

**JOURNAL
44**

**Channel Islands
Great War
Study Group**
www.greatwarci.net



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At the Palace

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Hello All

As the material for this Journal is being drawn together, it is very much being done so against the backdrop of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee commemorations. At times like these, the armed services come very much to the fore with their ceremonial involvement, precision drill and steady discipline, their red tunics and gold braid highly visible. To the untutored, their appearance seems a far cry from what the late Richard Holmes refers to in the sub-title of his final book ('Soldiers') as the 'Dusty Warriors'. But, the pride, the drill and the discipline are readily transferrable skills, if I can refer to them as that, from lining the Mall to the battlefield, and moreover, recognisable to the many hundreds of thousands who served throughout the Great War.

Yet, there is another aspect of service and that is loyalty to the crown, a situation that has existed, save for a brief period in the 1680s, since the Restoration. In part, this is a throwback to the days when British warrior kings led their troops into battle, the last being King George II at Dettingen in 1743. Since then, there have been royal personages who, such as a previous Duke of Cambridge, have led the Army, while more recently, others have served in the armed forces such as the Kings, Edward VIII, George VI, Queen Elizabeth, the Princes, Charles and Andrew, and notably, William and Harry, although not necessarily at the 'sharp end of the business'.

Some will say that loyalty to the crown is an anachronism in a modern day constitution. I would argue that it is not, and that it is far more preferable than an Army that swears its oath of allegiance to the government of the day, and can remain non-political. Of course, British governments, whether left, right or centre, set agendas, policies and budgets, but they also act in the monarch's name. What better example from modern history of the suborning of an army's oath of allegiance than that of the German Army's by Hitler in the 1930s?

That loyalty is reflected by the sovereign and her family, through royal patronage with members, appointed as Colonels-in-Chief of regiments, who take interest in the various units 'under their charge'. I do wonder however at their reaction to the large reductions currently taking place in the armed forces.

Finally, I cannot let the Jubilee commemorations pass without noting my disappointment at the BBC's coverage of the river pageant. There were many boats and people on the water that had interesting stories and backgrounds. A pre-Great War steam launch from HMS Espiegle, and another launch from the Arethusa-class HMS Royalist which was at Jutland. Meanwhile from my 'neck of the woods', one of the Lake Windermere launches, 'Queen of the Lake', was transported by road to London for the big day. And, Jersey sent the 'RNLI Howard D', doubly interesting because of it being gifted by TB Davis in memory of his son Howard who died in 1916 and is buried at Etaples, and also that it took part in the 'mini-Dunkirk' of St Malo in 1940. Of course, there were the Dunkirk 'little boats'. As was evident, effort was made by a great many and very little of it was actually acknowledged on the day by the BBC. Disappointing!

The Front Cover

Who is chaperoning who? The lucky chap is Captain Herbert Le Bas, RGLI, emerging from Buckingham Palace having just received his MC from King George V in February, 1918. I suspect that far fewer ladies wear fox stoles these days!

George Francis Lé Vee **An International One Man Crime Wave**

A one line entry in Jersey's 1919 Roll of Honour and Service will never convey any great detail of the lives and, in many cases, the deaths of the Jerseymen who were listed. And, there were numerous errors throughout that book. Happily, the advent of technology, the worldwide web and the opening of archives has placed more and more information about those men (and women) in the public domain, allowing us to add to or amend what we know, invariably finding that they had fascinating lives in one shape or another. However, they were not necessarily for the good, as I recently had discovered in the case of George Francis Le Vée who, in the 1919 Roll of Service, had simply been listed as coming from the parish of St Peter and who was a Lieutenant!

(Note: I should point out that the surname of Le Vée is variously shown in many of the other documents as Le Vee, Levee, LeVee and similar, but I will stick with Le Vée throughout, even though there were doubts at times that I was dealing with the same man.)

Preliminary research had shown that George had indeed been commissioned as a Temporary Second Lieutenant (London Gazette 29102 dated 16th March, 1915). But, a subsequent entry for the Hampshire Regiment (London Gazette 29392 dated 3rd December, 1915) reported that:

'Temporary Second Lieutenant George F Le Vée relinquishes his commission on account of ill-health.'

There was no Medal Index Card in existence so, sadly as it appeared during that research, George had not contracted whatever it was that caused his ill-health by being in France, Belgium or some other foreign clime. However, his ill-health may not have been what it seemed, for not long after his relinquishment, he was arrested in Portsmouth for impersonating a Staff Captain! (The results of this preliminary research were reflected in the website's Roll of Service although the crime of impersonation was not supported by any reference.) It seemed that there was a story, and in looking to discover more about George, far more emerged than was expected.

Unsurprisingly, George was descended from French immigrants to Jersey, his paternal grandparents being Jacques and Mathurine Le Vée who, like many of their fellow French folk, would find gainful employment on the farms of Jersey's country parishes. Jacques and Mathurine had at least six children in Jersey, one of them being George's father Peter Francis who was born in St Mary around 1871 and who later, in about 1895 or 1896, married Anna Mary Ninnim, a lady who had been born in St Peter and who was three years older than Peter. Motherhood quickly followed matrimony for Anna with George's birth taking place in 1896, and a daughter, Adèle Marie following in 1900, with both children being born in St Peter. One gets the sense that the Le Vée family were trying to anglicise themselves very early on in Jersey as their first names indicate, Peter as opposed Pierre for example.

Not long after Adèle's birth, Peter and Anna decamped to Guernsey with their two children, and according to the 1901 Census, they were to be found living at Les Padins in Guernsey's parish of St Saviour, where Peter is listed as a Farmer and an Employer. Ten years later, the 1911 Census shows that the family had moved to the parish of St

Peter in the Wood, and were now living at a property called 'Plaisance', while Peter's status of Farmer and Employer remained unchanged. However, now 15 years old, George was not with his parents, but was back in Jersey, and living with a Jane Huelin, a retired school mistress, at La Hougue Lane in St Peter. George is recorded as being Jane's grand nephew. Given his age, it would not have been too long before he was liable for Militia service, however, although it is not conclusive, there is no current evidence that he served with the RMIJ.

His next 'appearance', as we saw above, was in 1915 when he received a commission before relinquishing it on the grounds of ill-health, and later donning khaki once more as a bogus Staff Captain. What next? To answer that, we can turn, no less, to the Ashburton Guardian in South Island, New Zealand, which published the following on the 21st March, 1921:

'AMAZING CAREER: Farmer's son as a "Staff Officer" and "Airman". It is almost impossible to believe that George Francis Le Vée – handsome and debonair, of fine physique and obviously cultured – as he stood in the dock at Hants Quarter Sessions, was the son of a Jersey farmer and a man who had a dark criminal record.

Le Vée, who is twenty-four years of age, commenced his career at the age of nineteen, when one spring morning, there arrived in Portsmouth a resplendent Staff Officer. He was arrested, was convicted on two charges, and sentenced in the name of George Francis Le Vée to three months' hard labour on each charge.

On his release, Le Vée in a short time was esconced as cashier in the YMCA Euston. In April, 1917, at Camberwell Police Court, he appeared to answer three charges of theft, for each of which he received three months' hard labour.

On his release he called himself the son of an admiral, and was sent to prison for six months' hard labour at Aldershot for obtaining £50 by false pretences from an Air Mechanic.

Later he posed as an officer of the Guards and a wealthy landowner in Plymouth. Another three months in gaol soon passed and Le Vée went to Jersey to meet old friends, and cashed numbers of worthless cheques.

He then obtained [a] passport to Intra [?], and for months was chased over the Continent by the French and Italian police. He stayed at the finest hotels and lived on the proceeds of various worthless cheques. Eventually he was arrested in Italy and deported. But the call of the Mediterranean Sea was too strong, and he appeared in Athens, entertaining on a lavish style.

Le Vée then disappeared. Later he borrowed a British pilot's uniform, walked into the hills, and told a Greek stationmaster that he had crashed on the hill-tops. A special train was ordered for the "English Officer" and he was sent direct to Constantinople at the expense of the Greek government, furnished with cash in Constantinople by an RAF Colonel, and granted a free passage to England.

The war having concluded, Le Vée decided to undertake a special mission to Berlin as a British Colonel. Worthless cheques were passed, and he fled to Cologne, where he was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Then he went home, stole money from his sister's bedroom, and returning to Aldershot, where he hired a taxi, obtained money from the local War Pensions Committee, and went on a motor tour. Eventually, he was arrested on a charge of defrauding the taxi-driver, and with obtaining money from the Aldershot War Pensions Committee.

At the Hants Quarter Sessions he was sentenced to twelve months' hard labour.'

