

## A Brehaut Family some 400 years ago

By MARIE DE GARIS

The origins of the Brehauts in Guernsey are somewhat obscure. It is believed that the family came from Brittany, there being de Brehauts in that part of France as late as 1668. The story goes that the first Brehaut came to the island in a worm-eaten old boat. In connection with this, a rude little ditty that other children taunted little Brehaut children with, ran thus:

Berhaöut, Berhaöut,  
La maire est haöute,  
Et ton baté,  
Qu'est pllöin d'magaöts!

However that may be, it is certain that the Brehauts have been established in Guernsey for centuries. It is interesting to note that the Extente of 1331 spells the name Brehault, according to the Ile-de-France or Parisian dialect which was adopted a century earlier as the correct French, whereas locally we always use the older Norman pronunciation and say 'Berhaut' as we do another old Guernsey surname Brouard, which we pronounce Berouard. This placing of the vowel 'E' before the consonant 'R' is one of the major differences between Norman and Parisian French.

Torteval appears to have been 'the cradle of their race' in Guernsey. At the time of the Extente of 1331 six of the eight tenants of the Fief des Huit Bouvées in that parish were of that name. Four of the six bore the Christian name Jean. There have been Jean Brehauts in Torteval ever since. None are then mentioned in any other parish, but by the end of the following century the Brehauts had become established in several of the country parishes, even as far as the Cätel.

In the year 1500 Jean Bonamy, des Catches, St. Martin's, King's Procureur, and one of the most wealthy and influential men in the island, went to Rome on a pilgrimage with a party of other Guernseymen. Whilst there, having no doubt made suitable payment to the Church, Bonamy caused a Mass to be sung at the Altar in the crypt of St. Sebastian for the souls of certain friends and relatives in Guernsey. Among these was Pierre Brehaut, des Hyvelins and Collas Le Messurier and his wife. Les Hyvelins remains today only as the name of one of the four cantons of the parish. Being that in which the Church stands, it is the chief canton.

Pierre Brehaut and Jean Bonamy were connected through the Le Messuriers, Bonamy's wife being Jenette, daughter of Pierre Le Messurier, who was brother of Alichette Le Messurier, wife of Collas Brehaut, a relative of Pierre Brehaut.

Pierre Brehaut died shortly after Bonamy's return to Guernsey, leaving a son, Lienart or Leonard.

The 1504 Livre de Perchage of the Fief Lihou mentions Leonard as being the owner of at least twenty vergées of land in the small dependancy of Notre Dame de Lihou, in the Marais Gouies area (on both sides of the present-day Plaisance Road). He also was the owner of a similar area at Les Marchez and in the Fief Crochon. All these lands and other property which as time went on, he bought, is situated to the east of the parish church, the "haut d'St. Pierre" district, in the triangle Marais Gouis - Les Marchez - Les Catches.

the base of the triangle roughly corresponding with the St. Pierre-du-Bois - St. Saviour's boundary and touching the Forest at one of the acute angles. This land is all in the Ivelin Canton. The period was a time in Guernsey history when a lot of enclosing of land was being undertaken, and the old Livres de Perchage are full of references to someone's "neuf courtil" or "neuve piêche". Present-day field names are almost a register of these 16th and 17th century owners. The Brehauts gave their name to a district, "La Contrée des Brehauts", as well as to a way-side pre-Reformation Cross which stood on the site still known as "La Croix des Brehauts" facing Sion Chapel in the centre of the Brehaut country. One field does bear the name "Le Courtil des Brehauts". It is situated on the La Tourelle property a few yards east of the place where the old Cross stood and adjoining the enclosed garden "le potager" in which the Brehaut house once stood. This paper is concerned chiefly with Leonard and some of his immediate descendants. In truth he can be described as not only their common ancestor but, through their numerous offspring, the ancestor of most islanders whose forbears hailed from the west of Guernsey. He was one of our roots. How he and his family acquired their wealth we do not know. In those days one did not become rich by just farming. A document among the Brehaut papers may provide a clue.

