and were able to write letters and postcards, as at Celle.

I left Soltau on the 2nd September and travelled through in an ordinary train, to Aachen, and after stopping there two days I was taken to Rotterdam.

While in the camp at Soltau I often heard how hard-up people were for food, and during my journey to Aachen we were often asked when stopping at the stations to give food, to people on the platforms, and the people looked pretty hungry.

Opinion of Examiner.

This man gave his report quite well.

Everald G. Thorne.
22, Aldermanbury, London, E.C.,
20th September 1918.

The Somme – Some Autumn Jottings



Our drive to the Somme invariably involves coming down the Albert-Bapaume Road, turning off at Pozieres to go through Thiepval and then on to Mailly-Maillet. This time the sight of a well painted water tower on the northern edge of Pozieres was there to behold, commemorating the VCs won the Australians.

The Somme this October enjoyed surprisingly good weather for much of the time, though the beet harvest still saw plenty of mud brought onto the various roads by tractors and the like. Round the clock traffic is noticeable with heavy vehicles taking the beet to the processing plants.

Looking ahead to populating the website while validating the Roll of Honour references, part of the time was spent visiting the various cemeteries which contain the remains of Jersey men. Having got to Courcelette British Cemetery on one expedition only to discover the camera left back at the *gîte*, I can assure readers that taking the shortcut to Thiepval by the track shown on the map is not to be recommended unless one has a 4WD. I haven't!

Courcelette contains the remains of Lt. Edward Renouf, 54th Bn, Canadian Infantry. His headstone is inscribed "Of Jersey CI". Meanwhile a small puzzle was caused by seeing OV Capt. Nigel Choveaux' headstone at Foncquevillers along with 6 or 7 fellow officers from the 1st/5th South Staffords and no other ranks. With the VC BoR saying that he was KIA leading his men, I wondered where the men were! However, returning home to check databases, it seems that many are buried in Rossignol Wood Cemetery. Puzzle solved

Many of the regular aspects associated with the Somme continue, not the least being the "Iron Harvest", with a Mills grenade nestling in a field edge adjacent to Bernafay Woods and an unexploded 18 pounder shell, complete with fuse standing to attention in the field adjacent to the NZ Memorial at Longueval, being noted. I have not heard of any mishaps of late, but I'm sure that there will be the odd death in the future from the remaining munitions. The continuous succession of coaches with educational parties has become a permanent feature, though I wonder if the accompanying teachers have the comprehension themselves of the events of 1916. Unconfirmed was the report that human remains had been discovered near High Wood.

With this and my trip the week previously, I found that I was gaining a different appreciation of the geography of the battlefield by mentally overlaying the line of trenches onto the contours. Possibly, this occurred because I had recently read John Masefield's "The Old Front Line", but standing at Gommecourt or outside the Ulster Tower one can readily appreciate (not sure that's the right word!) the proximity of front lines and the opportunities presented to well-sited machine gun nests.

The Thiepval Wood excavations should be seen if you get a chance, and Teddy Colligan from the Ulster Tower is a very knowledgeable speaker on the 36th (Ulster) Division's role on 1st July 1916. I think that he and his wife will be staying in post there for 2007.

Book Reviews

Plumer – The Soldiers' General by Geoffrey Powell (Pen & Sword Books (2004)) – Ned Malet de Carteret

Viscount Plumer of The Messines, as he became, stands out as perhaps the finest and most successful of the Great War Generals.

This book sourced from numerous sources, sadly without the subject's own papers – which he destroyed after the War, tells the story of a soldiers' soldier

in chronological order of his life. Interestingly, the first “glowing” biography written of him by his ex-Chief of Staff, General Charles (Tim) Harington, suffers from the same problem today in that his records and the other primary sources, mainly the letters written to Plumer’s wife (Annie) have also been lost.

Born in Torquay in 1857, Herbert Plumer came from a Yorkshire family, his father having sold a large estate in Edgware, London. He was one of four children. Educated at Eton, with both Rawlinson and Byng, he did not excel and left in 1876 to join the 65th Regiment of Foot in India. During his early career he saw life in India, and action in the Sudan.

A fine horseman, he was later charged to raise a troop of 500 mounted infantrymen, later, 750 men, in Matebele-land in 1896 in South Africa. He did so, fought two battles and rode 600 miles in 41 days.