Lest anybody think that this was an over-imaginative reporter scribbling about a 'Robin Hood figure' in far-distant Ashburton, the article itself or similar was syndicated to other papers in Australia and New Zealand. One does sense that the originator was also subject to the charms of this 'handsome and debonair' rascal standing in the dock. As to George's 'fine physique', one must suspect that his periods of hard labour were much like the modern day equivalent of visiting a health club for a work out!

The article's chronology is a little obscure, but, between say, March, 1916 when he was a bogus Staff Captain and later turning up in Constantinople in December, 1919, he had received twenty four months' hard labour. No distinction was made as to whether the sentences were concurrent or consecutive, nor was there any suggestion of time off for good behaviour. We might therefore think that he spent two out of those three and three-quarter years cracking rocks for His Majesty. However, he did join the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), given the service number 96037, and later transferring to the Royal Air Force (RAF) on the latter's formation on the 1st April, 1918.

Perhaps we can improve upon that obscure chronology by referring to another article and, in so doing, better understand George's lightning progress up the ranks in his pseudo-military career. For this we now refer to the Auckland Star of the 24th July, 1920 to find:

'FRAUDS IN MANY LANDS: Bogus Staff Officer's Tour of Europe: Cables to Air Ministry. An old Etonian and demobilised RAF Mechanic who masqueraded as a Staff Officer and practically toured Europe, was sent to gaol for fraud and other offences by the Westminster Magistrate on the 13th May [1920]. The story told by Mr Eustace Fulton, on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions, was both amusing and amazing.

George Francis Le Vée, 24, who was a native of St Peter's Jersey, had been brought to England from Cologne, said council, where in February of this year he was sentenced by a Military Court for masquerading in the uniform of an Officer and being an unauthorised person found in the British occupied territories.

Le Vée was demobilised in January, 1919. In December, 1919, he took rooms in the Grosvenor Hotel, London, in the name of 'Major H Mangay Coombs, RAF'.

Engaging a Batman: Wearing the uniform of a Major and various decorations, Le Vée went to Kingston-on-Thames on the 28th December [1919] and called on Air Mechanic Herbert Beisley [assumed service number 135744], with whom he served at Blandford in 1918.

He told Beisley he was commissioned and had been appointed to go to Berlin on a special mission. He wanted a Batman and Valet, and on the assurance that the "Major" would put things right with the Air Ministry Beisley agreed to accompany him.

They met later at Victoria, and, Le Vée being in possession of warrants, they travelled by Pullman to Dover, crossed the Channel, and got to Cologne.

Le Vée was now in Colonel's uniform, and at Cologne passed as "Lieutenant-Colonel Mangay Reid RAF". He began a series of amazing frauds, which ended in confinement in a German prison.

£3000 Pearl Necklace: *Detective-Inspector Collins (Scotland Yard) supplied the rest of the story.*

Le Vée, he said, was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the 13th Hampshires in November, 1914, and resigned in the following December through ill-health. In 1916 he was sent to prison for unlawfully wearing an Officer's uniform and for false pretences.

In 1917 he joined the Air Force as a Mechanic. In June, 1918, he attempted to obtain, and very nearly succeeded in getting, a pearl necklace worth £3000 by representing that he was an Officer of high rank in the Grenadier Guards, and he got three months' hard labour for the attempt.

Worthless Cheques: *After demobilisation in March of last year he got a passport at Guernsey to proceed to Intra (Italy) via Boulogne and Turin, to take up employment.*

For some months he was heard of at various Continental cities, staying at good hotels and issuing worthless cheques. Turin authorities had him arrested and deported as a "rogue and vagabond".

Le Vée then went to Athens, presented himself to the British Consul as an ex-Officer, and was found employment at a British exhibition of trade industries. He defrauded the Ionian Bank, and got £130 from an Officer by means of a worthless cheque before he left Athens in November, 1919.

Next he turned up at Constantinople as "Squadron-Leader Harold Mangay Coombs, DFC, RAF", and told the Officer Commanding the RAF there that his Handley Page machine had crashed at Thebes, and he had lost his kit.

Voyage home on a Transport: *His story was that he was under instruction from the Air Ministry to obtain full particulars as to the opening up of air routes in the Near East.*

He asked the Commanding Officer to send an official cable to the Air Ministry, London, himself dictating the cable, which was duly sent.

Provided with uniform at Constantinople, he stole blank forms from an Officer's [cheque] book and cashed worthless cheques, and at the end of December, 1919, left Constantinople in one of His Majesty's ships, having been given a warrant to England.

On the transport he struck up acquaintance with a real Squadron-Leader, and wrote to the Air Officer Commanding at Malta asking for the services of this Officer for a special mission to Germany. He also cabled the Air Ministry in London.

At Marseilles, Paris and Boulogne on the way back he got rid of more worthless cheques.

"Inadequate Punishment": His second Continental trip was less successful, for, although he passed several further cheques, he was arrested at Cologne on the 7th January, [1920] and then confessed to his identity.

Mr Francis (the Magistrate) said [that] in all his experience he had never heard of a more audacious career of fraud.

"You are an international criminal", he told Le Vée "You have committed crime half over Europe, and the punishment I can give you seems inadequate".

"You are sentenced to six months' hard labour, and you are lucky to get out of it with that."

That sentence probably drew the curtains on George's pseudo-military career in which he had risen to Lieutenant-Colonel, and he possibly felt the spiritual need for a complete change on his release in late-1921. And what better place than being a member of the Church of England to achieve this?

At some point between his release in 1921 and 1924 he travelled to Quebec in Canada, this being noted by the Canadian government on its Ocean Arrivals Form (Form 30A) (and available on www.ancestry.ca for a fee) and it does appear that he stayed there for upwards of three years when he was next reported as being a passenger onboard Canadian Pacific's SS Melita docking at Liverpool on the 3rd December, 1927, having previously left Montreal. That it is the same George there is no doubt, for he gives his age as 31 and his address as 'Plaisance' in Guernsey. However, in the intervening period he had become a C of E Missionary, but, lest this be thought of as being a Jersey leopard changing his spots, the morally uplifting effect was negated somewhat by the word 'Late' preceding C of E Missionary and his entry featuring in the section for 'Deports' who had to enjoy the comforts of Third Class travel!

As his trip to Canada indicated, George had not changed. Nor, one suspects, for his subsequent voyage to Bermuda. Passenger lists for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's SS Orbita show that he landed from there at Liverpool once more on the 19th October, 1928. No longer a man of the cloth, he was now a 32 year old Civil Servant who gave his next address as 49 Grand Parade (now possibly part of the West Rocks or the Albany Hotel) in Eastbourne, having previously lived in Canada. Not a man to put his feet up, George was soon very much out and about at work once more since the News in Brief column of The Times of the 16th July, 1929 would report that:

'[A] Sentence of three years' penal servitude was passed on George Francis Le Vée, 33, a clerk, at Windsor Quarter Sessions yesterday. He pleaded "Guilty" to two charges of obtaining £5 from clergymen by means of false pretences, and also admitted having obtained money at Oxford, Cambridge, Abingdon, Honiton, Leamington, Bristol, Edinburgh, Newark, Weston-super-Mare, Stratford-on-Avon, Liverpool and Blackheath, and a passenger ticket for America, valued at £119, by means of false pretences.'

No further references can be found regarding his life of crime after his release in 1932, and it may be that, at last, he decided to go straight. But, on this, judgement is reserved. Interestingly, an unnamed newspaper carried the following item on the 27th November, 1946:

'Le Vée: Will Peter Francis Le Vée, a native of Jersey CI, son of George Francis Le Vée, deceased, who was last heard of about 14 years ago in Southampton or any person having communication of his whereabouts, please communicate with Bois and Bois, Solicitors, 2 Library Place, St Helier, Jersey, CI.'

It is safe to assume that the names of George and his father Peter had been inadvertently transposed, for it appears that Peter, having returned to Jersey, died in August, 1940 while living at Gloria Villa, Greencliff in St Martin. Peter's widow, Anna also died, in November, 1944, while living at the Manoir du Fief ès Neveux in St Lawrence. Given those dates, it is highly unlikely that George would have been aware of their deaths at the time, since the Island was occupied by the Germans. We do not know whether he did contact Bois and Bois subsequently, but, it seems that he died not long after his mother, sometime during the third quarter of 1950, in the Tonbridge area of Kent, aged 54.

However, there is more information in the public domain on George Francis Le Vée, and it is in the shape of two service files held by the National Archive at Kew, although these have yet to be consulted (**Note:** I will be doing so when I can next visit Kew). The first file (AIR 791/871/96037) undoubtedly covers George's time in the RAF, and possibly his prior service with the RFC. The file's dates are from 1918 to 1928, although it is suspected that the later date is for some form of administrative closure. It is felt that the second file (WO 339/28135) may prove far more interesting as it is for 'Levee GF, Major' and has the covering dates of '1914-1922, 1932'. At first glance, one must question why, given that George resigned from the army in 1915, did the file remain open for so long, and, if it is one and the same man, why is he shown as a 'Major'? Of course the administrative staff may have simply become confused by the facts and fictions that constituted George's life.

