

Introduction to The Photographic Archive at Societe Jersiaise



Origins and Development

The Société Jersiaise was formed in 1873. Included in its founding objectives were the creation of a museum and library. Publication of a *Bulletin Annuel* (journal) commenced in 1875 and an annex to the society's second Annual Report for 1876 drew the attention of members to the importance of a number of subjects including, 'Recording in permanent photography local prehistoric monuments, buildings and ruins.' The Société Jersiaise realised its aim of opening a museum in 1877.

With the practice and collecting of photography already identified as priorities these activities were continued as significant parts of the Société's museum and library operations. Multiple interests in the medium of photography, as a method for recording research, as documentary and scientific records and as an independent art form are actively maintained by society members to the present day. These patterns of development, established over more than 140 years, have resulted in the accumulation of a photographic archive which is remarkable in its insular context.

Scope and Context

The Photographic Archive of the Société Jersiaise contains over 100,000 images dating from the mid-1840s to the present day and is the principal Jersey collection of nineteenth and early twentieth century photography. The Island of Jersey has a rich history of photographic practice as a territory geographically and culturally positioned between Britain and France, two nations that were prominent in the development of the medium of photography.

Photography in Jersey

Photography arrived in Jersey on 9th May 1840 just nine months after it had been first publicized in the urban centres of England and France. Able to practice in the Channel Islands without concern for the patents restricting the medium in the 1840s, amateur and professional photographers arrived from both sides of the English Channel. Following technical developments in the 1850s, by the boom period for Victorian photography in the 1860s, the number of photographic studios in St Helier peaked at twenty-one. The archive holds examples of work by important nineteenth century photographers such as William Collie, Charles Hugo, Thomas Sutton and Henry Mullins. The collection incorporates late nineteenth century studio collections of negatives by Jersey based photographers such as Ernest Baudoux, Albert Smith and Clarence Oules. Important twentieth century holdings include a major archive of over one thousand negatives by Percival Dunham Jersey's first photo-journalist and an archive of one thousand three hundred German Occupation

images compiled by Emile F Guiton (1879-1972) Honorary Curator of the Société Jersiaise Museum and founder of the Photographic Archive.

Subjects

The subjects represented in the collection are as diverse as the multitude of processes and techniques with which they were made. Examples range from the earliest photographic processes of the Daguerreotype and Salted Paper print or Calotype made during the late 1840s and 1850s through the Collodion, Albumen and Gelatin process advancements of the Victorian era. Interspersed with the most prevalent processes, are the many variant techniques conceived, adopted and abandoned throughout the growth and maturity of the medium leading to the present day.

The archive contains over 15,000 portraits of identified people and views of every bay, valley and vista. Together the collection offers detailed visual record of Jersey and Channel Islands history and an excellent representation of technical and aesthetic developments throughout the photographic era.

Viewing the Photographic Archive

The Photographic Archive Catalogue containing over 36,000 images can be searched online at <http://photographic-archive.societe-jersiaise.org/> and we recommend that researchers consult this resource in the first instance. Researchers may also view original prints and negatives, by appointment. If you wish to consult original photographs in the archive, please contact us as far as possible in advance of your desired date to visit providing details of the photographs or subjects that you wish to view. We aim to respond to enquiries within five working days and to assist researchers as soon as possible, however, please be aware that during busy periods response times may be longer.

Photographers



Henry Mullins (1818-1880)

Henry Mullins was by far the most prolific of the first generation of Jersey photographers in the mid-nineteenth century. He produced thousands of portraits of islanders between 1848 and 1873 at his highly successful studio in the prime location of the Royal Square, St Helier.

Mullins was part of the circle of photographic pioneers at the Royal Polytechnic Institute, Regent Street, London where the first photographic studio in Europe was opened in 1841. The first record of his professional practice is in Edinburgh in 1843.

Mullins arrived in Guernsey in summer of 1847 and settled in Jersey the following year.