He and General Mahon relieved Baden-Powell at the Relief of Mafeking on 17th May, 1899. After this Plumer commanded a column to continue the fight against the Boers lead by Botha, Smuts, de Wet and de la Rey. Among his troops were Canadians, Australian and New Zealanders, men he would later command in WW1. The end came three years later in 1902. Plumer and his men had survived physical and mental strain, danger and disease.

He spent the next 11 years in England and Ireland rising through the ranks reaching that of General.

At the outset of WW1, Plumer was Corps commander of V Corps as a part of Smith-Dorrien’s Second Army. Plumer came to be associated with the Ypres Salient for the rest of the War and his success at Messines, with the firing of 18 mines to start the attack proved to be one of the few truly successful battles of the War.

His attention to detail, his very careful planning and training and his ensuring that his troops were fully equipped led to his success. He was always touring the front line and mixing with the ordinary soldier. He was certainly not an armchair General and he was universally loved by his men. I feel that Field Marshal Montgomery in WW2 had Plumer as his role model (Reviewer)

The book alludes to his difficult relationship with Field Marshal Haig. Plumer had given him low marks as an examiner at Staff College. Haig constantly referred to him as an “old man” – which must have irked him, however Haig recognised his great talents and backed Plumer at times when his position was in danger. Lloyd George interfered with the Army Command and even Haig’s job was on the line after Passchendaele.

After a spell in Italy, Plumer was brought back for the final push of the War in 1918 and the final victory.

In July 1919, he was promoted to Field Marshal and ennobled.

Post War and, despite not being in the most robust of health, Plumer was in Germany, then Governor of Malta, and finally High Commissioner of Palestine – both of which jobs were extremely tough, but Plumer succeeded in pacifying all parties and his terms of office were considered a great success at difficult times in those countries history.

His wife, Annie, was rather haughty, and in his family life she rather wore the trousers, to the extent that Plumer was estranged from his eldest son (Tom) for much of the last 10 years of his life, something which profoundly hurt him

Plumer died on 16th July, 1932 in London. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, five days later. His was the first military burial in the Abbey for 50 years. It was a tremendous occasion, however in contrast to all the “brass” there was a “huge turn out of middle-aged ex-servicemen, many of whom will have never met him, let alone seen him who came to pay their respects supposedly to one of those who had so carelessly squandered the lives of their friends and comrades fourteen years earlier” – Geoffrey Powell

This book provides a superb in depth profile of a tremendous personality and the author I feel gets really under the skin on undoubtedly the finest Army General of WW1. I can thoroughly recommend it.

Plumer's great-grand-daughter is Sarah whom I have had the pleasure to know for over 30 years and indeed her mother (Cynthia), Plumer's grand-daughter. Sarah is married to Jersey's Planning and Environment Minister, Senator Freddie Cohen.

Geoffrey Powell is a WW2 veteran paratrooper of Arnhem fame.

Editor's Note: Ned has kindly loaned me his copy of “Plumer” which I am currently reading. Ned does not mention it, but Plumer held an appointment for three years as DAAG in Jersey during the 1890s. Now, where did he live?

The Great War Generals on the Western Front by Robin Neillands (Magpie Press) – Barrie Bertram

Originally brought out as a hard-back in 1999, this issue was a soft-back version and dated 2004.

In this book the late Robin Neillands makes great efforts in refuting the widely held image of the Generals being “donkeys” in that they were uncaring, incompetent and so forth. At the outset, he establishes a series of statements regarding the Generals, and seeks to present arguments that such a General was not incompetent or that another was unduly careless with lives. In this he tends to be a little repetitive, and his background as a RM Heavy Weapons Instructor lends to this, however, he then gets into the meat of his subject by reviewing each battle and discussing command performance.

Though he again repeats his introductory material the battle by battle account provides a logical approach from which to rate the Generals involved,

highlighting mistakes and successes, and the logistics, alongside the level of support that was available. As with many recent books on the topic of generalship, the political dimension is evaluated not least the impact of Lloyd George on the decision making process, while, until Third Ypres at least, the influence of the French is obvious in where the British would have to attack. In the latter case, Sir John French is regarded as being overly-influenced by the French while Haig after initially repeating French's approach does stand up to the French command while giving loyal support. Perhaps this became easier as the British Army grew from the original four infantry divisions fielded in 1914?