George's story is undoubtedly fascinating, but what caused him to set out the way he did? It seems that, by early 1916, he had acquired for himself the upper/middle-class 'airs and graces' that allowed him to adopt the role of Staff Captain, and he continued the pretence of being an Officer in subsequent years. Would he have acquired that persona at home given that his father, at least, was a French speaker as were many in the wider family? There is a temptation to pooh-pooh the 'Old Etonian' reference, but, what if? By staying with Jane Huelin, might it be that he received a first-rate education?

He was sufficiently confident to present himself to the Hampshire Regiment in late-1914 or early-1915, at a time when young men with good backgrounds became officers with little more than a letter of introduction from some local dignitary or a highly placed army officer. Clearly a first class education would have helped, but we should not discount the possibility that such letters can also be forged. Could the illness that he later suffered from have been a convenient 'illness' to dispose of him administratively without the Battalion's dirty laundry being aired in public?

It is clear that many people were duped as he passed one dud cheque after another and, in the minds of many, well turned out, debonair and cultured British Officers would not have stooped so low as to committing such an offence. Would they? Yet, probably the most remarkable fact was that the RAF Commanding Officer in Constantinople appears to have blithely accepted the pack of lies regarding the crashed Handley Page at Thebes. Even out of professional curiosity would that CO not have looked at a map to see that Athens, with its established British Consular support, was much nearer to

Thebes than Constantinople? What of the fate of the supposed aircraft's crew, for it was of a size such that 'Squadron-Leader Mangay Coombs' would never have been flying it solo, DFC or no DFC?

Of course this account has depended on newspaper reports that may have been coloured somewhat, but for all the glamour implied with George being described as 'handsome and debonair, of fine physique and obviously cultured' and the kudos that attaches to being considered an 'international criminal', the bottom line was that he was a small-time confidence trickster with expensive tastes and a penchant for travel, and an unsuccessful one at that, given the frequency of George's stays in prisons. Where he was successful was in proving that 'the bigger the lie, the more it will be believed'. Nonetheless, he seems to have been a fascinating character and, if nothing else, worth writing about. Finally, given that he defrauded the Ionian Bank back in 1919, it would be interesting to see whether George Francis Le Vée should also be blamed for the current Greek Eurozone crisis! Now, that would really be a success!

(Note: Unfortunately, I have not found a picture of our 'handsome and debonair' George. Who knows, something may turn up as I will be passing this article for the JEP to use as they see fit).

Centenary Commemorations

Well, after my comments, in the last Editorial, regarding how the Great War might be commemorated in 2014 to 2019, we have had some progress.

First, Liz Walton has come forward to look at 'A History of the Bailiwick of Guernsey in the Great War'. This would be based on material that she had previously assembled (in true Blue Peter fashion) for a similar book, and she is currently looking at the outline for what might be produced.

Secondly, Daniel Benest has similarly volunteered to look at the updated 'Jersey Roll of Honour and Service', and has even had an article published in the JEP highlighting our ambitions in this task (see page 30). More importantly, he has been getting around the 'powers that be' to attract moral support. The final format has yet to be determined, but it is expected that it will be illustrated.

Hopefully, by the time that this Journal is released, there will have been some initial discussions with Jersey Post regarding the possible issue of commemorative stamps for each centenary year of the Great War. Others will undoubtedly have their views, but it does seem to me that the Great War was 'black and white', and there is so much in the availability of photographs of the time that could be used without resorting to colourful artwork.

Similarly, there are also discussions under way as to how 'A History of Jersey in the Great War' might come about. There should be more on this and our progress in the philatelic arena in the next Journal.

We have not addressed either a Roll of Honour and Service or issuing commemorative stamps for Guernsey as yet. Is there anyone who might like to volunteer for either task? Certainly the Roll of Honour task could capitalise on what has begun for Jersey, while the stamps task would be more 'political'. Who knows, joint stamp issues?

As a Reminder Have you got your Breathalyser With You?

Are you still planning to tour French battlefields or indeed are just planning to visit or drive through France on and after the 1st July of this year? Remember that you will be required by French law to carry a breathalyser in your car. Even though the fine is comparatively small at 11 euros (£9), I suspect that the French police will be buzzing around the exits of ports from St Malo to Dunkirk looking out for unsuspecting motorists with GB, GBG and GBJ plates! Check out the web, or if you are in France before then, visit the well-known hypermarkets who will have ample stocks of breathalysers costing around 1-2 euros.

CWGC Non-Commemorations

After their recent visit to the ICI, the CWGC are slowly progressing with the paperwork and working out what to do with each grave. In the case of John Helman for example, Liz Walton was advised that:

'You will be pleased to hear that our United Kingdom Area Office have informed us that the Private Memorial to AB Helman adequately commemorates the casualty and will be treated with a biocide in the normal way on the next trip by our contractors and they will also look at the lead lettering in detail to ensure that the name remains legible.'

With regards to submissions for commemorations, we've recently submitted the name of Edwin Godfray who we discovered features on the war memorial in St Martin, Jersey. He appears to have died at what was Lancashire's County Lunatic Asylum in Lancaster so it is hoped that his grave's location will not be too difficult.

Another name is that of Amant Ferret, but he appears to have been French whilst there is no reference to him in the SGA website.

Accepted

Norcott, Gerald *
Dustan, John
Cudlipp, Herbert
Blanchet, Jean
Warne, Alfred
Bailey, Alwyn C
Leopold, Archibald
Cheney, Walter A
Poingdestre, Alfred
Jouanne, Auguste F
Syvret, Edward H
Lihou, Joseph T
Le Breton, Wilfred J
Whittle, Thomas J D'A
Orange, Walter
Ellis, John
Asser, Verney – Non-CI

Accepted

Burton, Garnet C
Helman, John W
Le Noury, Walter
Logan, Lionel H
Ounan, Thomas P
Turner, William A
Mutton, Harold C *
Le Morzédec, Henri
Marquis, Jack H*
Lander, Charles HR *

Not Submitted

Syborn, George T
Raymond De Caen
Mourant, Sydney A
Surguy, Sidney

Pending

Pirouet, Charles A
Owen, Guy

TBA

Anderson, Frank B
Touzel, Walter H

Ferrer, Amant

Rejected

Adams, Frank H
Vibert, John E

With the CWGC

De Gruchy, Alfred
Rundle, Cubitt S
Godfray, Edwin de V

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

The Reverend Simon Stock Knapp

Subsequent to publishing the article about Father Simon Knapp in Journal 43, I shared its contents with a few chums from my local WFA branch, one of whom supplied the following snippet from the Naval and Military Press reproduction of O'Moore Creagh and Humphries': *'The VC and DSO Book: Distinguished Service Order 1916-1923'*:

'The Earl of Ypres (then Viscount French) unveiled a stained glass window to his memory in the Carmelite Church, Kensington, subscribed for by officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Irish Guards. Lord French said: 'Father Knapp was a credit to that sacred Order to which he belonged, and indeed to the whole Catholic faith throughout Christendom. He gained the esteem and sincere affection of the soldiers with whom he served''.

Unfortunately, I cannot date the event accurately, even by searching through the Times Digital Archive. However, Sir John French became Earl of Ypres on the 7th June, 1922. Implicitly therefore, the ceremony must have preceded that date. In the article I had referred also to Dozinghem being the site of Casualty Clearing Stations (CCS). At the time of his death, there were in fact three, numbered 4, 47 and 61. As with other units, the CCSs also maintained War Diaries, and having been given a copy of the page for the 1st August, 1917, of the 4th CCS, it details the various comings and goings of those who were injured, such as No 12 Army Train that evacuated 3 Officers, 44 Men and 78 Germans rearwards. The Diary sadly also lists those who died, and on that day, one Officer and 20 men would succumb to their wounds. Was the Officer that was referred to Father Knapp? At present this is not known without further research, for another six Officers also died and were buried at Dozinghem on the 1st August.

(As an aside, I have also received copies of maps of the time and an aerial photograph showing the layout of two of the CCS, the railway line and the embryonic cemetery. But, I have been asked not to go public with it, so the material cannot appear in the Journal).

Turning to the present day, following her recent trip to France and Flanders, and, as it turned out the UK, Elizabeth Morey wrote from New Zealand of a missed opportunity to visit the Carmelite Church:

'I have always been interested in the padres and read the article with a lot of interest and when I came to the mention of the Carmelite Church at Kensington, I realised that that was the very church I had tried to visit when I was in London only a week or two before getting the journal.

