

# Who do you think you are?

The public misconception of archives as big buildings full of dusty documents, ancient ledgers and shelf upon shelf of piles of paper could not be further from the truth. A recent BBC Television series has proved that archives are places where family trees grow. The team at Jersey Archive reveal just how much satisfaction they get from helping people to trace their roots.

## The Jersey Archive

JERSEY ARCHIVE IS MUCH more than the Island's repository of official and private documents.

Between the lines scribed on records in States, parish, church, business and individual collections lie the stories of Islanders, from community leaders to ordinary souls who, as they went about their business hundreds of years ago, could never have imagined that in the future their deeds would form part of the rich tapestry of Jersey's social history.

In association with the Channel Islands Family History Society, the award-winning Archive in Clarence Road has established itself as the first port of call for historians, researchers and professional and amateur genealogists.

The huge worldwide interest in genealogy was illustrated in the second series of BBC Television's *Who Do You Think You Are?* series screened over the winter.

The Channel Islands featured yet again when actress Sheila Hancock's search ended in St Peter Port as her great, great, great-grandmother, ground-breaking merchant woman Ann-Judith Zurhorst, retired from London to Guernsey in the 1840s.

Jersey Archive was involved in the first series when archivists helped *Have I Got News For You* star Ian Hislop to

find out more about his mother and grandfather who lived in Jersey through the Occupation.

It does not matter whether those interested in genealogy are household names or the average person in the street, everyone who sets out to trace the lives of their ancestors is likely to find the experience a life-changing one. By delving into the past anyone can learn more about themselves and the individuals who were part of their history. Usually a fascinating tale or two pops up and unresolved questions emerge to be answered.

### Anna's story

The Archive, like all repositories of official documents and personal records, is the best place to start and it is one of the archivist's greatest pleasures to help to unravel family mysteries.

The BBC2 series inspired the Archive Assistants to undertake an exercise to show how easy it is to make those first shoots appear on a family tree. They focused on 19th-century Islander Anna Esther Boudier and then set about tracing her ancestors, their lives, relationships and the houses in which they lived. Anna's story has its own unresolved questions and mysteries, but in looking at the records held at the Archive the staff were able to piece together a picture of her life.

Church records reveal that Anna was baptised at the Town Church on 5th April 1835. She was the only child of Josué Boudier and Anna Bishop. Josué died within a year or two and his wife remarried at St Clement's Church on 11th March 1838.

### Church records

Church of England records are a vital source of family history information, especially before the civil registration of births, marriages and deaths became statute in the UK in 1837 and in Jersey in 1842.

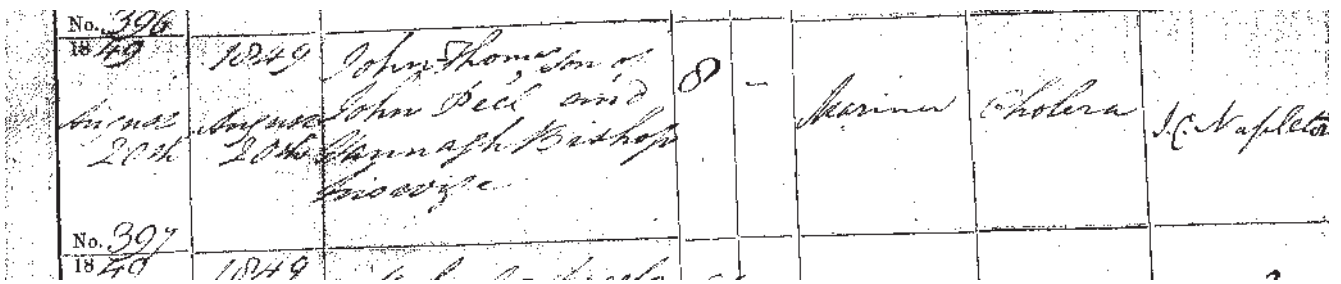
When researching further back, genealogists have to rely on church records, as baptisms, marriages and burials have been recorded since 1538. Jersey's earliest surviving register comes from St Saviour's Church and is dated 1540. The early registers of all Jersey's parish churches are held at the Archive and, following conservation by Archive staff, those dated before 1842 have been transcribed and have been indexed by the Channel Islands Family History Society.

