

## **World War 1 and Guernsey cricket**

In 1914, as Europe went to war, the Royal Guernsey Militia, which at that time consisted of two infantry regiments and an artillery regiment, was mobilised to replace the regular army garrison which was withdrawn to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders.

Militiamen could not be sent overseas but the States of Guernsey decided to offer a contingent of trained men to the British Government. This offer was taken up gratefully and in the end two full strength infantry companies and a machine gun section were sent to join the 16th Irish Division which was forming in Ireland as part of Kitchener's all volunteer army. The companies were attached to 6 Royal Irish Regiment and 7 Royal Irish Fusiliers; the machine gun company went to 6 Royal Irish Regiment. In addition a Divisional Ammunition Column was formed from the Royal Guernsey Artillery and sent to 9th Scottish Division. The 16th Division took part in the fighting on the Somme in 1916 and the Guernsey Companies suffered heavy casualties. They were eventually disbanded in early 1918.

In the meantime the States decided that they would send a full infantry battalion to the British army, probably because they felt that the island should be seen to be doing its bit. As a result at the end of 1916 the Militia was suspended for the duration of the war, conscription was introduced and the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry was raised as part of the British army. Most of the initial officers and men were former members of the Militia but later drafts were not.

The Cost.

The RGLI left behind them in France 327 graves bearing their cap badge. Many, many more Guernseymen suffered grievous wounds of body and mind while yet others had suffered years of captivity in Germany. The war had been won, but at a terrible cost which was felt in every home in the Island. When the call for men came in 1939 the States remembered 1917 and 1918 and refused to send the Militia to war.

The Total Number of men who served in the RGLI was 3549

Of those the number recruited in Guernsey was 2430, the remainder were transferred from England.

Of the 3549 men of the RGLI, 2280 served in France with the 1st (Service) Battalion.

The following casualties were sustained:

Killed in Action or Missing, presumed dead 230

Died of Wounds 67

Died of Sickness 30

Total 327

Wounded 667

Prisoners of War 255

The following honours were awarded to the RGLI

Officers: 1 Companion of the Order of St. Michael & St. George

4 Military Crosses

1 Member of the Royal Victorian Order

3 Distinguished Conduct Medals

7 Military Medals

1 Medaille Militaire

1 Croix de Guerre

2 Officers and 2 men were mentioned in Dispatches.

During 1914 cricket on the island was in a healthy state with 38 matches being played before the outbreak of war on 4th August. Matches were played at Elizabeth College Field, Belvedere Field or Fort Field and Cambridge Park. Teams that played were obviously Elizabeth College and also the Green Howards, Rangers, Grange CC, Guernsey Athletic, Guernsey Royal Artillery, 4th North Staffords as well as occasional matches involving HMS Superb, Carrefour Ramblers, the Star, the Press, Castle Cornet XI and Commercial Travellers.



Castle Cornet team 1916

Weekly Press

Ratcliffe H Millicheap T Ryan Woods

H Firkins (Cap) G Watson R Ashworth A S Walford W E Twyman

A Wetton

N Clark

The match between Athletics and the Travellers at College Field saw WS Goss of the Travellers scoring 52 in 16 scoring strokes (4242243412444444) in their total of 260 with the Athletics finishing on 162 for 1. There were numerous games such as Mr FW Mourant's XI, Mr P dela Mare's XI, Mr WJ Piprell's XI, Mr EB Waite's XI and Mr PF Trotter's XI mainly at the start of each season.

The number of games tailed off as the war continued. After the 38 matches in 1914 there were 11 games in 1915, 13 in 1916, 14 in 1917 and only 5 in 1918. Matches were also played at the Butes in Alderney and in 1915 there were 9 matches against the likes of the Militia, the 4th North Staffords and St Annes, as well as Married v Singles.