It is a proclamation in Spanish dated 1459 signed by Inigo Darceo, Treasurer of Spain and representative of King Henry IV of Castille, stating that he had seen a safe conduct from the King for certain English merchants Thomas de Saumarey, John Dausson, Thomas Henry, and William Esstur, their servants, sailors, etc., to come and go for purposes of trade between England and France in accordance with an agreement between the King of Castille and the King of France (Charles VII) and ordering all Spaniards to observe this safe conduct. At one time this proclamation bore Darceo's seal, but it is now missing.

Guernsey being a port of call for ships trading between England and the rest of Europe, many of the islanders were concerned with this traffic, either as traders themselves, or as seafarers. It is quite likely that Leonard's father or grandfather may have been a captain on a Guernsey ship needing this document as a passport, or as a protection from privateers. So far as we know, the Brehauts were not traders or shipowners themselves at that time. No Brehaut merchant's mark or seal has up to now been found, but the document may have come into the Brehaut collection through marriage.

A short time after his father's death Leonard Brehaut became one of the St. Pierre-du-Bois churchwardens, the other being Jurat Pierre Le Messurier. A rental roll, started on November 15th, 1511, at a parish meeting held within the church, in the presence of the Bailiff, James Guille, and Jurats Thomas de Saumarey and Jean de Garis, was compiled at the request of "pyeres Le Messurier, sen. and Leonard Brehault, procureurs and general Attorneys of the fabric and trésor of the said Church". The purpose of the meeting was for the Bailiff and Jurats to hear and record "certain engagements and acknowledgements of certain rentes and revenues owed to the Trésor in wheat, money, capons, hens" (for these last the old word "guellins" was used) and other annual rentes which several property owners "des gens de biens" as the Rental terms them, acknowledge to owe annually at the feast of St. Michel au Mont de Gargane.

This Rental is in two parts, one for the "Trésor" and the other, consisting mostly of remembrances and obits, for the "Cure" and several apparently widely spaced out meetings were needed to complete it. The Trésor roll was finished on June 28th, 1513, and was sealed with the seal of the Bailiwick.



This seal is now missing. The second section, that belonging to the "Cure", was not begun until nine years later, on November 15th, 1522. The same bailiff and three jurats were present as was also "Syre" Pierre le Messurier a kinsman of the churchwarden Pierre le Messurier, acting as vicar of Master Thomas Cotyl, an Englishman who was rector of St. Pierre-du-Bois at the time. Le Messurier also acted later in a similar capacity to Cotyl's successor, Andrew Powes. This is the first instance we have of absentee clerics in the parish. It is extremely doubtful if these two men ever even came to Guernsey at all, but they collected their stipends, out of which they would pay the resident curate a small wage. However, "Syre" Pierre became rector in his own right in 1534. He was what is described as a "peasant priest", a local man who lived humbly with his neighbours, of little learning, just sufficient qualifications for his Office, and the ability to sign his name and collect the dues owed to the Church.

In this Rental, Leonard Brehaut acknowledged to owing for his wife, one bushel of wheat rente and six silver pennies. The feast day of St. Michel au Mont de Gargane, when all these assessments became due, was celebrated on May 8th, and no doubt when the parishioners forgathered in the vicinity of the Church with their offerings, the occasion was taken to hold a "son" or fair.

Leonard had four children, one son and three daughters, who in time were married into equally well-to-do families. The son, Pierre, later Jurat Pierre Brehaut, married Genette le Feuvre. A daughter married Leonard Blondel, one of the immensely powerful Blondel family of St. Saviour's. Leonard Blondel's father was Jurat Jean Blondel brother of Jurat Collas or Nicolas Blondel. When Nicolas died in 1550 Leonard Blondel was appointed Jurat in his place, one of the few instances we have of father and son sitting together on the Jurat's bench. The second Brehaut daughter, Elizabeth, married James le Messurier, second son of Jurat Pierre le Messurier, Churchwarden. They had three sons, James, Leonard and Thomas. Leonard le Messurier was one of the six new Jurats elected in 1565 when seven were deposed by order of the Privy Council, his cousin Collas le Messurier being elected at the same time. He only had daughters, but his young brother, Thomas, was the ancestor of the Maison d'Aval branch of the le Messurier family.