The Anglican Church records show that Anna's stepfather was John Peele, an ornamental painter born in St George's Parish, Middlesex.

Anna was not an only child for long. The family soon grew. In 1839 Maria Grace was born, followed by John Thomas in 1841 and five years

NO. 1034	La dite. Mère	Marraine		
Avril 5	Anna, Esther, fille de	Josué, et de Anna, Bishop, sa femme	Boudier	Marraine
No. 1635	Le dit. Père Elixa Bishop	Marraine		

Entry of baptism for Anna Esther Boudier



Entry of burial for John Thomas Peele, half-brother of Anna Esther Boudier

later by James Joseph. The 1841 census listed Anna residing at 25 King Street with her mother, stepfather and half-sister.

### The changing face of Jersey

Anna's childhood coincided with a period of unprecedented growth and great social change. After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, Europe enjoyed a period of peace, which lasted till the second half of the century. Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars many army and navy officers retired to Jersey. At the other end of the social scale, English, Irish and Scottish labourers came to work on large capital projects such as the harbour improvements. By 1837 the population had doubled and new roads and properties were built to accommodate the boom.

The growing population of St Helier and the poor quality of water supplies led to a series of cholera epidemics. In 1832, there were 787 recorded cases and 341 deaths in ten weeks. These epidemics underlined the need for a palatable water supply and public sewers. During the second cholera epidemic of 1849, the Health Committee kept daily cholera returns, indicating who was infected and who died. Sadly, Anna's half-brother, John, was one the fatalities.

### Census data

The census records are also a vital source of information for genealogists. The first UK decennial census was taken in 1801, but it was another 40 years, in 1841, before the census gave details of names and addresses of

individuals. It is the first census available on microfilm at the Archive. Through the ten-yearly census returns it is possible to plot the movement and growth of families over a period of 60 years up to and including 1901, the census most recently opened for public access. The returns are a mine of information for all sorts of historians but are closed to public access for 100 years as they contain personal information – which is frustrating for family historians.

In the 1851 census Anna is recorded as being a boarder at Valpy's school at 30 Union Street, St Helier. Interestingly, her stepfather was by then living alone in London and there is no trace of Anna's mother and siblings either in the Channel Islands or the UK. The Archive Assistants have assumed that the death of young John may have prompted a move and that the rest of the family may have

been in transit and fell through the official net. This left 16-year-old Anna living in Jersey with no obvious trace of her mother and half-siblings.

### 1861 Census

The 1861 census recorded Anna still living at Valpy's boarding school but she was described then as a governess. Valpy's school was probably one of a number of Dame schools – small private establishments, many of which were run exclusively for girls – operating in Jersey in the second half of the 19th century. Five unmarried sisters ran Valpy's and in 1861 they had four boarders and one schoolmistress.

The Archive Assistants continued to use the census records to track Anna's life. By 1871 she had left Valpy's and was living on the Esplanade with Charles Pirouet and his wife, Jane. Charles is listed as a merchant, aged 49, and it would appear that Anna was a lodger but was still working as a governess.

In 1881 Anna was still residing with the Pirouets, but at 7 Pier Road, today the headquarters of the Société Jerseyaise and next door to the Jersey Museum and the offices of the Jersey Heritage Trust.

By 1891 Anna was living at 41 La Motte Street, the house of Jane Pirouet, and her occupation was recorded as 'of independent means'. In 1901 Anna was still boarding but this time at 30 Belmont Road.