Finally, Neillands concludes with a Summary of his findings and rates the Generals, although he does not go to the level of awarding points or stars in the way today's newspapers rate footballers during a match! Australia's Monash and Canada's Currie are both regarded highly in the role of Corps Commanders, as is Plumer, Second Army's Commander, whom Neillands feels, rightly to my mind, should have been left in command at Third Ypres and not had to hand over to Hubert Gough. Gough deserved the sack for his performance at Third Ypres, yet, when he did better with his Army having taken over unprepared positions prior to the German March 1918 Offensive, he was only then sacked, and probably unfairly!

Haig? If Neillands has a strong criticism, it would seem to be his readiness to let the man on the spot get on with it in his own way, even though he had previously given strong strategic direction. Rawlinson was the example on the Somme who chose to ignore such direction, while Gough regarded as a "thruster" chose a different line of assault and was never ready for the dates required by Haig. Haig made mistakes and not using "Daddy" Plumer at the outset of Third Ypres may have been his biggest, and he should have "gripped" his subordinates far more. Yet Neillands rightfully points out that it was Haig, of all the Generals, French, British or American, who effectively won the war!

Well worth a read.

From Private To Field-Marshal by F-M Sir William Robertson – Barrie Bertram

I chanced on this in a second-hand book sale and for £1 thought it might be money well spent!

The book recounts "Wullie's" progress from the bottom rung of the military ladder to its pinnacle, recounting life at each Army rank that he attained, excluding that of Warrant Officer Class 1 which he did not achieve (I have the edge there!). It is an interesting read in the sense that he appears at each stage ready to go "the extra mile" for his career. He learnt at least five of the Indian languages and his account of an intelligence expedition into the NW Frontier area highlights the arduous nature of that terrain.

One suspects that, because he was regarded as a mature subaltern at the age of 30+, he was soon earmarked for Staff duties and after 1892, appears

never to have served again as a regimental officer, but progressing through numerous Staff roles to CIGS in December 1915 until February 1918. As he recorded his progress, he acknowledged the support of those who guided him and higher up the ladder the support of those alongside or below. Not a word of criticism, no doubt that being “bad form”.

In the account of his time as CIGS, there is again no directed criticism, however one can sense that the book is somewhat coded in some of these areas. As a “Westerner” he makes out a sound and logical case for pursuing the battle on the Western Front. He points out that the support of the number of troops in Salonika for example would require six times the shipping for an equivalent number in France, and in any case, such activity reduced the shipping available to bring the American forces over. Replacement manpower remained vital on the Western Front, and it was a fool or a Prime Minister who believed that being on the defensive did not involve casualties! It is clear that his removal as CIGS rankled, but again no directed criticism.

Throughout the book, it is clear that “Wullie” gave thought to the needs of the military, and throughout one remains impressed with the logic that was applied. It is perhaps this aspect in both him and Haig that sat least well with Lloyd George and Churchill at the time, with the politicians more concerned with being re-elected in due course.

Les Bretons de la Guerre de 1914-1918 by Jean-Pascale Soudagne and Christian Le Corre

Now, a bit of French homework for you! The following is the “blurb” from the back cover of the book.

Lorsque le président de la République française, Raymond Poincaré, signe l'ordre de mobilisation, ce sont alors, à partir du 2 août 1914 2,5 millions d'hommes qui abandonnent leur vie, leur labour quotidien pour rejoindre jour après jour leurs lieux de mobilisation. Comme les Parisiens, les Vendéens... les Bretons rejoignent leur affectation pour être transportés par chemin de fer sur les frontières du Nord et de l'Est. C'est le temps des certitudes, ils partent tous pour une guerre que l'on prédit de courte durée. Mais cette illusion ne tarde pas à se changer en désillusion. Les Bretons des 19e RI (Brest), 41e RI (Rennes), 47e RI (Saint-Malo), 48e RI (Guingamp), 62e RI (Lorient)... vont connaître les affres de la guerre, de la mort, de la douleur sur les champs de bataille de la Belgique, de la Marne, de la Champagne, de Verdun, de la Somme, etc. En Bretagne, à l'arrière, en l'absence des hommes, la vie se réorganise. Dans une région à forte identité agricole, il faut remplir les tâches laissées vacantes par les bras masculins. Les femmes s'entraident et remplissent ce rôle. D'autres vont travailler à l'arsenal de Brest, de Rennes... à la confection des munitions dans l'attente de nouvelles de l'être aimé.