As a commercial photographer he consistently embraced the rapid technical progress that ran in parallel with his career. While numerous photographic studios opened across the town of St Helier in the 1850s and 1860s Henry Mullins continued to be the photographer of choice for leading members of Jersey society and successful local and immigrant families. Mullins's productivity was matched by the technical standard of his

work; qualities that are exemplified in the richness of the portraits of Victorian islanders preserved on the pages of his photograph albums. There are 9,861 images from Henry Mullins available to view online.

Percival Dunham (1883 – 1961)



In the Photographic Archive of the Société Jersiaise there is a collection of just over one thousand glass plate negatives taken by Percival Robert Dunham (1883-1961) in Jersey between 1913 and 1914. At least eight hundred of these negatives were published in Jersey's *Morning News* daily newspaper or its sister publication the *Jersey Illustrated Weekly* between April 1913 and October 1914.

Percival Dunham was born in St Albans, Hertfordshire on 6th November 1883; the son of Herbert, a Straw Hat Manufacturer and Elizabeth a Dress Maker. The first evidence of Dunham's arrival in Jersey is a photograph: a postcard of the 1910 Battle of Flowers. In the 1911 Jersey census he is recorded as an employer running a 'Tobacconist Business' residing at a boarding house at 42 David Place, St Helier. Like many before and after him Dunham combined photography with another occupation. By 1912 Dunham was listed as a photographer at 57 Bath Street, St Helier in the *Evening Post Almanac*. This address had been a photographic studio for a long time. Photographer Robert Eager practiced there for over twenty years from 1873-1906 and the premises would therefore been adapted to the practice of photography. Eager had previously been a photographer in the studio of Henry Mullins, Jersey's most prolific mid-nineteenth century portrait photographer, from 1848-1873.

Percival Dunham's break came in 1910 when on August 27th the *Morning News* published one of his photographs with a credit. The *Morning News* started publishing photographs in July 1909 and must therefore by this time have acquired the requisite half-tone printing equipment. On 16th May 1910 the newspaper announced that their 'Photo Engraving Plant' was in working order. Local 'snapshotters' were invited to submit pictures for a weekly cash prize of five shillings for the best photograph for publication. Prints had to be handed in before 6pm on the day they were taken. In emergencies, 'for instance a snapshot of an accident taken late in the day' negatives could be accepted. Amateurs competing for these prizes were informed that 'for journalistic purposes only snap-shots of events of the day are of any value. Pictures of places such as Bouley Bay or Corbière are of no journalistic value...' On 19th May 1910 a notice was inserted reading: 'Smart

Lad about 17 (amateur photographer preferred) to act as assistant in Photo Engraving Department. Splendid opportunity to learn the art of photo-engraving.’ Throughout 1910 amateur and professional photographers were credited in the *Morning News*. The *Jersey Evening Post* started publishing photographs in August 1910. When a photograph of Percival and Minnie Dunham (née Mourant) taken on the occasion of their wedding was published in the newspaper on 6th November 1911 Percival was identified as the ‘Morning News Photographer.’ Capitalizing on the editorial and technological developments at the *Morning News*, Dunham had established himself as Jersey’s first newspaper ‘staff photographer.’ In this role as Morning News ‘staffer’ Dunham produced a compelling and diverse photographic archive of Jersey society. His archive is all the more remarkable when set against the 1904 launch date of the Daily Mirror, the first British newspaper with photographic illustrations. Dunham’s photographs were taken with a cumbersome plate camera over a decade before the introduction of 35mm roll-film handheld cameras and flashbulbs heralded the golden age of photo journalism. The resultant technical flaws in his photographs – over-exposure, edge fogging and soft focus – are overwhelmed by their documentary power.