I stayed in a hotel in Kensington and just along the road there was the beautiful big church. I spotted it several times and on my last morning, a Sunday, I was determined to go to visit the church (I love churches). I walked around to Church Street and unfortunately there was a service going on, so I did not like to go inside. I was very disappointed but that's the way it goes. Then I get home and received your newsletter and lo and behold, you write about Father Knapp and the time he spent at the church'.

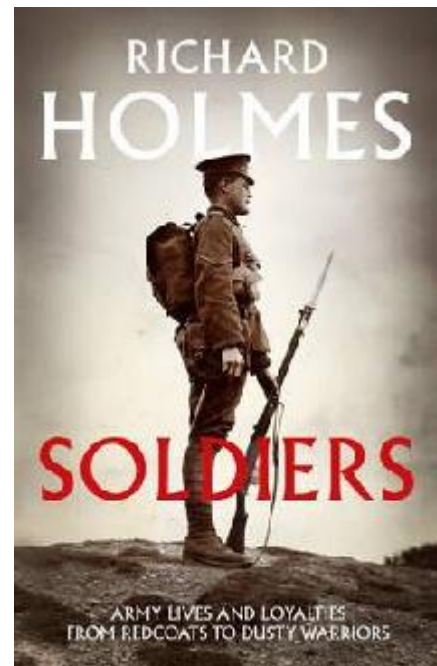
Timing is everything, and I am sure there are some of us who visit a place not realising that a particular site is near by, and only on returning home we are left saying 'If only I had...!' Elizabeth's account reminded me of the strange experience that I had about 3-4 years ago when heading to Kew. It was a Saturday, and I had arrived at Marylebone

Station intending to travel by tube all the way. Changing at Paddington I then discovered that the District (and the Circle) line was closed for engineering work, so that I could not make it to Earl's Court, and from there pick up the Richmond bound tube. The solution was to leave the station to catch a bus for Hammersmith where I could resume my tube journey westwards. The route took me along Kensington Church Street, where, although I was unaware of it at the time, I was passing the Church of Our Lady of Carmel and St Simon Stock and the Carmelite Priory. As I was doing so, I had a strange feeling that this was an area where there were associations with Jersey and the Great War, and that might be associated with my research. Of course it could be said that many places in London were visited by Jersey men and women, not least the city centre. All I can do is to repeat that I had this sensation.

Book Reviews

Soldiers By Richard Holmes (Harper Press, £25.00)

Like many, I am a great fan of the late Professor Richard Holmes who, in my view, brought a new understanding of the Great War to readers and television viewers alike. He was also an advocate for a better equipped, housed, and trained British Army, and combined the roles of military historian at the Army's Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and military man, the latter resulting in progression through the Territorial Army's ranks from Private to Brigadier. As is well-known, he died sadly, at the end of April last year, and this book was his final work, one that he completed while he was undergoing treatment for non-Hodgkins lymphoma.



Unfortunately I have to say that the book is not his finest work, and clearly his illness contributed to that. At some 600 pages in length, it started to lose its 'fizz' about mid-way through and drifted to an inconclusive end with the final chapters little more than vignettes of aspects of service life, depending on the many anecdotes that he had gleaned from a close association with soldiers in his dual careers.

Where the book does succeed is in presenting the soldier, whether it is the officer, the Senior NCO or the other rank, as a man apart, a member of a tribe that is somehow separate from society at large and not always understood in terms of that tribe's regimental traditions, behaviour, language and attitudes. These tribal foibles are not new. They have evolved over the last 350 or more years, and explain the book's subtitle of 'Army Lives and Loyalties from Redcoats to Dusty Warriors'. One would think of all members of a uniformed service as wearing the same uniform. Not one bit of it! As the author points out, the minute that the authorities decreed uniformity, so exceptions became the rule. To distinguish regiments from each other, Redcoats wore different coloured facings that lead to the Buffs and the Green Howards being so called, while the removal of pigtails was so despised by the Royal Welch Fusiliers that the flash, a set of five black ribbons, was introduced and still appears on uniforms today for members of the 1st Battalion, Welch Regiment. Apart from the more modern cap badges

and shoulder titles that distinguished units in both World Wars, many idiosyncrasies remain, not least the cherry red cavalry overalls of the 11th Hussars when in full dress.

The importance of regimental tradition being communicated to new men was vital, especially during the Great War when men who left 'blighty' on a draft to a Yorkshire regiment say, would find themselves moving out of Etaples to join the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This new identity soon saw a Tyke and the Jock defending their newly shared regimental honour in equal measure.

The book's starting point is, as in Allan Mallinson's 'The Making of the British Army, the English Civil War, but where Mallinson's book is chronological in terms of structure, 'Soldiers' is not, dealing with a topic in each Chapter, and only then coming up with a time line within. This enables far more anecdotes to be used amplifying the changes within the topics down the ages at a more detailed. Hoary old chestnuts such as 'Officers and their ladies, Senior NCOs and their wives, and Junior Ranks and their women' abound, and while amusing, one wonders whether there is an element of overkill in their use.

Richard Holmes points out that the military could struggle with the civilian population thanks to a language barrier. The need to maintain overseas garrisons brought about the use of native words that were absorbed into common civilian use or retained as part of 'mil-speak'. One wonders how many who read this will recognise which of 'ulu', 'dhobi', 'bundook', 'doolally', mufti' and 'dekko' are in common everyday use, while in the phrase 'I don't give a damn', the 'damn' as I discovered was 'dam' a small, almost worthless, Indian copper coin equating to a brass farthing. The alphabet soup that is used for military acronyms can also bubble over, and as can be seen, some acronyms, such as AWOL or POL can form the basis of pseudo-nouns or verbs (e.g. polling up), while others can be put to derogatory use as in the case of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps' RAOC standing for the Rag and Oil Company! Then, there is the topic of being able 'to swear like a trooper', but we will quickly move on!

As an ex-Serviceman reading the book, there was much that I could relate to from my own experiences, much that I had gleaned from other books and from the accounts of other military men, and surprisingly, it also provided a learning experience in that there was, to me, new information to absorb. But, I was left wondering whether those with no service background would similarly relate to what had been written, or whether it was too esoteric. Perhaps this is not an issue, for the book covers the period of 300 years before I enlisted (honest)!

The Great War, as in Allan Mallinson's work, is but a small part of the overall book, and is well covered in other books, some of which are quoted. But, the book does provide some context, although reference to topics such as the old practices of purchasing and equipping a Regiment, billeting and purchasing a commission, while interesting, are not relevant to the Great War. For that we need to look at 1881 and the Cardwell and Childers reforms, the building of barracks and depots in the county towns, when true county affiliations began.

While I have some reservations about his book, it is clear that Richard Holmes cared for Tommy and the British Army, regardless of how flawed the individual and the organisation may have been, is and could be, and one can sense his apprehension at the changes which are emerging as a result of the decisions of the UK government over

the last two years. In conclusion, I would suggest that it is a book to be borrowed as opposed to bought, unless one is a Richard Holmes enthusiast, and it would most certainly have been a far better work had he not been beset by illness. I would hope that someone will, at least, get it out of their local library, for I would certainly welcome having a second opinion. Though I must pass on a warning that the book occasionally reflects the coarseness of soldiery!

Chester Cecil Church

After the disappointment in discovering that the results from the Fromelles Identification Panel that met in late-March had not included Chester Church's name, I asked for feedback as to whether he had been considered. The answer was that he had not been, and for the simple reason that the DNA sample from the donor in New Zealand had arrived too late to be included as part of the batch of samples to be considered!

On one hand this was annoying as I had found two suitable donors a year ago, and both should have been asked to supply a DNA sample in true 'belt and braces' fashion! But, on the other hand, it means that the sample had not been rejected and that the case for Chester was still, if you will forgive the pun, very much 'alive'. In subsequent contact with the Australian and UK Ministry of Defence Project Teams, the forensic specialist and the family, the present situation is that DNA sampling kits will shortly be sent to the potential donors in the expectation that they shall arrive well before the cut-off date.

Incidentally, there will be a dedication ceremony at Fromelles at 7 pm on the 20th July, 2012 to commemorate the nine most recent Australians identified.

The Rows

The rows, so neat, so straight
the English grass, cut with care.
No weeds dare poke their unwelcome heads
between the cream stones of the fallen.
Close your eyes, can you see?
A man not a stone, standing there.