In June of 1914 Elizabeth College scored a record score of 342 for 8 against Victoria College in Jersey where JV Blad scored 208\*. In fact the Blads were pretty prolific for the College during this time. In 1914 CE Blad scored 104 v Victoria College in June, 100 v Athletics in July, in 1915 he scored 75 v Athletics and another 70 v Athletics. In 1915 he scored 75 v Athletics and 70 v Athletics again the next month. Not only was he handy with the bat his bowling exploits were equally impressive. In 1914 he took 5 for 44 v Grange CC, 3 for 31 against

the Royal Artillery, 6 for 56 against Athletics in the same game he scored his 100\*, but the same week he took 8 for 44 for Rangers against the Royal Artillery. In 1917 he formed his Lt. CE Blad XI in a drawn match against the College.

JV Blad in 1914 scored 53 against Mr FW Mourant's XI and a week later 129\* against Victoria College, a week later 95\* v HMS Superb, the next week 60\* v Mr FW Mourant's XI, followed by his epic 209\* against Victoria College the next week, a total of 546 for only once out! At the end of the season in 1914 he finished off with 80 for College Present against College Past. He probably left school that year but he appeared again in July of 1918 when he scored 78 for Mr PF Trotter's XI against his former school. He was College Sports Champion in 1914.

Next to come along was OG Blad who scored 45\* versus Castle Cornet, 47 against 4th North Staffords as well as taking 5 for 23 against GH Fortey's XI.

KS Blad also played for Elizabeth College during the war years.

GH Forty had a successful time at Elizabeth College starting with 4 for 37 against Grange CC, then scored 41 and took 8 for 32 against Mr FW Mourant's XI and the day after scored 47\* against The Garrison. He took 7 for 13 against the Royal Artillery and 4 for 45 against the Green Howards and then scored 36 against The Garrison. At the end of June he took 7 wickets against the Grange CC and in his last game for College he scored 60 against the Royal Artillery. In 1910 he scored 3 and took 3 wickets when the College were beaten by Victoria College. In the return match that year Elizabeth College were dismissed for 60 with Fortey scoring and were on the receiving end of 425 for 7 in return by Victoria College. However in 1918 he was back as Major GH Forty where he assembled a team to play in what turned out to be a close game against the College.

The Elizabethan reports in June 1907 that FGR Mockler scored 68\*, HT Mellish 1 and JB Dinwiddie 11 in a total of 115 for Elizabeth College and Victoria in reply were dismissed for 101 with FG Mockler bowling 14-3-29-2 and brother EC Mockler 17.5-6-30-7.

In 1914 E d'A Collings scored 69\* against Mr FW Mourant's XI and 38 against The Garrison two days later. His last two innings amassed 33\* against the Royal Artillery and 58 against The Garrison.



Eric d'Auvergne Collings

Weekly Press

ER Morres in 1914 took 7 for 24 playing for the Grange CC against Elizabeth College and followed it up two days later with a 60 against the Green Howards. He obviously liked the Green Howards with 54 a month later. He scored 43 against Elizabeth College and then took 7 wickets against the Royal Artillery a few weeks afterwards.

EJ Mortis first played for Elizabeth College in 1915 and too 3 for 45 in their win over Victoria College. The following week he scored 65 against the Athletics and a month later having got the taste for success he scored 100 again versus the Athletics. The next year, 1916, he took 6 for 66 against Mr EB Waite's XI and in July he really enjoyed himself taking 8 for 68 against Castle Cornet. In his last match he took 6 for 60 against Mr A Maunder's XI at the College Field.

EHF Layard saw plenty of success in 1915. He started off in May with 5 wickets against Mr A Maunder's XI and three days later hit 35 against the 4th North Staffords. In his first match against Victoria College he scored 59 and then followed it up with 2 for 16 in their 91 run win. In 1916 he was back with 128\* against the 4th North Staffords and 63 for College against Victoria. In the same week he scored 44 and took 7 for 56 against the Athletics and a week later he took 5 for 5 against the 2nd Guernsey Light Infantry.

There were other notable personnel featuring at this time. CJH Rawlinson scored 32 for the Athletics against The Garrison in 1914 and 40 against the Green

Howards. In 1915 he scored 37 in a lost cause against Elizabeth College and in 1916 he reached 49\* against the same opposition as well as 61 for Mr A Maunder's XI against the College. He later umpired the first senior inter-insular in 1950.