Francis Foot (1885 – 1966)



Francis Foot: Records of History

In the Société Jersiaise Photographic Archive there is a collection of 251 glass negatives taken by Francis Foot (1885-1966) that was donated to the society by the Foot family in 1996. The huge changes taking place at the Channel Islands Co-operative Society’s Charing Cross site and the National Trust for Jersey’s (NTFJ) recent restoration of 5 & 6 Pitt Street, St Helier where Francis lived and worked, have prompted additional research on this fascinating visual record of the Foot family’s business and domestic lives. Rarely is an historic building restoration blessed with an equally historic photographer in residence! Francis Foot’s photographs provide a social documentary record that brings to life the history of these buildings and the biographies of their inhabitants during the most prosperous period in their history. Linked to the restoration programme, which

has seen the buildings saved and brought back into sustainable use, this archive powerfully illustrates the importance of preserving our built heritage.

Abraham Foot, Francis's Grandfather, came to Jersey from Dorset and married Elizabeth Ralph at St Helier Town Church on 30th June 1835. Abraham and Elizabeth had four children, two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary, and two sons. François Philippe Foot was born on 10th December 1840 but sadly died in infancy. When a second son was born on 2nd July 1847 he was named François William and at that time the family were living at Millbrook and Abraham was employed as a labourer. At the age of 13, in 1861, François was an apprentice carpenter living with his mother and sister at Brayer Cottage in Rue de Trachy, St Lawrence. In 1880 François Foot married Louisa Hunt the eldest daughter of John Hunt a Marine Store Dealer at 5 Pitt Street, St Helier. By 1881 François, whose occupation was now ship carpenter, and Louisa were living above this shop and running the business, beginning a century of trade by the Foot family in Pitt Street and Dumaresq Street.

Francis Foot was born on the 2nd February 1885. At the age of sixteen, in 1901, he was employed as a photographic assistant and must have been working at one of eleven St Helier photographic studios listed in the Jersey Almanacs that year. Despite his early training, Francis was never listed as a photographer in the Jersey trade directories and there is no evidence of him operating a studio in his own name. It must have been around this time that Francis experienced the pleasure of listening to recorded music on the gramophone. Recognising the commercial potential in this technology he decided upon a career change and opened the first record shop in Jersey. Nevertheless, a grounding in the medium of photography equipped him with the necessary skills to produce commercial postcards and, perhaps more importantly, some of the most distinctive early twentieth century family portraits to be found in Jersey photographic archives. Francis married Margaret Vernon in 1914 and though none of his photographs are dated, some of the best clues are the appearances of his four children – George b. 1914, Stanley b. 1915, Dora b. 1917 and Reginald b. 1920 – in the portraits. A group portrait of the family sitting in their car must have been taken circa 1924. Here, Francis has included himself in the family group and though he may not have operated the camera he was clearly directing the pose. A portrait of George, Stanley and Dora, circa 1918, captures expressions that defy the age of its subjects. Other photographs such as an impressive view of the SS Roebuck beached in St Brelade's Bay in July 1911 after being holed on the Kaines rocks can be dated by their content.

Fortunately, Francis possessed an awareness that motivated him to photograph his surroundings: the interior and exterior of the shops at 5 & 6 Pitt Street showing the iconic HMV logo and his father and family at work. The family also ran a shop in Dumaresq Street where an intricate display of soap boxes was created in the shop window spelling out the name. Some of the glass negatives have suffered from water damage which can be seen as blemishes on the edges of some images but thankfully even in these cases most of the important details have survived. Like Francis Foot's photographs, the buildings themselves have many stories to tell, and the restoration process itself has recently contributed new material to the archive. It was intriguing and quite poetic when a photograph of Francis and his companion with their cameras, on location circa 1914 (illustrated), was discovered behind a mirror above a fireplace in one of the rooms at no. 6. By reconnecting Francis Foot's photographic archive with the buildings where they were taken, developed and printed, we gain a greater understanding of the value of their preservation and their past, present and future.