Some stand shoulder to shoulder with their neighbour
Others so crammed, they intertwine.
Some were willing others, not so.
On those open, devastated fields of Flanders
They were all equal as Death led them away.
Open your eyes and see the men, not the stone



Jon Frisby

Out and About

Looking Back: Late-April saw a number of the Group's members visiting France and Flanders with their paths criss-crossing the battlefields, and, I am pleased to say, have also provided Trip Reports. We kick off with Steve Bailey who arranged a tour for a few work colleagues to visit the battlefield at Loos and other sites over the weekend of the 27th to the 29th April. He writes:

'This was the eleventh year that a group from Lockheed Martin UK had visited France and/or Flanders. The trip kicked off with a rendezvous at the Ashford Tesco for a 'full English' before heading through the tunnel. There were four car loads in this year's convoy with thirteen attendees in total.

After we left the tunnel we headed to Arras for lunch and then set off to the German cemetery at Neuville-St-Vaast. This is the largest Great War German cemetery in France with a staggering total of 44,833 burials. In contrast to the more often visited Langemarck cemetery in Flanders, this one is immaculately kept and spread out of a large area. It is well worth a visit if you have not been there.



The entrance view to German cemetery at Neuville-St-Vaast

We then moved on to Vimy Ridge where we had a tour booked. Our guide was absolutely outstanding, a 19 year old History undergraduate who really knew her stuff. This is the second time some of us have taken the guided tour, but it always strikes me that the Canadian Government puts our own to shame in terms of the obvious pride it takes in the sacrifice shown by its soldiers and the commitment to maintaining the memories.



Pensively listening to our excellent Vimy Ridge guide

The night was spent in nearby Arras with the obligatory over indulgence that some of us should be old enough by now to avoid, so Saturday started with a few delicate heads amongst the group.

Our Saturday was spent in the company of Jacques (Jack) Ryckebosch from Flanders Battlefield Tours who gave us an excellent drive/walk tour of the Loos battlefield, complete with trench maps. We had specifically chosen this particular battle as it is less well known to us than the more obvious Somme, Passchendaele and Verdun battles. Our guide was both informative and very pleasant company, so we've pretty much decided we'll book him again next year for a guided tour of the Ypres Salient. This is home turf for Jack as he lives in Poperinghe and is a Last Post committee member.'



A cloudy view from the platform at Dud Corner cemetery across the Loos Battlefield

Steve's point about having Jack Ryckebosch as a guide to Loos is well-made. Very often one can miss the nuances of a particular battle, especially if it is one of the lesser well documented ones. Now, we turn to Roger Frisby who reports:

'I visited Flanders at the end of April for a short trip to the thirty-odd unvisited graves in that region. All but one now have headstone/memorial photographs attached to our two Rolls of Honour, the missing man being Thomas Pengelley who now lies in Wytschaete Military Cemetery. I can only blame myself for a "senior moment" as I had driven past the cemetery and had checked him off my list!

It was nice to see that many memorials and headstones had been cleaned or recut since my last visit.

Group member Elizabeth Morey was staying in Ieper with a New Zealand party to commemorate ANZAC Day. Although we didn't realise it at the time, we both attended the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate on the same evening. The New Zealand Veterans Band was playing and accompanied the singing of the New Zealand National Anthem. It was a very moving experience.

*This time, I was accompanied by my son on his first Great War visit. Jon found the experience so moving that, on the evening he returned home, he wrote a poem, “The Rows”, shown elsewhere in this edition (**Editor:** See page 14).*

A whistle-stop trip to Vimy, Notre Dame de Lorette, La Targette and Arras, in somewhat mixed weather, ended our visit, just time for moules frites on the Belgian coast before the ferry home!’



Looking down at Lens from the Canadian Memorial at Vimy



Larch Wood (Railway Cutting) Cemetery

Yes, there was mud too!

Roger's visit to Vimy clearly benefitted from a bout of good weather. As can be seen from the photograph on the previous page, Mount Kemmel, Mont des C ats and the Messines Ridge can be made out on the horizon to the left of the two slag heaps. Lastly we can read Elizabeth Morey's comments on her trip to the northern hemisphere:

'I am gradually getting my head above water after my trip to Paris, the Western Front and London. I am not sure what has happened to the time since I got back – trying to catch up on the mountain of paperwork at work, keying in my 40-odd page diary of my trip (ready for printing and binding and adding of entrance tickets and other bits and pieces I gathered along the way), and making a big start on our WFA branch newsletter to try and get it in the mail to everyone before our meeting at the end of June. But enough of those excuses!

*I am not sure if I have thanked you for emailing your horses' article (**Editor:** War Horsing Around – I am going international!) to me and for the photos that arrived more recently. The article is excellent and I've put it in the June issue along with two or three of your photos. Many, many thanks indeed for allowing me to reprint your article.*

My trip to your part of the world went fantastically well, except for the weather – which I won't talk about! But I decided that there was nothing I could do about a shower or two of rain, so just got on and enjoyed everything. After three days on the Somme, I had ANZAC Day at Ypres – starting with a 9.00am service at the Messines Ridge NZ National Memorial (there was hardly a dry eye for the whole of the lovely service), and we went to the Menin Gate for three nights in a row.

On the 24th April the ceremony was mainly taken over by the Australians, with about two little mentions of NZ – my beef about the Australians is that they don't seem to realise that the NZ in ANZAC stands for New Zealand! The next night, the 25th, was also an Aussie night at the Menin Gate but we managed to have three of our party lay a wreath.

However, the third night was all Kiwi – the NZ Veterans Band were touring France and Belgium, touring the battlefields and playing concerts along the way (including playing at the ANZAC Day service at Messines). They played two or three fantastic tunes and then two of our group (who are excellent singers from a choir) led the NZ National Anthem. It was worth going all that way just for those few days.

After that we were treated like royalty at Le Quesnoy for more ANZAC commemorations. I had a note from Roger during the week and it looks like we were both at the Menin Gate on the 26th April. I'd loved to have met him, but never mind.'

Well, I am disappointed in Elizabeth! After a sizeable English breakfast in Ashford, and then a plate of moules frites in Belgium, she could have treated us something from the menu in Paris!

Unfortunately, my RE Museum visit had to be scrubbed thanks to a stomach bug, while Kew is now on the back burner until after the 2012 Olympics.

Looking Ahead: A very quiet period ahead, possibly due to the London Olympics.

I will be in Bodmin until the end of June, and taking in the DCLI Museum at some stage.

Website Workings **By Roger Frisby**

The website's hits have now surpassed 26,000. Much of the recent activity has been encouraged by the appeal in the JEP from Daniel Benest resulting in more information and photographs of Jersey servicemen and women.

Work continues on the Guernsey Roll of Service. Trawling through 1914 and 1915 lists published in *La Gazette de Guernesey* and matching those names to available records has added many more names. I am now searching through service and pensions records using various search terms and this is uncovering many more, particularly men who served during the early years of the war. A visit to the National Archives must be made to view Royal Navy records as simple on-line searches of the index show many men of Guernsey birth who served. Unfortunately, the index does not show if they had wartime service. Guernsey Roll now lists approximately 5000 men and women.

A new item, 'Men of Sark' (see the article following), which was compiled by Jane Norwich is now available, thanks to her kind agreement, on our web site under 'Those who served'.

Names for Jersey's Rolls of Honour and Service are still emerging, surprisingly so for the former, while the next update for the Roll of Service will very likely appear in about two months time. The RN problem for Guernsey names exists for Jersey also, and it is anticipated that there are more names to be added from the same source.

Men of Sark **By Jane Norwich**

Editor: The following is from Jane Norwich, albeit lightly edited to suit the Journal:

'I feel the copyright is not mine, but belongs to the Men of Sark. All I have done is to search records, speak to older Sark residents and gradually put it together. It has been a bit of a challenge and sorting out which Jean Carré is which, was a considerable one. I just wanted each man who was prepared to serve to be remembered, not just by his initials and number, but by his name and his place in his family and here on Sark.

Every year Reg Guille (Seneschal) reads out the names and I wanted to know who they were, what did they do, did those who came home lead full lives? It just seemed right to get on and do something.

So feel free to use the data, all the information is evidence based, not opinion, I was told a few stories, but nothing that I can confirm, so I have stuck to facts. Incidentally I have come up with a few errors, the Eddie Parks' book has Jean Hamon (Janette) as I Hamon and the Guernsey Press article on the dedication of the Sark Memorial window, May, 1926, has several incorrect names.

Good luck with your continued work I am so glad that those who served in whatever capacity are remembered.'

Sark, like many parts of Britain, played its part in both world wars. In WW1 many men enlisted, both in the army and at sea. Many did not come home; their names are on the

memorial outside St Peter's. In WW11 Sark was occupied, one young man brought up on Sark did join up, but as the memorial attests he did not come home.

Who were these men? What did they do? Where did they live? Who were their families?

Questions often asked at the memorial, in church or in chapel. This booklet hopes to answer some of these questions. Every man who enlisted played their part whether their service was long or short, some paid the ultimate price, but each one was a part of Sark and is part of the history of Sark.