So much of Anna's life was spent moving from one town location to another. She never married, and in her testament made in 1913 she left

#### DIRECTORY.

E., 7, Belmont-rd. (St. Maunclor), 's.	Valpy, Misses, 32, Hmo-street, Wilton, Miss, Summerland House, Don-roul.
, 57, Val Plaisant. ou, 17, St. James- k, Oxenford House, co.	Share and Stock Brokers. Manuel, H. L., Church-street. Nicollo, Gray & Co.
, 11, Val Plaisant. Rev. G., M.A. (St. ), St. Peter's. 12, Senic-street. , Windsor-road. , 1 and 2, Victoria yge, Principal, C. J.	Ship and Anchor Smiths. Falle, E., Pier. Grundin, P., 19, Commercial Build. Hazin, E., Esplanade. Le Marquand, P., North Pier. Le Masurier and Le Blancq, Commercial Buildings. Mc. Allen, 10, Esplanade.
: Young Ladies- NG AND DAY), 3, St. John's-road. 8, 6, Clavence Ter. 31, George Bouillon. , 29, St. Peter's-road. , Warrenby Terrace. 7, St. Saviour's- ne, 6, Devonshire-	Ship Builders. Allix, E., 7, Havre de Pas. Clark, F. C., 12, Commer. Build. Deslandes, G. & Son, 23, Com- mercial Buildings, Esmaut and Mauger, Dock-place, Esplanade. Gallo, P., Commercial Build. Gavey, P., 9, Pier-road. Granlin, P., 32, Esplanade. Le Vosants, Daniel & Co., St. Aubin's-road.

Jersey Times Almanac advertisement for Valpy's school

everything to her cousin, Frederica Maria Brodie. The wills and testaments of movable property (household goods, shares, money, etc.) made in Jersey from 1660 to 1985 are also in the care of the Archive.

### Anna's mother

The relationship between Anna's mother and her second husband is an intriguing one.

In November 1838, just six months after their marriage, Anna Bishop (women in Jersey continued to be known by their maiden names) and John Peele obtained a separation des biens in the Royal Court. As a widow, Anna would have been entitled to keep items of personal usage - *biens parapherinaux* - from Josué's movable estate, and the separation would have preserved this on her remarriage. On marriage, a husband became entitled to his wife's moveable estate with the

exception of her *biens parapherinaux*.

The 1861 census lists a Hannah Peele as a dressmaker, living with her son, James Peele, aged 15, and daughter, Grace M Hammond, a widow, aged 22, in Cotton Street, St Mary's District, Whitechapel. Hannah is listed as being 42 years old and the head of the household - her marital status is still given as married rather than widowed but there was no trace of John Peele.

Even though Anna Peele had become Hannah, it can be reasonably assumed that this was Anna's mother. Her place of birth was given as Jersey, and although her age was incorrect, the names and ages of her children corresponded. In the nineteenth century illiteracy was common and names were often misspelt, and people did not know their precise dates of birth. Jersey Christian names were often anglicised in the census (Jean

becoming John, Philippe becoming Philip) and the surnames frequently misspelt - or just plain wrong if the enumerator was not familiar with them.

In 1861 Anna/Hannah was still living in the Whitechapel district. Whitechapel was home to a large population by the 1840s and many parts of the district were poverty stricken - as illustrated on Charles Booth's map of London showing areas of social population. The maps are available on the internet. Whitechapel Road, which ran through the centre of the district, was not particularly squalid, but the alleys and backstreets that branched from it were prime examples of poor, filthy and dangerous living conditions.

Charles Booth's maps of London are wonderful visual representations of life in the city and are coloured street by street, with each colour



7 Pier Road: The home of Anna Esther Boudier in 1881, now the Soci t  Jersiaise premises, next door to the Jersey Museum

representing different scales of poverty and wealth

## The family in Jersey

Although Anna's immediate family moved to London in around 1851, her extended family, including her maternal grandmother, stayed in Jersey. Anna's maternal grandmother was Anne Magdelaine, the daughter of Philippe Le Geyt and Elizabeth Riolet dit l'Hermité. She was born in 1783 and baptised on 15th October in the Town Church. She married Thomas Bishop in St Helier on 20th July 1805 and their daughter Anna, Anna's mother, was born in 1815.