Albert Smith (1853 – 1914)



Originally from Liverpool, Albert Smith worked from a studio in Waterloo before coming to Jersey and purchasing the photographic business previously run by Monsieur E. Baudoux and sons in New Street. Albert Smith worked from several different premises in St Helier, and was able to advertise his business as the largest photographic establishment in the Channel Islands. Thousands of his images survive as glass plate negatives and subjects include studio portraits and portraits of cattle. Many of his views were sold as postcards. He and his staff not only worked on commissions, but also captured many scenes of Jersey at work and at play.

Emille Guiton (1879 - 1972)



Emile Guiton was born in Jersey in 1879. He was a very active member of the Société Jersiaise – curator of the Museum, on the Executive Committee, joint honorary secretary and editor of the Annual Bulletin. Emile Guiton was a keen amateur photographer and practised throughout his long life. He experimented with colour at the beginning of the twentieth century in “Autochromes”. His subjects include the recording of archaeological excavations and he was one of the few people in Jersey permitted to take photographs during

the German Occupation of 1940 - 1945. Emile Guiton also recognised very early on the importance of collecting photographs, both as a valuable social historic resource and as interesting artefacts - examples of developments in science and technology. He donated many images to the Société Jersiaise. He died in 1972.

Ernest Baudoux (1828 - 1897)



The Société Jersiaise Photographic Archive contains a collection of 1385 negatives by Charles Ernest Baudoux. Prints from 12 of these negatives are exhibited here. Baudoux was born in the department of Marne in north-east France in 1828. The first trace of his photographic practice in Jersey appears in the trade directory in Jersey Almanacs of 1869, where he is listed as operating a studio at 56 New Street, St Helier. He remained at this address until 1876 when the studio is recorded for one year at 57 New Street. By 1877 he had continued the move up New Street to No. 59 in premises that extended into 11 Craig Street.

Nothing is known about Baudoux's practice in France but it is clear from his archive that he was already technically accomplished when he arrived in Jersey. The content of the archive reflects a broad based professional practice incorporating studio portraiture, landscape and architecture. In addition to taking portraits of the clients who chose to visit his studio, Baudoux produced editions of topographic views that were marketed as card mounted images or 'scrap prints' which were sold loose for collectors to compile in personalised albums.

Soon after arriving in Jersey Baudoux produced a panorama of St Helier which seems to indicate a desire to survey the town in which he had relocated with his wife and son. Although the photographs do not join up precisely, the quality of the full plate size (20.3 x 25.3cm) wet collodion glass negatives he produced is impressive. The wet collodion process was technically demanding and for use on location required a mobile (often horse drawn) darkroom in which plates could be coated and sensitised, exposed while still wet, and developed immediately. The panorama shows the architecture of St Helier in tremendous detail. Notable details include the Westmount Quarry, Strangers' Cemetery, the Marine Hotel and Baths (predecessor to the Grand Hotel) and an absent Waterfront. In one image a sign painted on a wall announcing the sale of land

reads: 'To Be Sold, Thursday 14th July.' Checking the calendars reveals that July 14th 1870 was a Thursday and this provides an approximate date for these photographs.

Six individual photographs represent Baudoux's wider archive and approach. He answered commissions to photograph houses, often posing the owner and their family outside as in the case of Halcyon House, built by the traveller and writer Robert Playfair. He photographed work places, leaving a valuable record of light industry in Jersey in the late nineteenth century. Public events he photographed include the centenary memorial for the Battle of Jersey in the Royal Square on 6th January 1881. His atmospheric photograph of waves breaking over the pier at La Collette expresses an artistic ambition. An image of boots and shoes prefigures the photographic 'pack-shot' of modern retail and advertising business.

Many of Baudoux's studio portraits were produced with a sliding plate mechanism designed to give two exposures on one glass negative. After choosing the best image he often eliminated the 'reject' by marking it with a cross. Having selected his preferred image, Baudoux retouched the negative to enhance the complexion of the subject and conceal facial blemishes. This effect shows that the practice of photographic manipulation originated long before the digital age.