In Alderney JW Workman must have been a shining light. In August 1915 he took 6 wickets for St Annes against the 4th North Staffords followed 3 days later with another 5 wickets against the same opposition. In September he took 8 wickets including a hat-trick for the Married against the Singles and had 3 catches dropped in his first over. It was to no avail for having dismissed the Singles for 40 they were then dismissed for 26. The next year he staged a Mr JW Workman's XI against Major Duus XI at the Butes and then brought a team to College Field to play Lt Hartley's XI

The following were known to have played cricket in Guernsey and were killed:

Lt Kenneth Sven Blad, brother to CE, JV and OG, joined the Royal Engineers and flew over enemy lines to select suitable areas for Wireless Stations. He was accidentally killed on the Dollon-Arras road in Nov 1918 aged 20 and is buried in Fillievres British Cemetery. He was returning to Group Headquarters on his motor cycle when he crashed into a French car. Though somewhat shaken he was apparently unhurt and decided to carry on with his ride. On the way, however, he ran into the tail of an army lorry and was killed.

Ernest James Brouard joined the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars and was killed at El Arish (Egypt) aged 24 in January 1917. He is buried at Kantara War memorial, east of Suez. He played 1st XI cricket during his time at Elizabeth College (1902-1909). He was also Junior Sports Champion in 1908.

Lt Eric d'Auvergne Collings was the youngest son of four of Dr and Mrs C Collings and was a member of the Queen's West Surrey Regiment. He was killed at the Somme in August 1916. He was aged 19 and was prominent at Elizabeth College in football and cricket, and was also a member of the College O.T.C. He joined the 2nd RGLI on 15th Jan 1915, went to Sandhurst in May and was commissioned on 12th Jan 1916.

Frances Bardon Denham, born in Mysore, India, joined the Worcestershire Regiment and was killed on 7th July 1917 aged 19. He played for the 2nd XI cricket team in 1913.

Herbert Joseph Frayling was part of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. He was killed on 30th August 1918 aged 19 and is buried at Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetary



Herbert Frayling

CWGC

Gerald Williams Hilliard was a sub-lieutenant. He joined the Royal Aero Club, member no. 1079, qualified to fly a Grahame-White biplane at the Grahame-White school in Hendon in February 1915. A Zeppelin L14 was conducting a bombing raid over East England and Hilliard was piloting one of 3 RNAS aeroplanes hunting for it. On 8th September 1915 he was flying a BE2c he died aged 30 when his bombs exploded on making a heavy landing at Bacton. He is buried at Caister Cemetery near Great Yarmouth. He played cricket for Elizabeth College in 1901.

Eric John Mortis left College in 1916 and joined the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry and was killed at Doulieu in April 1918 aged 19 and buried at Trois Arbres in North France.

Capt William McAndrew Marshall was killed whilst on active service on 19th March 1918 aged 29. He was in the 37th Dogras and Indian Political Department. (He is the brother of Douglas Cargill Marshall who was killed in the Dardanelles aged 22). A report featured in the Jersey Evening Post on 2nd September 1918. " The inhabitants of Ledjef and Kerbela were mostly well dispnsed towards the forces.

On 12th January some fired on the troops who were exercising near the town causing a few casualties. Two leading sheiks were to be punished but fled. After the incident on March 21st the Political officer in Jedjef (William Marshall) was murdered. No reason was ever established. He is buried in the Baghdad War Cemetery. He represented Elizabeth College cricket team in 1906.

Capt Henry Tupper Mellish born in Plymouth attended College from 1903 to 1908 playing in the 1st XI in 1908. He joined the Army Service Corps and was invalided home in 1917 and died in October. He is buried in Edinburgh (Morningside) Cemetery.



H T Mellish death plaque medal

Capt Ernest Charles Purchas was born in Rondebosch near Cape Town. He played for Elizabeth College in 1910 and 1911 against Victoria College and was also the Senior Sports Champion in 1909-10. He joined the Royal Horse Artillery and was accidentally killed by the explosion of a Trench Mortar in March 1915 aged 23, being buried at Aire Communal Cemetery.