Rapidement, arrivent en provenance du front les premiers convois de blessés, il faut alors agrandir les capacités d'accueil. Les hôpitaux provisoires ou auxiliaires apparaissent un peu partout, dans les grandes comme dans les plus petites villes. Mais outre les blessés, à défaut de permissionnaires, la Bretagne voit arriver des prisonniers, militaires mais d'abord civils. Pour évoquer ces derniers, on lit pour la première fois dans la presse ou sur les papiers officiels un terme qui aujourd'hui fait encore froid dans le dos, celui de "camp de concentration".

I confess that I have not yet sat down to read the book with dictionary near to hand, but can certainly vouch that it is a well illustrated 128 pages. It tackles the mobilisation, life in the front line and on the home front, and I have found that I was surprised to expect anything different to the British "experience". There is in one aspect, however, that the book differs and that is on the debate regarding the number of Breton Great War dead, a fact I had noticed quite separately a few years ago. Allowing for various adjustments (whether casualties were from *La France Metropolitan* or not for example) the Breton percentage of the French dead seems to approach 18-20%, a figure that is disproportionately high as the region probably consisted of less than 10% of the French population at that time.

The Jersey Parish Memorials – Part 3 By Paul Ronayne

Grouville Parish Memorial



This is located on a small triangular strip of land between a main road and a smaller road opposite the entrance to one of Jersey's best loved golf courses, the Royal Grouville. Unique to the Parish Memorials in Jersey this memorial is some distance from both the Parish Church and Parish Hall where as all the others are either next to one or both or in some cases situated inside one of the buildings. The memorial is made from granite and takes the form of a cross. At the base of the cross are panels with the names of fifty three men who died during the Great War. Also listed are the names of five men who died during WWII. Of those killed in the Great War sixteen of them must have died fighting for the French as their names are listed together on one panel with the inscription:

Anciens Combattants Francais

The main inscription on the front of the memorial reads:

Grouville
Tribut De Reconnaissance
Aux Paroissiens
Morts Pendant Le Grande Guerre
1914-1919

Charles Edwin Ralph Malet was killed on the 14th May, 1916 near Loos in France. Charles, 21 years old, and the eldest son of Mrs P Mallet of Gorey was a Rifleman in the Jersey Company of the 7th Royal Irish Rifles. It was reported that he had been wounded putting up wire in the trenches but later died in a dressing station in the presence of his brother, A Mallet. He is buried at the Bois-Carre Military Cemetery, Haisnes. Ian and I visited his grave along with several other Jersey Contingent men's graves in that area two years ago. (The 7th Royal Irish Rifles War Diary notes that three men were wounded and one killed on the 13th May so maybe the JEP got the date wrong).

Edward Bienaime Bertram was a Private in the 14th Bn, New Brunswick Regiment, Canadian Infantry, when he was killed in action in France. It was reported that whilst returning back with some comrades of the Machine Gun Section a shell had landed nearby killing him instantly. Edward was just 22 when killed on the 6th April, 1917, and is buried in Villers Station Cemetery, Villers-Au-Bois. He was the son of Adele Eugenie Le Clercq (formerly Bertram) of "Beachside" La Rocque, Grouville, and the late Edward Philip Bertram who had sometime earlier drowned whilst out fishing.

On 9th April, 1917 the Canadians stormed Vimy Ridge. Private Leonard William Bertram died that day while fighting with the Quebec Regiment, as part of the Canadian Infantry. The third son of Mr and Mrs John Bertram of East Lynne, La Rocque, St Clement, it was reported that Leonard was killed by a sniper. He was 23 years old and is buried in Canadian Cemetery No. 2, Neuville-St Vaast.

The third Bertram on the memorial was also serving with the Canadian Infantry at the time of his death on 6th September, 1916. Rolf Guillaume de la

Vieuville Bertram was originally born in Grouville, and was the second son of the Hon. Louis John Bertram CMG and Mrs Bertram of Mandeville, Jamaica, British West Indies. Aged 24 at the time of his death Rolf was a Lieutenant in the 8th Bn, Manitoba Regiment. He was wounded in July 1916 then moved to the "Daughters of the Empire" Hospital at Hyde Park in London where he subsequently died of his wounds. He is buried in the Kensal Green (All Souls') Cemetery. (Editor: Rolf was an OV and the Book of Remembrance informs us that the wound resulted during grenade practice when a man threw short! Now, where have we heard of accidents on the throwing range?)