The youngest of Leonard Brehaut's daughters, Jaquette Brehaut, married twice. Her first husband was Collas Brouard and her second, Jean le Messurier, was son of Jurat Jean le Messurier of the Foulon, wool merchant, and Jouane Henry, his wife, and a grandson of Jurat Pierre le Messurier, Churchwarden of St. Pierre du-Bois. The two sisters, Elizabeth and Jaquette, married uncle and nephew. Jaquette Brehaut is the direct ancestress of both the Brouard family in the west of the island and of the le Messuriers of Le Foulon and later of Alderney. She had the rather rare distinction of being the mother of two sons bearing the same Christian name with a different surname, Jean Brouard and Jean le Messurier.

All through the period covered by this paper those three families, Brehaut, Blondel and le Messurier, married and intermarried to a most perplexing degree. The generations fused with one another in a quite unsolvable fashion. To confuse matters further the choice of male Christian names was strictly limited in the three families to about half-a-dozen, Leonard, Pierre, Jean, James, Thomas and Nicolas or Collas. Seldom was there less than two of them on the Jurat's bench, although one must remember that a Jurat then was a less rare individual than he became later. With a population of about 8,000, one

person in 600 became a Juré-Justicier or "magistrat". If one had plenty of money, was of the right sex, and belonged to the right family — this august bench was then one close cousinage — one could expect almost as a matter of course to occupy a place on it.

During his lifetime Leonard Brehaut acquired more and more land and rentes, especially fields within the area already mentioned — in the Haut de St. Pierre — and a few of the contracts for these properties are still in existence. By the 1540's his son Pierre, "Pierre fils Lienart" was doing the buying. Leonard was obviously dead.

Pierre Brehaut and others sold "par audience de paroisse" ten vergées of land at the Clos Landais taken in saisie from Pierre Brouard to Jean de Garrys for the sum of 21 bushels  $\frac{1}{2}$  cabotel and 1 denereal of wheat rente. He bought from Jean Vidamour one of the three fields known as La Ville Hérode and exchanges with Jean Brehaut, a kinsman, a field in Torteval parish for a second of these Ville Hérode fields. La Ville Hérode must have been from its name, Ville, a small hamlet with a few dwellings long before the Brehaut time, although one of these fields that Pierre Brehaut acquired, situated between the two houses now known as Plaisance Villa and La Ville Hérode probably did have some sort of dwelling even in his time, it was still there in 1787 and is clearly marked on the Duke of Richmond's map. There is no mention of a house in the contracts. In point of fact houses are seldom mentioned, even in the early Livres de Perchage at all. To the Guernseyman of the period, it was the land, the fields and the rentes due on them that mattered. People still lived in what were no better than hovels, which were generally sited in hidden valleys or into banks of rising ground for protection, merging into the landscape. Rude structures made out of the ground, they stood on, of stones and gravel and earth, they were quickly erected and easily came apart again. These hovels were accounted of so little value that as soon as a dwelling became uninhabited it was destroyed and the land on which it stood ploughed up. They consisted of one room only and were most unhygienic, of course, but people survived. Poor and squalid as they were, they meant home to our ancestors, "la maisaon". It is interesting to note that the present-day Guernsey-French word for the household living room is still "la maisaon".

Most people did little more than sleep in these crude dwellings, except in winter. Until comparatively recent times Guernsey people lived mostly in the open air, even when substantial roomy houses were commonplace. A "terpi" set in some sheltered spot was well backed with sods "des piettes", and on this the housewife did all her cooking. Near the terpi she placed her spinning wheel, "son rouet", at which she worked, or else she knitted while she kept the fire going with wisps of furze "des chimmets d'jaon" or "des quouaipiaux" gathered from the fields by her children.