Anthony Rodovask Stevens played for Elizabeth College in 1896 and 1897. He joined the New Zealand contingent and was wounded in France and died in Sept 1919 in Wairna, New Zealand.

Capt Francis Dobree McCrea was born in Jamaica in 1894 where his father was in the Jamaica Constabulary. He played for Elizabeth College in 1910 against Victoria College scoring 4, 0 and 3. He was also Senior Sports Champion in 1912. He

joined the Royal Canadian Regiment and was killed at the Somme in Sept 1918 at the age of 23. He is buried in the Crest Cemetery, Fontaine-Notre Dame, south-west of Cambria. He was the Elizabeth College Sports Champion in both 1911 and 1912.



Capt F D McCrea CWGC.org

Lt Percy Edgar Napier Howard was born in Darjeeling, India, and played College 1st XI cricket in 1912 and 1913. He belonged to the Royal Irish Regiment who were involved in a particularly brilliant charge on the evening of 19th August in which the Royal Irish took the position at Le Pilley near Lille. In the fighting of 18th, 19th, and 20th only 80 men survived out of a battalion of 600. He was killed, as were most, by shrapnel at Lille in Oct 1914 aged 19. He is buried at Le Touret Memorial. He played for College in 1913.

Lt Cecil Frederick Napier Draper was born in Dublin and played for College in 1911. He was in the Middlesex Regiment and was in action at the battles of Mons, Le Cateau, Marne and Aisne where he was wounded. He was wounded again after his return to France and died in June 1916, being buried at Bethune Town Cemetery.

Lt Frank Stanley Layard, born in Ceylon, was brother to EHF Layard. FS Layard played in 1913 and 1914. After joining the Border Regiment he was reported missing and assumed killed in France in May 1917 aged 20. He was awarded the Military Cross at Arras in April, his citation being "2nd Lieut. Frank Stanley Layard, Border Regiment commanded a patrol of bombers on reconnaissance, which came under heavy fire. In spite of several casualties, he completed his task and brought back most valuable information. The success of the enterprise was entirely due to

his own personal courage and determination." He is commemorated at the Dairy Crucifix Cemetery.



Lt F S Layard

Weekly Press

His father FH Layard had 3 brothers (CWC, AH, EW) who all attended Elizabeth College and had strong links with the tea trade in Ceylon. (EHF Layard was still playing cricket in Ceylon in 1928 and 1931)

Major Aston Gifford Astley was born in India and played for the College during 1906 and 1907. He was in the 8th Royal Fuseliers and was killed by a sniper while carrying out an inspection of a new gun position in shallow trenches at Flers in the Somme in Oct 1916, aged 26, and was awarded the Military Cross, in recognition of gallantry and devotion to duty in the field. His memorial is in Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, Mametz.

Capt Andrew Vere Myles played in 1908 and was invalided home in 1914. His brother Capt Philip Henry Myles, at College 1904 to 1906, was killed at Mesopotamia (Iraq) at the Battle of Sheikh Saad in January 1916. It was PH Myles who was awarded the Vellum of the Humane Society whilst at Elizabeth College for saving the life of a man drowning at Havelet Bay in 1905. His memorial is at Amara War Cemetery. Another brother, the youngest of the three, Maurice Trevor Myles also attended Elizabeth College and was wounded on 17th April 1915 and died three days later and is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery.

Frederick Neville Parker was born in Torquay in 1892. He attended College from 1903 to 1910, played 1st XI cricket and enlisted with the 1st Kings Royal Rifle Corps. He was killed in northern France in April 1915 aged 22 and is buried in the Bethune Town Cemetery. His brother, Harding Neville Parker, also played for College in 1909, was wounded in May 1919 but survived the war.

Charles Edward Robinson was born in Shanghai and was in the Royal Naval Air service. He was reported missing assumed killed on 8th December 1915 aged 29. His is remembered at the Helles Memorial, Turkey. He represented Elizabeth College cricket team in 1903.