Edward Francis De Faye was the son of Francis George and Phoebe De Faye, of 21, David Place, St. Helier, and Pamproux, La Rocque, St Clement, but Edward must have had a link with Grouville as he is remembered on the Grouville Memorial. Killed in action in Gauche Wood near Gouzeaucourt, during the Battle of Cambrai it is only fitting that Edward was at the time of his death a 2nd Lieutenant with the Royal Tank Corps, serving with A Bn. Edward is remembered on Panel 13 of the Cambrai Memorial. He died on the 1st December, 1917 at the age of 25.

Just a few yards away from the memorial is a building which also is of great importance to Jersey history; an old railway station from the Jersey Eastern Railway days stands just to the south of the memorial and is now converted into a house. It's wonderful building and I can't help but think how many of the men now inscribed on the memorial used that station to board a train for St Helier on their way to leaving the Island to fight in the war. It's a fine setting for a fine memorial.

(Editor's Note: A late addition to the Journal continuing Paul's series. Only one memorial as he has also done the piece on Brundig. Coincidentally I have just been having a few exchanges regarding Bertrams in the Great War with an Alan Bertram in Jersey. I am not related to any of those identified by Paul!)

Out and About

Good to hear of a few "get-togethers" by fellow Group members not least one gathering in Guernsey that involved the brothers Ronayne, the brothers Balshaw, Ned MdC, Mark Bougourd, and Liz Walton. This followed on from another where Liz and Roger Frisby met up in Jersey with Ned and the brothers Ronayne. More recently Roger and I have met up in London.

I had my Somme trip in October (see earlier article) and on Remembrance Day was at a website launch ceremony of the Craven District's Roll of Honour a few miles north of Skipton. After meeting up with Roger, I spent time at the IWM and the National Portrait Gallery over the next couple of days. They had one of "Billie" Nevill's footballs on display at the IWM while I went to see Sargent's "The Generals" (or more unkindly "Still Life in Boots") at the NPG, across the road from Edith Cavell.

Now, looking ahead to 2007, I have a trip to Verdun and the Somme lined up for 13th March – 1st April, when I also hope to go burrowing under Arras, while

22nd – 29th. April will see me in Jersey spending the mornings at the Library's microfiche. I am banned from there in the afternoons! Meanwhile, a trip to Guernsey has to be on the cards next Autumn.

“Death Penny” – 2nd Lt Lewis Appleby Le Brun



Only very recently sold on E-Bay. Le Brun was with 3rd Bn Hampshires but attached to 11th Bn SLI. His “Death Penny” went for £123. I recently gave a small sum to an appeal by the King's Own Royal Lancaster Museum to buy one for a VC winner That was £2500.

Odds and Ends

CWGC Cemeteries & Memorials in Belgium & Northern France

The CWGC, in conjunction with Michelin, has recently produced this very good booklet/atlas (cost £7.00 or Euros 10.00) showing 956 locations where British dead are buried or commemorated. I have found it a great improvement to the overlays of maps 51 and 52. It ranges from Dinard in the west to Sedan, from Coulommiers up to Zebrugge in the north, and covers WW2 as well as WW1. The maps remain at 1/200000 scale and there two indexes listing locations alphabetically and numerically. A good buy.

Website progress

The website is continually developing and with some media publicity in the CI, is attracting interest. A number of pictures and details are starting to trickle out, and a gentleman in NZ has identified a missing name from the Guernsey RoH. Meanwhile both RoH will be fully searchable, certainly by the time you receive this. However, the data continues to be added to and is likely to be for the foreseeable future.

As to articles, the French Seaplane Base is expanding while I hope that by the time this gets to you, an article on the German POW camp on Jersey will appear. For that one, the Société Jersiaise has to be thanked for agreeing to material and photograph release. Hopefully a piece on Victoria College OTC in wartime will soon appear. Pictures are awaited from the College for that.

The other area now set up is the private members' area, and all Journals should be capable of being printed. As of Issue 12, members who are able to do so, will no longer receive a printed copy and can either print or just view the Journal.