The sixteenth century was a time of stress, trouble and change for all Europe, and Guernsey was no exception. Pirates prowled more daringly along the sea routes, as many islanders found to their cost. Many of our people were caught and consigned to the galleys by their captors. The richer were ransomed, but the poorer never saw their native land again.

In Guernsey there was great poverty, but some men were doing quite well. The Jurats and their friends were not becoming poorer. They continued to acquire more properties and rentes, often in saisies. They started building solid stone houses containing several rooms and even, in some cases, an upper storey. The Brehauts, either Leonard or Pierre, built theirs as has been stated, at La Tourelle, on the property now owned by Mr. H. Bougourd. The

name Tourelle means a small tower. There might have been some sort of watch tower at a very early date, we shall never know. The present tower was built by the Allès family (who bought the place in the mid-eighteenth century from the Brehauts) about 100 years ago to give substance to the name.

The religious storms raging all across Europe also affected Guernsey. When Henry VIII broke with Rome and abolished the Mass and confiscated all Church properties, those in Guernsey also went to the Crown. Relics were destroyed and the wayside Crosses, including La Croix des Brehauts, taken away. Nobody protested, Huguenots fleeing from France were given a warm welcome. But when Henry's successor, the young Protestant Edward VI, died and his sister Mary, a rabid Catholic, reigned instead, the wind of change turned full circle. Her dedicated purpose was to bring back into the Roman fold every part of her realm, however far-flung, at whatever cost, and woe betide any who tried to stop that purpose. In Guernsey the Jurats had begun to have second thoughts about all these Huguenots. There was nothing diffident about these new islanders. They were out to get power. Power meant religious freedom for them, and they were knocking at the Jurat's stronghold. There was nothing much the latter could do, but they were desperately uneasy. When Mary came to the throne in 1552 the Jurat's bench became Catholic again to a man. The Huguenots were persecuted and many fled back to their native country. The Jurats, and the clerics who had recanted their erst-while Protestantism with them, were more than eager to prove their new Catholic zeal, and to do this, cruel and unwise things were done. The most quoted example, of course, was the burning to death as heretics of three women and the new-born son of one of them on July 19th, 1556, at the Tower Hill in the Bordage. These three women, Catherine Cauchée and her two daughters, Guillemine Guillbert and Perotine Massys were first brought before the Ecclesiastical Court, consisting of the Dean, Jacques Amy, who was also rector of St. Saviour's, and four country rectors, Jean Allès, of the Forest; Pierre Tardif, St. Martin's; Guillaume Paquet, Câtel; and Jean Navetel, St. Andrew's; which pronounced them guilty and sent them to the Royal Court for sentence. The Court comprising the Bailiff, Helier Gosselin, and ten of the twelve Jurats promptly ordered the unfortunate women to be taken to the stake and burnt, and the sentence was carried out forthwith. The two missing Jurats were Pierre Brehaut and his brother-in-law, Leonard Blondel. Brehaut was essentially a kind and generous man, as we shall see later, and the absence of the two from that particular Court sitting was in all likelihood intentional. In any case the Brehauts and the Massys were connected by marriage.

A considerable amount of whitewash has been splashed on this awful deed since, but really, nothing can be said in extenuation of it. It was made doubly horrible by the fact that these women must have been known personally to most of their judges. The mother belonged to an old-established St. Martin's family. Her two husbands came from the west, the Massys, at that time, especially, were quite large landowners in St. Pierre-du-Bois and St. Saviour's. Those men, old Jurat Jean Blondel, Jacques Amy, Jean Allès, Pierre Tardif and the rest; it was their acquaintances, women from the Haut Pas, that they were consigning to the flames.