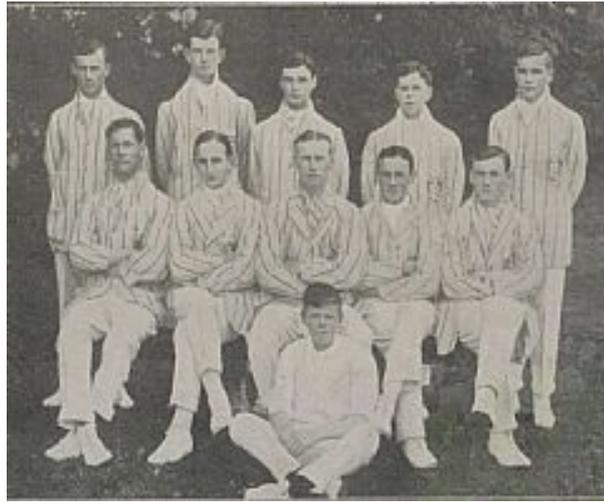
George Herbert Forty does not appear as having been killed at the 1st World War. He lived at Candie and attended Elizabeth College and was so good at cricket that he played for College from 1910 to 1914 and captained the College side in 1914. He obtained a scholarship to Exeter College but abandoned this in Aug 1914 and took up a commission in the DCLI. He was wounded by gunshot in the thigh later in 1914, he was wounded again in the chest in 1918 and due to his injuries he was sent back to England where he died in May 1922.



Capt G H Forty

CWGC.org

Although his wounds contributed to his death it falls beyond the Commonwealth War Grave Commission's cut-off date of 31st August 1921. He was awarded the Military Cross with his citation reading "Temporary Captain George Herbert Forty, Duke of Cornwall's light Infantry, for conspicuous gallantry in action. He brought his company up under intense fire to reinforce another battalion, displaying great courage and initiative. Later, although wounded, he stuck to his post and re-organised the line. He has on many previous occasions done fine work."



Elizabeth College 1st XI in 1913

Priaulx Library

CE Blad (3131) TG Marshall (3117) TS Dobree (3198) *EC D'A Collings (3127)*  
*FS Layard (3133)*  
*PEN Howard (3246)* GH Forty (3058) WL Ozanne (3084) LW Hart (3205) JV  
Blad (3130)  
CM Douth (3281)

Notwithstanding the cut-off date the record of Maj Wilfred Thomas de Lacey Clark who is registered in the roll-of-honour when he was injured in the Dardanelles (Turkey) in July 1915 and died later in Guernsey in Feb 1919. There is also the case of Maj Frank Barclay Anderson, a PT instructor in the Royal Marines, who was retired through ill-health in 1917 and died in England in June 1919. Another in this line is that of Capt Henry Tupper Mellish (see above) who played 1st XI cricket for the College in 1907 and 1908. He was wounded in France but died in Guernsey in Oct 1917. Yet again Frank Gordon Hamilton is included in the list but he was accidentally drowned whilst bathing in the Dardanelles in Aug 1915.

There is also Capt Arthur Hugh Dobbs who attended Elizabeth College from 1901 to 1905 and mysteriously is not on the list of those who lost their life according to [www.greatwarci.net/memorials/guernsey/lists/ec.php](http://www.greatwarci.net/memorials/guernsey/lists/ec.php) However according to [www.elizabethcollege.gg/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/At\\_remembrancelist-WWI.pdf](http://www.elizabethcollege.gg/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/At_remembrancelist-WWI.pdf) he is listed. Fighting with the 76th Punjabis he was killed near Kut el Awara in Mesopotamia (at Bazra) in April 1916 aged 28. He had a brother who fought and survived the war.