The age range of those that volunteered stretched from 18 to 39 years. Some men were single, others were married with children. In all over ten per cent of the entire population of Sark and therefore over fifty per cent of the adult male population volunteered to serve in WW1.

Hopefully all the men who volunteered are recorded here, it is impossible so many years after the conflict to be sure, but every endeavour has been made to ensure it is complete. The research has relied on official documentary sources as well as recollections and local history sources. Every effort has been made to ensure that all the entries are accurate, but any errors are the responsibility of the compiler.

Jersey Archive 'What's your Street Story' Talks

Jersey's Archive continues to hold these talks on Saturdays commencing at 10.00 a.m. The remaining programme throughout 2012 is as follows:

- 16th June - St Peter's Village
- 21st July - FB Fields
- 18th August - Springfield
- 15th September - Gorey Common
- 20th October - St Brelade's Bay
- 17th November - Bath Street

If you are looking to attend, you will need to book by ringing 01534 833300.

Jersey's Militia Pay Lists, 1914-1917

Work has started in converting the Pay List images into table form, and this activity is almost complete for the Militia's 1st Battalion from 1914 to 1917, showing that some 950+ men served in its ranks during the period, while it is obvious that there were a number of inter-company and inter-unit transfers. There are a few of cases of two men having the same regimental number, and this will be addressed. Along with this activity, reference to each man's British Army unit is being made as is his fate if he died, based upon the Rolls of Honour and Service, and there is a cross-check with the 1913 lists as well as 'Ancestry' data.

Hopefully, the first draft of the nominal roll (with warts and all) can feature on the website as part of a new, 20th Century, history of the Militia in a few months time with nominal roll for the other units being progressively added later on. But, we are talking of a year's project with this.

Faces Remembered



Sgt-Drummer George Clayden



Gnr Arthur Wallace Smith

There is something about photographs of young soldiers who have enlisted and are going off to war - they are always smiling! The first picture is of a very young 'Bonnie Hie'land Laddie' – Sergeant George John Clayden who died of his wounds at a CCS near Albert on the 21st January, 1917 while serving with the 2nd Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders. George's brother Albert, serving with the Regiment's 1st Battalion, had died some 20 months previously. Both boys were born in St Lawrence, but the Regimental connection came from their father who had been a Colour Sergeant with them, having served in Afghanistan (1878-1880) and by 1891 was attached to the 1st Battalion, RMIJ as a PS Instructor, living at St Lawrence's Arsenal and retiring in 1904.

Arthur Smith enlisted in the Army in March 1917, after the RMIJ had been suspended 'for the duration'. He served with a number of the RGA's Siege Batteries after a spell at Fort Brockhurst, Gosport. His service record is a little confusing, but he may have served in France. He certainly went to Italy, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Salonika before returning to England and being discharged in May, 1919.



Pte Alfred Marett

Arthur's service with the militia had commenced in August, 1914 and this was noted on his service records. He returned to being a shoemaker and repair in St Helier's Market Street.

Our final chap is Alf(red) J Marett of the Jersey Contingent who served with the Royal Irish Rifles only. He is somewhat glum, possibly because he has been a PoW for a year or more. His jacket has been newly issued while the picture appears to have been part of a group photograph, and one wonders whether it is of a number of PoWs just released. The JEP noted that a reception was given in the Town Hall for such a group in early 1919. We are told that:

'Alf survived the Great War at the expense of his health, at first on returning home he could only go outside after dark and each evening his father went out with him for a walk and gradually got him back together again and he worked on the docks for years. Alf never spoke of his experiences but from time to time when 'he'd had a few' would swear about the French!!!'

Undoubtedly it was a less than joyful homecoming, having to adjust after a difficult time in a camp which, as we have previously seen from the de-brief reports of other PoW, would not have gained too many Michelin stars!

Ronayne Writes

Writing: It has been a busy few months! Having rather rashly committed to completing two books by the end of 2011, I found myself at the start of this year with two incomplete books and two publishers anxious for their manuscripts, images, maps, etc. Negotiation, and a lot of sweat and tears, meant that my book based upon the journal of Great War Jersey soldier, Clarence Ahier, was finished (just about) in April, ready for publication by Pen and Sword on the 20th September this year. It is entitled: *'A Gunner's Great War: The experience of an artilleryman from the Somme to the Subcontinent'* (see page 31 for the cover). It is now on Amazon for pre-ordering.

My second book of 2012 is now complete, published and, as I write these words, about to hit the shops. *'Jersey War Walks'* contains twenty walks around the Island focused on its military and fortification history. This includes everything from the Iron Age to the Cold War, and includes the Great War, of course, with visits to sites such as Blanchés Banques Prisoner of War Camp and the Coastal Battery at South Hill. In addition, it visits memorials, graves and monuments where appropriate. While the relics of the Occupation and Napoleonic Wars feature more prominently, simply because of their sheer number, I have given the Great War equal prominence in the 'Brief History' section and elsewhere. It is priced at £7.95 while the publisher is Seaflower Books (see page 32 for the cover). See www.jerseywarwalks.com for more details.

With these two books almost out of the way, I am lining up two more writing projects.

Teaching: Among my other activities I have been running my Great War course at Highlands College. Talks are planned for De La Salle College in July.

Walks: May saw the Jersey Spring Walking Week, during which I led four walks: St Brelade's and Ouaisne Bays, St Ouen's Bay, Bouley Bay and Egypt and St Catherine's Bay. I covered the full spectrum of military history as always.

Trips and Tours: Preparation is in hand for the Go Tours tour to France and Belgium this coming September to, people may recall, take in the Channel Islands' Great War battlefields such as Guillemont, Ginchy and Les Rues Vertes.

On the Second World War front (**Editor:** Moonlighting on the wrong war!), I organised and led the Jersey Normandy Veterans' Association trip to Normandy in May. It was my third trip of this nature, and included visits to Utah Beach, Sainte Mère Église and Arronanches. The highlight of the trip was the veterans marching across the famous Pegasus Bridge (see below) accompanied by the Band of the Island of Jersey ... in the pouring rain! The weather aside, it was an emotional moment that was worth getting wet for. I am back in Normandy in June with the Go France trip.



Finally, I was also engaged in May as a guide for a group of Canadians who were visiting Jersey, mainly to view its Second World War history, but made a point of also visiting the graves of three Great War Canadian soldiers buried in Jersey. The three were all Jerseymen who had emigrated prior to the war and then came back to Europe as volunteers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. They died of wounds or illness, either in Jersey or the UK and were buried in the island by their families. During my time with the visitors, we went to La Hougue Bie, La Rocque, Gorey and St Catherine. We also visited the Great War memorial at Haute de la Garenne, so that they received the full picture.

Infantry Record Offices

The British Army was a sizeable enterprise during the Great War, one that required an administrative 'tail' that was impossible for the War Office in Whitehall to handle by itself. When one considers, as in this article, the infantry, that there were some 1761 Battalions, either already in existence, or formed for the duration of the war. Multiply that figure by a thousand, and allowing for the turnover resulting from the casualty rate and wastage from various other causes, one can project that the figure for infantrymen will well exceed two million men and more!

While the War Office undoubtedly dealt with the strategic considerations and demands that a world war needed to be addressed, the armies on the various fronts such as in France or Mesopotamia considered the operational matters. The Battalions themselves would have to face the daily needs of waging war. Yet men had to be administered. Some of the administration, such as the issue of pay, leave passes, promotions, medal awards, courses and discipline was clearly done at Battalion level, while the higher

formations such as a Brigade or Division would only deal with the 'exceptions to the rule' that were beyond the Battalion's scope or authority, e.g. in approving and forwarding honours or instigating disciplinary measures for serious offences. Of course, a higher formation could be a pain in the derrière with a request in the early hours of the morning seeking to establish the answer to the apocryphal 'How many pairs of boot laces are there in the QM Stores?' But that was not the administration of men *per se*, rather that it reflected the focus on ensuring that units could function operationally. (For want of a nail...!).

Somewhere in-between these organisations came the Infantry Record Offices (IRO), and in them we would find another army, one that consisted of the much maligned 'pen-pushers'. These were located throughout the United Kingdom (that then included all of Ireland) as is shown on the tables on pages 28 and 29. As can be seen, the IRO were located in towns and cities that might be considered regional centres such as Exeter in the south west of England or Warley in East Anglia. Furthermore, their remit was to look after the records for those Regiments, following the 1881 reforms, which recruited in the 'region'. Thus the IRO in Lune Street, Preston, for example, looked after the Regiments centred on Bury, Carlisle, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, and Preston itself. It made sense organisationally, and the staff would have 'known the patch'.