Anne appears in the 1851 census as a widow, aged 67, living in Don Street. Her profession was given as dressmaker and she was listed as the head of the household, which also included her 30-year-old dressmaker daughter, Eliza Fleury, and her son, William, aged ten.

Ten years later Anne was still alive and living in St Helier with Maria Brodie and her daughter, Frederica. Maria was the sole recipient of Anna's worldly goods on her death in 1913.

The Boudier family moved to Jersey from France in the 18th century.

The first local record is the marriage of Estienne Boudier to Ann Payn in 1721. Ann and Estienne had three children including John Boudier, born in 1721 and baptised in the Town Church. John married twice and had nine children with his second wife, Elizabeth Falle, whom he married in St Saviour's Church on 10th March 1756. The second youngest of their children, Josué, was Anna's grandfather.

Josué married Esther Le Gallais and they had two sons, Jean, baptised on 10th October 1806 and Anna's father, Josué, baptised on 1st March 1809. The Archive holds the testament of movable property of Josué Boudier senior, in which he left his property to be divided between his wife and sons. The testament was made in 1824, two years before his death.

Perhaps Anna stayed in Jersey because of her paternal family connections and her inheritance of property in Jersey from her uncle, Jean. The Archive also holds the Island's Public Registry, which records the details of land transactions relating to individuals from 1602 to the present day. By searching the index to

the land registry for Anna's name, the Archive Assistants found that in 1847 – at the age of 21 – she owned a house in Don Street, which her grandfather had bought as new in 1813.

Anna's mother appointed a *tuteur* to act on her behalf, and on 19th June 1847 Thomas Gallichan sold the property for the sum of 72 quartiers of wheat of rente – rente is an annual charge made on land similar to a mortgage and wheat rente was paid on a yearly basis. Subsequent contracts in the land registry show that Anna sold her right to receive the rente for a cash payment. It seems safe to assume that a governess living in St Helier had more use for a cash sum than an annual payment of wheat.

## Archive resources

The Archive Assistants were able to piece together a large amount of information about Anna's story and her life in the Island by looking at the various records at their fingertips. Some provided just brief glimpses of what must have been major influences on her life: her father dying when she was only three, her mother re-marrying, inheriting property at the age of 12 and being left in Jersey when her mother moved to London.

If you would like to try to find out more about your ancestors in Jersey, the Archive is open to the public from 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Tuesdays to Thursdays. It has a late night opening to 7pm on the last Thursday in the month.

The catalogue is available on-line by clicking on the catalogue link on the Jersey Heritage Trust website, [www.jerseyheritagetrust.org](http://www.jerseyheritagetrust.org). The Archive staff are always available to help new readers and volunteers from the Channel Islands Family History Society are happy to help people trace their roots.

