

La Banque d'la Cârre The bank on the corner

On the 11th January 1886 the Jersey Banking Company collapsed, sparking a financial crisis. The building, which didn't collapse as Jan de la Maze had understood, still stands as the NatWest on the corner. Jan de la Maze (i.e. John from Saint Catherine's Bay) was a character probably created by the Reverend Charles Picot (1840-1921). After working as a teacher at Millbrook, Charles Picot took holy orders. He served in Guernsey, and returned to Jersey to take up post at First Tower. He became chaplain to the Hospital and the Prison in Newgate Street, and curate at All Saints Church in The Parade. He wrote ghost stories and humorous tales in Jèrriais under the pen-name of C. du Mont, and it is suspected that he used the pen-name of Jan de la Maze, supposedly a fisherman, for saltier stories that would not have been seemly for a clergyman to be openly associated with.

La Faithe The cattle market, Minden Place

EJ Luce describes the contrast between high fashion in 1911 and the cattle market in Minden Place. Not only did EJ Luce (1881-1918) write topical satirical poetry for the newspaper La Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey, but prose as well.

Des Prix fos! - Crazy prices!

George d'La Forge recalls in 1974 the Mafeking riots which broke out in 1900 between English speakers and French speakers in Saint Helier. George F. Le Feuvre (1891-1984) was born in Saint Ouen, and emigrated to North America after WWI. He became a United States citizen and retired in 1946. In retirement, he travelled, returning to Jersey regularly, and wrote prolifically under the pen-name George d'La Forge, contributing hundreds of articles of reminiscence and commentary. Most articles were written from outside Jersey. He subscribed to the Jersey Weekly Post, and often wrote in response to items he spotted in the newspaper.

Noël and Porter - 1889

Noël and Porter was a retail landmark of Saint Helier for many years. The department store building was sold to British Home Stores in 1966. The origins of the business, as we see in this extract, was in the drapery business of Mr Porter in King Street. Whether Mr Porter's stock benefited from the satirical recommendations of Jan de la Maze, a character probably created by the Reverend Charles Picot (1840-1921), can only be guessed at.

Au Cinéma West - 1922

George W. de Carteret (1869-1940) wrote topical commentary in Jèrriais in the newspapers under the pen-name Caouain (Owl). The Owl supposedly lived in a flat over the newspaper offices in the Royal Square and would fly round the parish halls, perching in corners to overhear the latest political gossip and electoral titbits, when he wasn't involved in altercations with his wife, Marie Hibou. In this extract from an article in Les Chroniques de Jersey, we get a picture of life when West's Cinema in Bath Street was showing silent films for the entertainment of Islanders. T.J. West opened his cinema on the site in 1909. The cinema closed in 1972.

Texts for the trail have been abridged and modernised in spelling. Complete texts, and other works by featured writers, are available online. Copies of the posters and this leaflet can be downloaded from www.jerriais.org.je

L'écriture des textes a été modernisée. Vous pouvez télécharger les affiches et les feuillets sur le site d'Ithangnie de L'Office, et vous trouverez un fléchage de textes sur les Pages Jèrriaises.

 **L'Office du Jèrriais**

+44 1534 449290

info@jerriais.org.je

www.jerriais.org.je

**words and
places**

**a literature trail
in Jèrriais
reflecting
Saint Helier's character
in poetry and prose**

**des patholes et
des plaiches**

**a project for
La Fête de Saint Hélier
prepared by
L'Office du Jèrriais**



Sanctuaire du Poète Poet's Sanctuary

Jean Sullivan (or John Sullivan, 1813-1899) was one of the very few Jersey poets to write in the now-vanished Saint Helier dialect. He was an antiquarian, a patriotic Royalist, a notary public, and a rather roguish character who had occasional brushes with the law. He wrote flowery poetry in a lofty style in Jèrriais, French and English, and also received permission from Buckingham Palace to translate one of Queen Victoria's books into Jèrriais - but never published the translation. This extract comes from a fantastical 1863 poem that mixes science fiction, witchcraft, politics and Saint Helier lowlife.

Hélas! Hélas!! Ah! 'My Good.' Alas, alas! Goodness me.