Now, even with the spread of effort, the IROs were dealing with upwards of 150,000 men and some cases many more. For each man, each form or piece of paper that, in some way made reference to him, was retained from the time that he enlisted in the army until the day that he left it, dead or alive! Indeed, and beyond! We can gauge what many of these forms were like when we leaf through some of the better populated files on 'Ancestry'. Attestation, Medical History, Casualty Returns, Changes of Marital Status and Next of Kin (NOK), Record of Service, Discharge Papers, and much more were added as necessary.

I am sure that we've experienced poor administration where we have been employed or from civil servants of one shade or another. However our 'much maligned 'pen-pushers'' had an important role, one, that if they performed it badly, affected the morale of the men that they supported. Clearly they depended upon information from numerous sources, not least from the man himself. But consider the effort when a group of men, who had left the UK as serving in the Dorsets, were now transferred to the KRRC on arriving at an Infantry Base Depot (IBD) in France. In that example, two IROs would be involved once the information had been provided them. Communication between the various organisations must have been continuous, and particularly urgent if men were killed, wounded or sick, enabling the NOK to be informed as soon as possible.

For present day researchers, Medal Index Cards and their associated Medal Rolls are among the most frequently used documents that had been compiled by the IROs. The Rolls are sizeable, that for the Dublin IRO covering just four Regiments (69 Battalions of which 18 were Reserve Battalions) for example, consists of around 9000 pages, and that is just for the British War and Victory Medals. To that can be added another 1800 to 2000 pages for the Silver War Badge Rolls, and one would guess another 1000 for the 1914 and 1914-14 Stars.

These figures are approximate, but they imply a considerable amount of effort when multiplied by the number of IROs and Battalions, but even then there is more, for each entry meant the raising of an Index Card to note the man's name, number, regiment and

so forth, and then cross-referring to his entry in the Medal Roll. Consider the Jersey Contingent's RSM Jack D Le Breton as our example, the Index Card notes that his BWM/VM entry is to be found in B/104B6/744 where it refers to the Dublin IRO ('B'), the Volume and the Page Number.

The IROs were in existence prior to the Great War, but given the Army's expansion from 1914, they would have been forced to take on extra staff, while there would not have been a computer in sight! They were not alone in their task, as the Cavalry, the RASC, the Labour Corps and the others all had their own Record Offices too. If we had seen them in full flow we would probably understand their work even better, but we can only judge from what has been placed in the National Archive and on Ancestry. Perhaps the next time that we encounter a bureaucrat we might appreciate what they do for us?

What can you Say?

English Atmospheric: While trying to plug gaps in Jersey's Roll of Service, I came across Peter Le Bredonchel's Pension Appeal where, after service of just 237 days in the Wiltshire Regiment, he had complained of eye problems. A former farm labourer, who would be returning to that occupation on discharge, he attributed this problem to the wind and the atmosphere of England! One can think of the many impolite phrases that may have been used in reply!

Not to be Transmitted: Where they exist, service records are a 'warts and all' picture of a soldier and his service. But in a case of 'no names, no pack drill', resulting from efforts to find out more about an individual's Great War ancestors, it was intended that a copy of the service record be forwarded to the family. Until, of course, it was noticed that the soldier had been errant and had contracted gonorrhoea!

Then and Now



Mounting guard at General Haig's Headquarters. 1918.



Montreuil-sur-Mer (30th June, 2007)



Mark Bougourd reminded me of the RGLI Guard of Honour drawn up in the square at Montreuil sur Mer in 1918, and, in particular, the presence of the Corps of Drums drawn up behind the Guard. The Guard is facing eastwards, and looking at the shadows behind the men, it is clearly fairly early, between 07.00 to 08.00 say, on an Autumn day. As to the reason that they are parading, it is likely that they were there to greet Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig at the start of 'another day at the office'. His rank meant that the Guard would be ordered to 'Present Arms' while the Corps played the appropriate music. Now, I am not sure whether it would be a Royal Salute, whereby a few bars of the National Anthem would be played, given that as the C-in-C he was, *de facto*, the King's representative, or that the lesser General Salute was played instead? Does anybody know?

The more recent picture of Montreuil-sur-Mer, taken when the Saturday market was being cleared away was probably shot from a spot just a few yard's to the Guard Commander's right and facing the Guard. All of this took place under the steady gaze of the Field-Marshal's statue! The buildings remain, albeit that there are more Mansard roofs on display.

Odds and Ends

Administrative Matters: As ever, it would be of help if changes to Members' Email addresses are notified as they occur. This will enable me to keep the distribution lists up to date and for members to receive prompts on particular matters. I have been notified of a few changes recently, so thanks to those members.

Centenary Commemorations, a quick final word: Since putting the item together (on page 9), it has become very apparent that the article in the JEP has generated a considerable amount of interest with States politicians, civil servants and the heritage community alike. Furthermore, descendants are coming forward with information, photographs as well as questions, which is enabling both them and us to learn. Hopefully, we will have much more to report in the next Journal.

Edwin de Vismes Godfray: A letter from the CWGC today, acknowledging our letter asking for war grave recognition (see page 10). They have now passed the paperwork to the MoD. The Lancashire Records Office has also been contacted as to the related County Asylum records and an answer is awaited.

Enfin

As ever, my thanks goes to those who contributed to this Journal for their inputs, both large and small.

I have been concerned with this Journal that it may have been a little light-weight in terms of intellectual content and somewhat 'itsy-bitsy', while regular contributors may be suffering from article fatigue. So, if you haven't managed to write up something this time, there is always the next Journal that is waiting for that article from you, and new contributors will be most welcome, as will be the prodigal son!

Regards
Barrie H Bertram
13th June, 2012

Journal Issue Dates For 2012

Planned issue dates for 2012 are shown below:

Issue	Month	Articles To BB	Posted Web/Mail
42	February 2012	10 th	15 th
43	April 2012	10 th	20 th
44	June 2012	10 th	15 th
45	August 2012	10 th	15 th
46	October 2012	10 th	15 th
47	December 2012	10 th	15 th

As in previous years I will advise if there are any changes for individual issues as each publication date approaches.

Infantry Record Offices

<p><u>A-Cork</u></p> <p>Royal Irish Regiment 18 Connaught Rangers 88 Leinster Regiment 100 Royal Munster Fusiliers 101</p>	<p><u>E-Hounslow</u></p> <p>Queens Regt. 2 East Kent Regt. 3 East Surrey Regt. 31 Royal Sussex Regt. 35 Royal West Kent Regt. 50 Middlesex Regt. 57 Cyclist Corps Kent Cyclist Battalion</p>	<p><u>H-Preston</u></p> <p>King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regt. 4 Kings (Liverpool) Regt 8 Lancashire Fusiliers. 20 East Lancashire Regt. 30 Border Regt. 34 Loyal North Lancashire Regt. 47 Manchester Regt. 63</p>
<p><u>B-Dublin</u></p> <p>Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers 27 Royal Irish Rifles 83 Royal Irish Fusiliers 87 Royal Dublin Fusiliers 102</p>	<p><u>F-Lichfield</u></p> <p>Lincolnshire Regt. 10 Leicestershire Regt. 17 South Staffordshire Regt. 38 Notts & Derby Regt. 45 North Staffordshire Regt. 64</p>	<p><u>J-Shrewsbury</u></p> <p>Cheshire Regt. 22 Royal Welch Fusiliers. 23 South Wales Borderers 24 South Lancashire Regt. 40 Welsh Regt. 41 King's Shropshire Light Infantry 53 Monmouth Regt*</p>
<p><u>C-Exeter</u></p> <p>Devon Regiment 11 Somerset Light Infantry 13 Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry 32 Hampshire Regiment 37 Dorset Regiment 39 Wiltshire Regiment 62</p>	<p><u>G-Perth</u></p> <p>Black Watch. 42 Seaforth Highlanders. 72 Gordon Highlanders. 73 Cameron Highlanders. 79 Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders. 91 Highland Cyclist Battalion.</p>	<p><u>CI – Guernsey</u></p> <p>Royal Guernsey Light Infantry Royal Jersey Garrison Battalion</p>
<p><u>D-Hamilton</u></p> <p>Royal Scots 1 Royal Scots Fusiliers 21 Kings Own Scottish Borderers 25 Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 26 Highland Light Infantry 71</p>		

<p><u>K-Warley</u></p> <p>Norfolk Regt. 9 Suffolk Regt. 12 Bedfordshire Regt. 16 Essex Regt. 44 Northamptonshire Regt. 48 Cambridgeshire Regt* Hereford Regt* Huntingdonshire Cyclist Battalion Non-Combatant Corps.</p>	<p><u>M-Winchester.</u></p> <p>King's Royal Rifle Corps 60 Rifle Brigade 95</p>	<p><u>TP-London</u></p> <p>Royal Fusiliers 7 Honourable Artillery Company* London Regiment* Royal Defence Corps.</p>
<p><u>L-Warwick</u></p> <p>Royal Warwickshire Regiment 6 Gloucestershire Regiment 28 Worcestershire Regiment 29 Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry 43 Royal Berkshire Regiment 49</p>	<p><u>O-York</u></p> <p>Northumberland Fusiliers. 5 West Yorkshire Regt. 14 East Yorkshire Regt. 15 Yorkshire Regt. 19 West Riding Regt. 33 King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 51 Yorkshire & Lancashire Regt 65 Durham Light Infantry. 68 Northern Cyclist Battalion.</p>	<p><u>TBA</u></p> <p>Hertfordshire Regt*</p> <p><u>Notes</u></p> <p>* Territorial Force Units</p>

NEWS

Relatives asked to help draw up Great War roll of honour

ISLANDERS who sacrificed their lives in the First World War are to be remembered in a comprehensive roll of honour that will be published to mark 100 years since the war ended.