In 1887 Baudoux sold his photographic business to James Stroud; one of the twelve employees at the studio (number recorded in the 1881 census). He seems to have decided upon a career change and acquired Royal Paragon Stables, a livery and horse drawn charabanc excursion business, in nearby Grove Place, St Helier. James Stroud's ownership of the business was brief and in 1892 he, in turn, sold the studio to Albert Smith. Smith operated the studio until his death in 1914 after which it was continued by David, his son. In 1941, probably influenced by the German Occupation period ban on photography and his increasing age, David Smith donated his own studio archive and those of his predecessors to the Société Jersiaise. These archives contain some of the most important nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs of Jersey.

Clarence Philip Oules (1853 - 1927)



Clarence Philip Oules was born in 1853. He was the third son of the well-known artist Philip John Oules, who specialised in painting maritime subjects. Clarence married Léonore Stark with whom he had two children - Clarence and Pauline - and he was the grandfather of Reverend John Oules who has donated much of his ancestors' works to the Société Jersiaise. C.P. Oules, who worked from premises in New Street, is best known for his studio portraiture. Many of his portraits feature members of his family. He was also a Centenier. He died in 1927.

Philip Morel-Laurens (1869 -)



Philip Morel-Laurens was born in Jersey in 1869, the only son of Philip de Caen Morel and Mary Morel. His mother died when Philip was two. Their father took Philip and his sister to Australia, but they returned to Jersey in 1886. Philip joined the Militia and then in 1890 he took over the family stationers and bookshop in Halkett Place. He married in 1907 and in 1911 left the shop to farm at Leda House in St Lawrence. As well as being a talented and sensitive photographer, he was a Vingtenier, Roads Inspector and Rates Assessor for the parish; he played the organ in church and also composed music, and he was an amateur artist.

Thomas Sutton



Thomas Sutton is a very important figure not only in the story of local photography, but also in wider photographic history. Sutton had a workshop and studio in St Brelade's bay from 1848 until it burnt down in about 1854. The printing establishment where he worked with Frenchman L.D. Blanquart-Evrard in the 1850s was advertised as "founded at the suggestion of, and patronised by, H R H Prince Albert" who was a keen collector of photographs. Sutton's early experiments and contributions include the patenting of a "panoramic lens for taking photographic pictures", the publishing of a pamphlet on a method of printing which he claimed to be permanent and the compilation of the first dictionary of photography. He also produced the first photographic publication of the island - "Souvenir de Jersey" in 1854.

Edwin Dale (1882 -)



Edwin Dale was born on 3rd January 1882. When he entered the Jersey Eistedfodd photographic competition for the first time in 1913 he won four first prizes and two second prizes. He remained an amateur photographer, making his living running his father's boot, shoe and leather shop at 63 New Street. In 1947, after fifty-three years, the business was transferred due to Edwin's ill health.

As well as being a very talented photographer, Edwin Dale was a keen racer of model boats and known for his love of motorcycles. Many of his early images include the motorised bike on which he would travel around the island taking photographs. Most of his work dates from 1910 to the 1920s and one of his favourite subjects was the railway. He died on 27th January 1956.

Search the archives of these photographers and hundreds of others online at:

<http://photographic-archive.societe-jersiaise.org/>



Earliest surviving photograph taken in Jersey by Philip John Oules circa 1845 and below an advertisement placed in *Le Constitutionnel*, *Le Miroir* and *Chronique de Jersey* newspapers, September 1845

MR. PH. J. OULESS, No. 8, Royal Square, begs to inform his friends and public in general that he is just returned from Paris and other Capitals on the Continent, and intends continuing his profession during the winter in the Island.

M. O. having received instructions of the first pupil of the celebrated Daguerre will be enabled to produce with the aid of the Daguerreotype a most perfect likeness at a moderate charge.

T. BERTHELE A. BERTHELE