Mathilde de Faye (1846 - 19??) wrote under the pen-name Georgie and, with her younger sister Alice, contributed lively poetic portraits of social life in Jersey at the end of the Victorian era and into the C20th. The de Faye sisters are important in Jèrriais literature for the insight they give into the interests of women of the period - especially women of the town, rather than the traditional literary depiction of the farmer's wife. This is an extract from a long description of de Gruchy's merchandise, and the poem may well have been a commission - an example of commercial product placement.

La Compiainte d'eune Vaque The cow's lament

Edwin John Luce (1881-1918) wrote under the pen-name Elie. This is an extract from a long poem about the hardships of a cow's life - the epic autobiography of a Jersey cow in verse. At the end of the poem, the cow is shipped to America, never to see her calf or Jersey ever again. The picture painted of Jersey agriculture, the cattle shows and breeding programme, seen as though from the cow's viewpoint, is striking - and typical of Elie's inventive approach which still sounds fresh and direct today. Although he died tragically in the 1918 flu epidemic which hit Jersey hard, EJ Luce is still one of the most frequently performed Jèrriais authors at the Jersey Eisteddfod today.

Eune Arlévée en Ville An afternoon in town

PW Luce (1882-1966) was the brother of EJ Luce. The Luce brothers were born in Saint Lawrence and both became journalists. EJ became editor of Les Chroniques de Jersey, Jersey's last French language newspaper, while PW emigrated to Canada and worked on newspapers there, sending occasional poems back to Jersey. This is an extract from a dramatic monologue depicting a day out shopping in town. The female speaker chisels her way round town, trying to get the better of every encounter and never letting anyone else get a word in edgeways.

Merrienne et les voleurs en Ville - Mary Ann and the thieves in town

Edward Le Brocq (1877-1964) wrote columns about Ph'lip and Merrienne, an opiated old couple from Saint Ouen, in various newspapers. The Ph'lip and Merrienne stories started in The Critic, and after the Liberation transferred to the Morning News. When that paper closed in 1949, the weekly column became a feature of Les Chroniques de Jersey. When Les Chroniques closed in 1959, Ph'lip and Merrienne continued their domestic wrangling in the Evening Post until the author's death. In this 1961 article, Merrienne voices a familiar complaint about prices - nothing changes.

La Pouôrre Statue The Poor Statue

John Lock (1831-19??) wrote under the pen-name of Ch'la S'Peut. He lived and worked for many years in London, and contributed entertainment to Jersey Society in London dinners, besides sending poetry and prose to newspapers back home. Unveiled in 1751, the statue of George II was in a dilapidated state by the mid-C19th and the pedestal was used to post headlines by the newspaper offices round the Royal Square. After a stabbing incident between rival flyposters, the practice was eventually prohibited.

La Taxe sus not' Biêthe The tax on our beer

This extract is typical of the topical satirical poetry EJ Luce contributed to the newspaper La Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey. When that newspaper merged with its old rival La Chronique de Jersey, he became editor of the joint publication until his death. One of the features of Jèrriais literature is its immediacy and what has been described as its "satirical gaze". What with elections, parish assemblies, and all the controversies of Island life, Jèrriais authors have never been short of subject matter.

La Belle et Brave P'tite Île - The beautiful and brave little island

Jean Dorey (1831-1872) was born in Saint Helier at La Ville ès Nouaux. He worked abroad as a printer, but retired back to Jersey for reasons of health. This is an extract from a history of Jersey in verse begun in Jersey in 1863 and completed in London in 1864. The poem covers Jersey history from the Romantic imagery of druids conducting sacrifices at dolmens, through Romans, the martyrdom of our patron saint, and mediaeval battles, to the Battle of Jersey in 1781, as in these verses.

Lé cidre - Cider

Augustus Aspley Le Gros (1840-1877) was the founding secretary of La Société Jersiaise, was elected Connétable of Saint Peter in 1873, and elected Jurat in 1875. His poetry has a human and elegiac quality, but he could also demonstrate a sense of humour. His early death was a loss to Jersey politics and literature.

L'Eglyise dé Saint-Hélyi et ses travaux suspendus The Church of Saint Helier and its interrupted building works

Jean Sullivan (1813-1899), as a historian and antiquarian, took an interest in the architectural remodelling of the Town Church that took place in the C19th. This extract is from a Romantic fantasia inspired by an almost Gothic vision of a church in ruins.