And relatives of those who died in the service of their country between 1914 and 1918 are being asked to provide the Channel Islands Great War Study Group, which plans to compile the list, with more details about their ancestors.

Men and women who died serving in the British, French and even the German military are eligible for inclusion on the Jersey Roll of Honour – provided they or at least one of their parents were born in the Island, or if they married an Islander. Daniel Benest, who is helping to co-ordinate the project, said that it

By Holly Robertson

hrobertson@jerseyeveningpost.com

was a 'work in progress' that could take a few years.

He said: 'The date we have in mind [for publication] is the centenary of the Armistice on 11 November 1918, so we are trying to make as many people with Jersey connections as possible aware of the project.'

Information

Not only is the group trying to collect information about those who died in the war, but they also hope to update their records on people who survived military service.

Currently, there are 1,618 names on the Jersey Roll of Honour and 7,139 names on the Roll of Service.

Mr Benest said: 'The actual donkey work – 98 per cent of it – is done, it's just dotting the I's and crossing the T's, which is the hard bit.

'The families may have knowledge of personal details which if we were to try and research may pass us by.'

Mr Benest explained that the States had printed a Jersey Roll of Honour in 1919, however he said that its hasty compilation had led to a number of omissions.

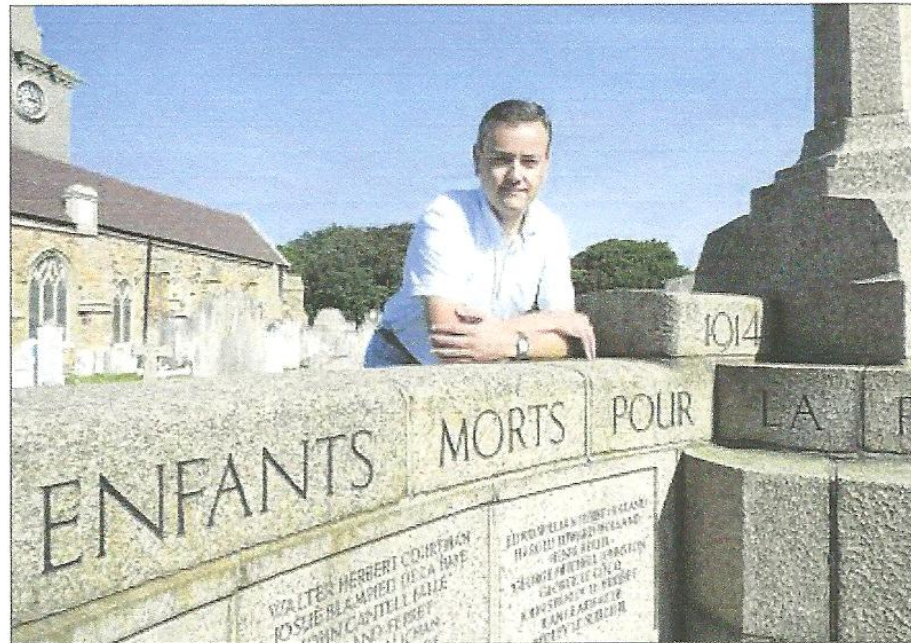
'People wanted to move and forget about it – it was the war to end all

wars and they wanted to move on with their lives so it was inevitably going to be a rush job,' he said.

To provide details of an Islander who served in the First World War, register online at www.greatwarci.net or email danielbenest@hotmail.com.



It is hoped the project will be complete in time for the centenary of the Armistice on 11 November 1918



Ian Ronayne and other members of the Channel Islands Great War Study Group have completed '98 per cent' of the work of compiling the Jersey Roll of Honour and Roll of Service

Born in 1966, IAN RONAYNE was raised and educated in the island of Jersey. Now married with two children, he divides time between the demands of family, work, and an abiding passion for history.

Some years back, this interest moved on to the First World War and more specifically on Jersey's participation in that terrible conflict. Today, Ian's research of Jersey in the First World War continues alongside further writing projects.

Jacket design: Jon Wilkinson

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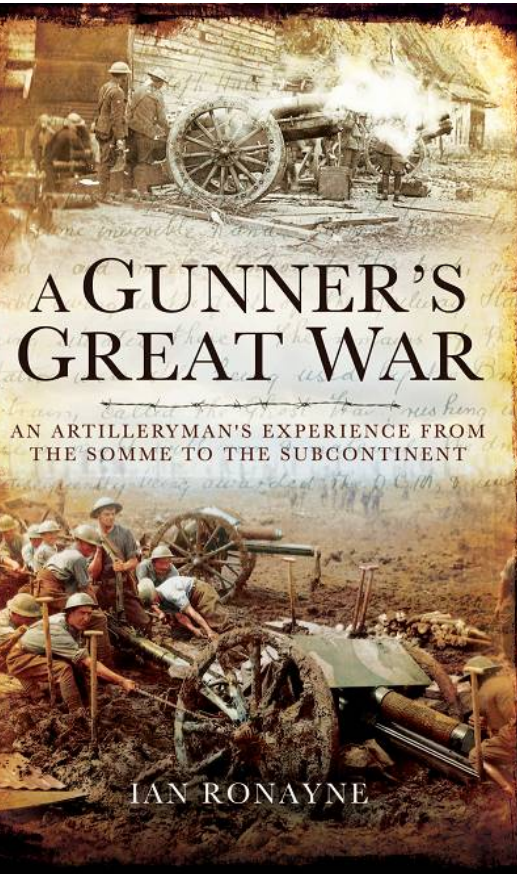


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A GUNNER'S GREAT WAR

AN ARTILLERYMAN'S EXPERIENCE FROM THE SOMME TO THE SUBCONTINENT

IAN RONAYNE

If the First World War had not happened when it did, Channel Islander Clarence Ahier would almost certainly have led a mostly unremarkable life. But it did, and in October 1915, aged just 23-years-old, Clarence left his home and volunteered to join the British Army. He would spend the next two and half years serving as an artilleryman on the Western Front.

Now this in itself is not remarkable - millions of other young men did the same thing. But Clarence Ahier did do something remarkable, and it was something to set him out from almost all his contemporaries. From the very beginning of his time at the front, he wrote a graphic and moving account of his experiences of war.

Clarence's ultimate plans for his meticulously written journal are unknown. But having lain unnoticed for years, it was recently discovered in a collection of dusty ephemera handed to a local history society.

The complete journal consists of around 25,000 words, with a focus on Clarence's experience during the Battle of the Somme, in the fighting around Ypres, and, after he was wounded for the second time, the journey to India and his time there as a member of the garrison. This will be supported by additional explanatory text.

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Although lying much closer to France than to England Jersey has owed allegiance to the British crown since 1204. Unsurprisingly, the Island is ringed with defences against an invader from Continental Europe.

In fact, there are the remains of defensive earthworks which go back to the prehistoric era though most of what is readily visible dates from later times such as the Elizabethan age and the English Civil War. But perhaps most notable was the period spanning the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a time when the Channel Islands were coveted by Napoleon's expansionist regime. Jersey's impressive Martello towers were constructed then, the majority of which survive.

Perhaps more obvious and certainly more commonplace are the extraordinary number and variety of fortifications thrown up by the German occupiers during World War 2, many of which have been restored in latter years by the Channel Islands Occupation Society and are more accessible today than they have been since 1945.

Yet *Jersey War Walks* does not focus on the Nazi period to the exclusion of all else. Local author Ian Ronayne is equally knowledgeable about the First World War (indeed, he is the author of a much acclaimed book on that period – *'Ours': The Jersey Pals in the First World War, 2009*).

In this book, the author presents some 20 routes which lead you round the beautiful Island of Jersey and offers you much fascinating background concerning the evidence of the Island's often turbulent history.



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