Capt Arthur Hugh Dobbs

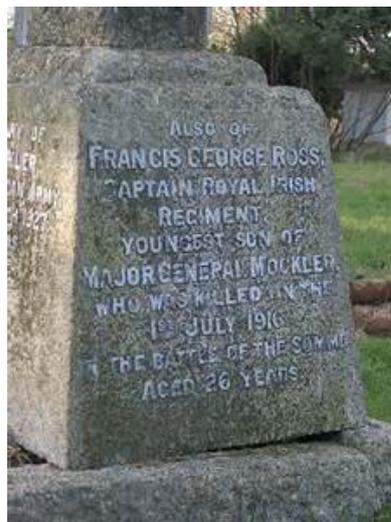
Capt Francis George Ross Mockler, who was a promising artist, attended Elizabeth College from 1905 to 1908 and captained the cricket team in his last year. He was born in Norwood and the younger son of Major General and Mrs E Mockler of the Grange, St Peter Port. He was reported missing on 2nd July 1916 from the Royal Irish Fuseliers while bombing the German 3rd line trenches and was believed to have been killed at the Somme on 1st July. He was mentioned in despatches and on 17th May was awarded the Military Cross by King George at Buckingham Palace. He has a memorial at Thiepval near the Somme and another at Le Foulon. He was considered to be one of the best all round athletes of Elizabeth College. He was captain of cricket but also played soccer in which he played 3 Muratti matches winning two and scoring 2 goals. He set a new batting record of an average of 43.6 until surpassed by JV Blad.

He had a brother, Major Edward Claude, who also captained the College team in 1907. He was in the Kings Own Ghurka Rifles (Malaun Regiment) and survived the war. He was the Elizabeth College Sports Champion in the three years 1905 to 1907



Capt F G R Mockler

Weekly Press



□Capt F G R Mockler gravestone

Capt Henry Byng Leapingwell in 1898 played twice against Victoria College scoring 0 and 8. He was in the 97th Decca Infantry in the Indian army and was killed in Mesopotamia in Jan 1916, his memorial being at Basra, Iraq. He was the Elizabeth College Sports Champion in 1901.



H B Leapingwell at Sandhurst in 1904

There is an interesting tie-up with another Old Elizabethan, Montague Middleton Barney, who was also killed in April 1916 aged 26. He was the only son of Mrs Barney of High Street, St Peter Port. On leaving school he left for America as a mining engineer and arrived back from Nevada to join the Army. He was married to Phyllis the 3rd daughter of Rev J Le Brun, the vicar of Alderney. Mrs Barney was in England at the time of his death on a visit to Mrs HB Leapingwell, her daughter.



M M Barney

Weekly Press

Lt John Mathieson Forrester scored 0\* and 0\* in 1892 against Victoria College. He was killed in France with the South Africa contingent in 1916, his memorial at Warlencourt British Cemetery. His brother was invalided out of France with shell shock.

George Stranger was killed at Doulieu, France in April 1918. His brother Capt Harry Easterbrook Knollys Stranger was a good cricketer and captained his school side in Marlow for 3 years. Having joined the 1st Battalion of the RGLI as a 2nd Lieutenant but almost a year earlier than his brother on 17 December 1916 he was awarded a Military Cross and his citation states: "He held an important bridgehead during a period of strenuous fighting at close quarters. He collected and organised men of several units, and held the bridge successfully against all the enemy's efforts to break through. He set a splendid example of courage and determination." The only one of the brothers who was married he was 27 and an acting Captain when he was injured in the same action as George, but he survived for a month before dying of his wounds on 11 May 1918. The eldest brother Frank fought with the Australian Infantry and was killed in March 1918. All three brothers died within 6 weeks of each other.



George, Harry and Frank Stranger in 1905

Greatwarci.net

Capt James Travers Blount-Dinwiddie was at College from 1898 to 1908. He gained three scholarships for Pembroke College, Oxford, and gained a degree in Law. He was part of the Border Regiment and took part in the Dardanelles landings in April 1915 but was wounded three days later, rejoined his regiment in June, was wounded again in Aug while leading his men up Hill 70, Anafarta Ridge, in the Dardanelles and died of his wounds in Sept 1915 at the Empire Hospital in London. He was buried in Auberley Church Cemetery in Gloucestershire. He played cricket as well for Oxford University. Mentioned in despatches but died at the age of 24.



Capt J T Blount-Dinwiddie

There were also many who were injured, not the least Capt John Valdemar Blad who was wounded at the Somme in 1916 but survived before retiring from the Army in 1932. His brother Maj Carl Edward Blad fought in France and Belgium where he was wounded but survived until he too retired in June 1947.

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Schola Elizabetha Reginae volume III

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