*The Archive Assistants at Jersey Archive compiled this article.*

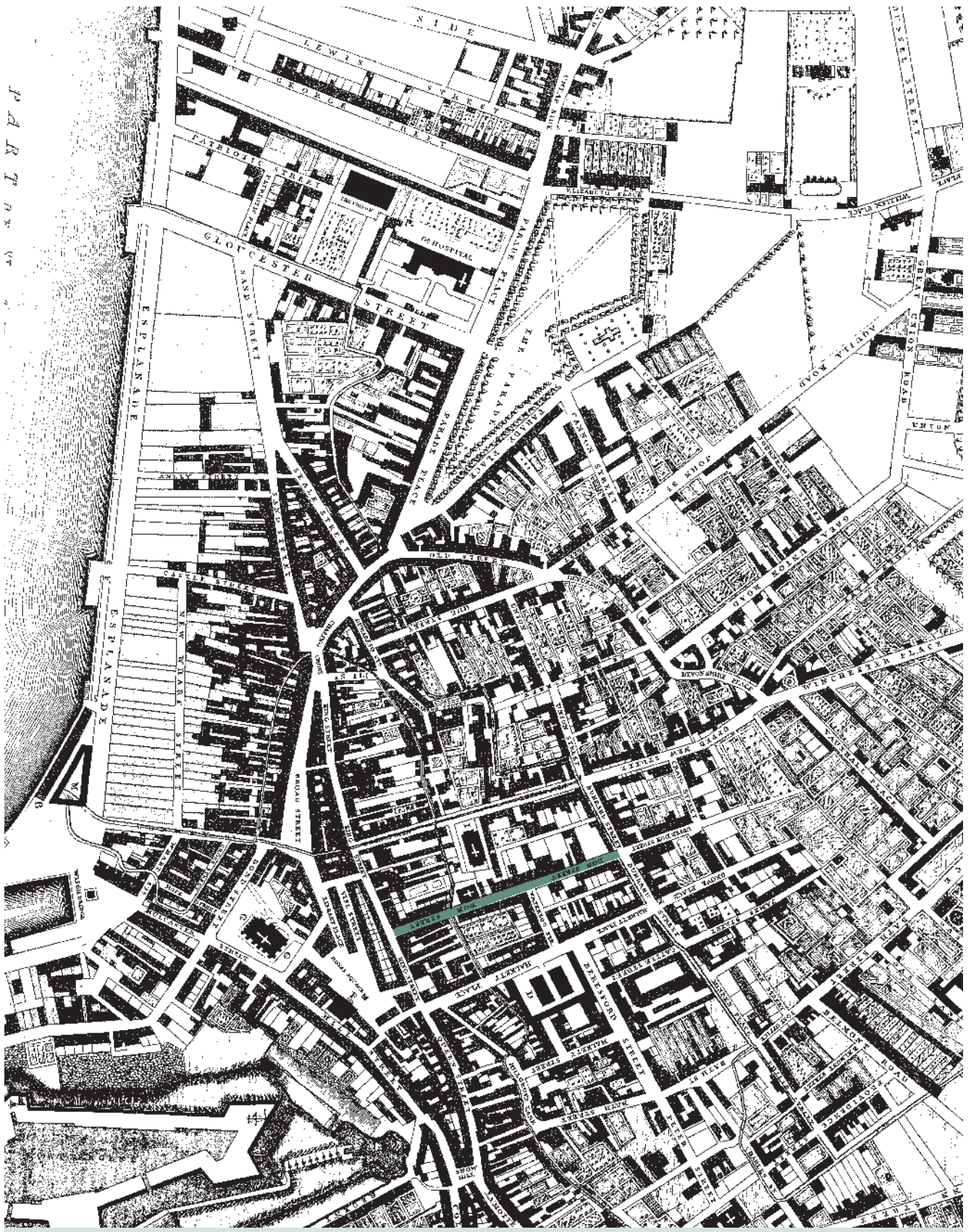
**AU GAGNE**  
MABILLEMENTS  
1001 PAYS  
INFECTIONNÉS  
SUR MESURE  
**KING ST  
& BROAD ST**  
LATEST STYLES IN  
**CLOTHING**  
For Boys, Youths & Men  
For Spring Wear  
**ARRIVING DAILY.**

**DEATH.**  
BOUDIER.—On Saturday, the 29th Inst.,  
at No. 30, Belmont Road, Miss Anna  
Esther Boudier, aged 78 years.  
Friends kindly accept this (the only)  
intimation.  
R.F.P.

**TIRE D EYES**  
are generally caused by defective  
vision, and if neglected the sight  
may be permanently injured.  
Don't neglect your eyes; consult  
me to day.  
**E. WYNDHAM HETICH**  
D.S.O.A., F.I.O.  
The Sight-Testing Optician,  
1, KING STREET.

The  
11 a m  
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Death notice of Anna Esther Boudier



Map showing Don Street where Anna Esther Boudier inherited a property