

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**8<sup>th</sup> January 2013**

### **Repatriation Files, Witness Statements and Alien Cards open to the Public at Jersey Archive**

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 Jersey Heritage opened over 200 new records to the public for the first time. The records have been closed to public access for periods of 30, 75 and 100 years and include details of the criminal misdemeanours of some of our ancestors, admission registers from the General Hospital and details of people being repatriated to the Island at the turn of the century.

The records are all stored at the Jersey Archive and are now freely available for members of the public to consult.

Stuart Nicolle, Senior Archivist said 'Every year Jersey Heritage opens more documents for people to come and view at the Archive. Whilst many of our documents are open to public access from the moment they arrive at the Archive, some files with sensitive personal data are closed for a certain period of time to protect individuals privacy.'

He continued 'The files that have been opened in 2013 allow us to discover some fascinating personal stories and also show us the changing nature of welfare, crime and punishment in our society.'

#### **General Background**

Many of the records date from 1912 - a year in which the Titanic struck an iceberg, the Olympic Games took place in Stockholm and tension was rising in Europe with the First Balkan War and Italo-Turkish War taking place.

Locally St Paul's Church was consecrated, there was severe flooding at Tesson Mill and doctor's went on strike at the General Dispensary and Infirmary.

#### **Repatriation Files**

Records opened for the first time in 2013 include a file from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor relating to repatriations of citizens to the Island. When Islanders travelled abroad and found themselves in financial difficulty they would call upon the local British Consul for assistance. The British Consul would then write to the Lieutenant Governor asking if the local authorities were willing to help.

There were a lot of applicants who were fraudulent and were not actually native to Jersey who demanded assistance. However, parish officials were always quick to deny these access to relief.

In the late 1800s some local boys had been sent to an Orphanage in France. They were later found to have been kept in particularly poor conditions. When the Consul asked for money to repatriate them local officials were reluctant to help and the funds had to be raised by a charity. The Home Office did not appreciate the Island's reluctance to help those for which they had responsibility and issued a rebuke to them.

In 1898 the Southampton Poor House complained that a girl called Emma Le Marquand had been sent to them from Jersey. Emma was born in Southampton in 1867 and was the daughter of Francis Le Marquand, a Jerseyman, and his wife Frances. Emma moved to Jersey with her family when she was 8 where they had lived for 22 years.

In 1898 Francis was taken in to the Hospital for Poor relief as was Emma, but the local authorities, seeing that she had been born in Southampton, decided to send her out of the Island. The authorities in Southampton quickly demanded that she be sent back and the local authorities acceded to these wishes.

Islanders left Jersey for all sorts of reasons but Joseph Renault and William Charles Cummins had a couple of interesting ones. In 1899 Renault joined up with a circus that was due to travel around France. Unfortunately the circus, run by an Englishman called Randall, did not succeed and Renault was discharged without money or any means to return home at Gavray, France.

Similarly the following year William Charles Cummins went to France with a travelling circus and when leaving was forced to ask for assistance to return to the Island from St Malo. The parish agreed to pay their fare home.

### **Witness Statements in Criminal Cases**

Records opening for the first time in 2013 include details of witness statements in criminal cases from 1912. The witness statements in 39 cases that came before the Courts have been kept and give us valuable evidence of the crimes committed during this period. Crimes from 1912 include those accused of theft, serious assault, dangerous driving, vagrancy, prostitution and running a brothel.

In 1912 Jean Marion, a native of France, was arrested by Centenier Vigot of St Helier. On 3 October 1910 John married Rita de Mouilpied at the Registrar's Office. The problem was that he had already married Annie Lanning in Fethard, Ireland 4 years previously, under the name John Allen.

When they had married he was serving as a driver in the Royal Field Artillery before moving back to Sheffield to start a new life together. Unfortunately John left after the birth of their second child.