Enfin

Looking back over the year, it seems that there has been a high degree of success, though I would not want to be "drinking too much of our bath-water" in saying so. The Journal has been well supported by many of the members with a range of well-written and interesting articles and, "touch wood", has got out of the door at the rough time intended. Roger, especially, is to be complimented on the website construction, which I know from our telephone conversations has involved many long hours of work. People in the CI are becoming interested both in terms of the public and the media. Where I am personally disappointed is the apparent lack of political will to see whether a CI memorial could be set up. Having received an E-Mail from one of Chief Minister Frank Walker's staff, it seems that problems are there to block progress rather than the starting point from which solutions can be found! However, I have a cunning plan – but more of that in the New Year!

As to the year ahead, I hope that numbers can steadily grow and that we can reinforce what we have "built". Some discussions have been going on between a small group of us regarding sponsorship and subscriptions, and in the latter case we will probably look to introduce this, with the prime aim of funding the website, but to cover other administration costs also. As an example, Brundig's headstone refurbishment is a project that could attract a little sponsorship (from say Commerzbank?). Areas where we should also widen our involvement is in acting as a "ginger" group to promote Great War remembrance and understanding, especially as the 90th Anniversary of Passchendaele looms, and to support educational needs.

Journal Issue Dates For 2007

Proposed dates are shown as follows. I'll try to keep to the schedule but will have the table on the website so that you can read any updates that might arise. At this stage the most likely candidate for change will be Issue 16.

Issue	Month	Articles To BB	Posted Web/Mail
12	February 2007	10 th	15 th
13	April 2007	10 th	15 th
14	June 2007	10 th	15 th
15	August 2007	10 th	15 th
16	October 2007	10 th	15 th
17	December 2007	10 th	15 th

Regards
Barrie H Bertram
15th December 2006

Special Constabulary Long Service Medals with clasp "THE GREAT WAR 1914-18"

Presentation to the Honorary Special Constables of Guernsey by SIR EDWARD C. OZANNE, KBE., Bailiff.

Friday December 2nd, 1921

ST. PETER PORT

BRICE A H (Senior Sergt.)
GALLIENNE P (Hon. Sec.)

DISTRICT No. 1.

MACKAY A M (Corporal)
AMY H P
ARNOLD F H
AUSTIN W
BADAIRE A
BICHARD T

BOURGAIZE A W
BOURGAIZE J R
BREHAUT T
BUSH F W
COHU T de G
DE LA RUE F H
DE MOUILPIED H B
EDWARDS W
HERBERT F J
JORY J A
KIMBER P W
LE CHEMINANT E C
LE CHEMINANT W P
LE PAGE E C

DISTRICT No. 2.

CORBIN E K Dr. (Sergt)
CANDON S A (Corporal)
ALLAIN A A
ANDERSON R J
BLONDEL J
BOWDEN H G

BROOKES D J
CUMING W J
DE MOUILPIED F
DE MOUILPIED J
DE LA RUE W
DUPEY A E (deceased)
GRUT N
HOWITT C W
HUNKIN R F
HURRELL E
LE PATOUREL T
LUFF W
MOLLETT W J D
ROBERT H

DISTRICT No. 3.

SHELDON W S (Sergt)
COHU E O (Sergt)
FERGUSON F S
HAMPTON A H
HART T E (deceased)
HARTLAND H J

HODDER A W
LE POIDEVIN J H
MOON J A (deceased)
NEILAN P
RICH E C
ROBERT James T
WATKIN W W

DISTRICT No. 4.

AUBERT D A (Sergt)
MOLESWORTH C R the Hon. (Sergt)
NEALE W
BLICQ F H
HOMAN J B
KITTS C
LE LIEVRE E H
LE PAGE W J
LINDSAY J
LANGLOIS W N
LE HURAY T J
MORGAN H J
ROBILLIARD H A G
WELCH J H

LIHOU	S P
LOCK	A E
MARQUAND	H E
PRINCE	J
ROBIN	T
ROUSSEL	A J
SMITH	W H
THOMPSON	P B
WHEADON	E T
WHEADON	G C
WHEADON	H G

ROBILLIARD	J
ROBILLIARD	J H
SMITH	H A
SPENCER	L A
WHALES	F
WHELAN	L

ST. PIERRE DU BOIS

BOURGAIZE	Joseph
BOURGAIZE	Pierre
BREHAUT	John
NORMAN	F J

OZANNE	John
ROBIN	Walter B
TOSTEVIN	Peter
TOSTEVIN	Thomas A