She did not hear anything from him until 1911 when he wrote to ask to become part of his life once more. However, she was soon to learn that in the meantime he had got married again and demanded justice. John had moved to Guernsey with Rita, a native of the Island. Once he was brought back to Jersey he was convicted of bigamy and was sentenced to 12 months hard labour, a fine of £1 and 5 years banishment from the Island.

In 1912 St Helier was not the salubrious place that we see today. In January Alice Francoise Ficamus was charged with soliciting in Library Place. In December the honorary police uncovered an even larger crime.

They spotted a lady coming out of 31, Hilgrove Street, part of Boots today, carrying a couple of bottles of beer. They decided to investigate further and going in to the house found 96 bottles of beer, 236 bottles of cider, 128 bottles of wine, 6 bottles of cognac and 3 bottles of rum.

Emile Dubée and Marie Le Bozec were found to be selling alcoholic drinks without a licence and to be running a brothel.

A daring heist took place in Green Street in February. However, the participants were not as clever as they thought. On the night of 26 February William Edward Le Bas, Walter Gallichan and Clifford Charles Walker broke into a shop ran by Ann Street Brewery.

They proceeded to steal 2 bottles of cognac, 3 bottles of gin, 3 bottles of port, 2 bottles of rum and 40 packets of cigarettes. When they were caught they tried to beg their innocence but were soon found out.

The saying, "There is no honour amongst thieves", proved particularly apt in this particular case. After a few weeks Les Bas reported to police that, "I have been laid in a trap by those two scoundrels."

He told the centenier that Walker had written a note to him in prison. The letter is actually included in the witness statements and says,

*"Now the best thing for us to do is to see if they have found out any more about us and if they haven't you say it was you done it Bill. And that you was dead drunk at the time. And we will say that you gave us the fags and we played Cards for them...You will get off with a month, and be out in time to meet your girl. But if we say that we three were in it he will send us before the Royal Court. And we will be in here until May when we will be found Guilty and get one year each. It would not do for us to say any of us done it, we would get too much as we have been had before. But you have never been had for pinching, so you will get off very light."*

Sure enough Walker's predication came true and they were all sentenced to 12 months hard labour for the crime.

### **Aliens Cards**

The Jersey Archive holds over 4000 'aliens' registration cards. In 1914 the British Parliament passed the Aliens Restrictions Act, limiting the movement of foreign nationals into the UK and the Isle of Man as well as ensuring that such people would be monitored whilst in the country. However, the act did not cover Jersey, and by 1919 it was considered urgent to take steps to prevent Jersey being used as a back door for foreign nationals trying to enter the UK. The principal points of the 1914 law were adopted by the island in an act of the States dated 17 February 1920.

The law stated that all aliens over the age of sixteen resident in Jersey had to register with an Immigration Officer, who was obliged to keep an up-to-date list of all aliens living in the island. This was kept in the form of a card for each person. Information on each card includes name, address, date and place of birth, nationality, occupation, date of arrival in the island and last country of residence. The cards also include a signature or left thumbprint and most interestingly for researchers, a photograph.

The aliens' registration cards, due to the personal nature of the information they contain, are closed for 100 years from the date of birth of the individual. This means that at the beginning of each year we open the next set of cards for researchers to access.

Cards open in 2013 include that of Antonio Francesco Asta, an Italian waiter who came to the Island just before the start of the Occupation and worked at a variety of different hotels, including Hotel de Normandie, the Continental Hotel and Portelet Hotel before being naturalised in 1950.

Also Jan Kucera a native of Prague who came to the Island in 1936 to serve as a waiter at the Aberfeldy Hotel and later the Hotel de la Plage before leaving the Island in order to enlist with the British Army to serve in the Second World War.

The card for Marie Schneider has also been opened. She was born in Austria and came to Jersey in 1935 to serve as a maid for, among others, Lady Trent. As many other Austrians, her nationality has been changed on her card to German in December 1938, before gaining British nationality by marrying Fred George Woodhall in April 1939.

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