In 1558 Queen Mary died, to the great relief of the English people who, in spite of all her efforts and that of the Roman Catholic priesthood, remained faithful to their new religion. They welcomed her sister Elizabeth, both for her own sake and because she was a Protestant. But in Guernsey it was a different matter. Being near to, and in touch with France, the Jurats knew

that only Elizabeth's life stood between them and a return to Catholicism — her heir being the young Scottish Queen Mary, married to the Dauphin of France, and she was a Catholic. Nobody knew that Elizabeth would be Queen of England for 45 years. The Jurats and the clerics dug their heels in. They were now Catholic and Catholic they would stay. They were not repeating the Edwardian experiment again. We can visualize them telling each other vehemently in Guernsey-French "pas d'aout de chavirrie", no more veering about. On orders from England the priests were deprived of their livings and Calvinist pastors put in their places. Jacques Amy was superseded as Dean by John After.

Pierre Brehaut had not signed the womens' death warrant but he made no secret as to where his sympathies lay. He was an out and out Catholic and did not attempt to conceal his distaste for all things Protestant. Especially was it bitter for him to see the new dean, John After, given the living of his own parish of St. Pierre-du-Bois. Dean After worked unceasingly to establish the Protestant religion finally in Guernsey, Brehaut fought hard to overthrow it. To his house at La Tourelle came the Blondels, the Le Messuriers, the Le Feuvres, Colin Halouvriz, Jurat Thomas Effart, and those similarly minded and they plotted and schemed how they could achieve this. In the early 1560's a petition was prepared, and the whole island canvassed for signatures; and it was sent to the Privy Council appealing against the Calvinists and their practices. The petition complained bitterly against Dean After, who among other things "forbids the people to kneel in Church and to lift their bounettes" (their caps) at the name of Jesus; Saints days and festival days not observed; the office, the Sacrament and the burial service improperly administered; Church doors kept shut during the service and no one can come or go; etc. etc." The Dean having arrived penniless in the island just three years before is now not only Dean but Rector of the two parishes of St. Martin's and St. Pierre-du-Bois and has laid hold of all the plate, jewels and ornaments of the Churches and has converted all rentes and obits for his own use". "For all that" the petition ended contemptuously, "he can neither teach nor preach". This petition was sent up to London with two thousand signatures, a fourth of the then island population.

Naturally John After was not taking all this lying down. He defended himself in a counter plea asserting that the Jurats and their supporters had themselves stolen the Church plate, and converted the rentes and moneys for their own use. He claimed that the signatures on the Jurats' petition were forgeries. He also informed Her Majesty and the Privy Council exactly what he thought of these Jurats and their ways of life, both in public and in private.

At this distance of time it is quite impossible to find out which of these two factions was in the right. If indeed one quarter of the Guernsey inhabitants signed the Jurats' petition in good faith, then obviously Protestantism was established in the island contrary to the wishes of the population. Also equally obviously the degree of literacy among our people must have been considerably higher than that of any other part of Europe.

As for the charge and counter-charge of stealing the Church plate and rentes, there is good evidence that the Plate was collected together by the Catholic element and hidden, later being secretly sent to France. Rentes could not be hidden like that, and as a matter of fact, they were not stolen. The St. Pierre du Bois 'rentals' for 1687 and 1689 consist mostly of the rentes due 150 years previously. If pre- and post-reformation rentals in other parishes were consulted they would probably bear this out.

England was becoming increasingly Protestant, France stayed Catholic,

Guernsey was very near to France, therefore it was necessary to the Privy Council that our religion should be the same as in England rather than like the French. In 1565 Dean After got his revenge. The Jurats and clergy who had had a hand in sentencing the three Protestant women (now called martyrs) were deposed from office and summoned to England to answer for this deed, and also to explain the reasons why they were hindering the Queen's religion.

On this latter charge (for he was not implicated with the first), Jurat Pierre Brehaut received his summons also. Centuries later, the Allès claimed to have in their possession the Royal Warrant "signed by Queen Elizabeth herself" which was discovered in a secret cupboard in the old Brehaut house when it was pulled down when they bought the property from his descendants.

After their departure there was silence. No one on the island knew what was happening but naturally everybody feared the worst. Later, months later, it became known that on arrival in London three of the Guernseymen, Richard de Vic, Pierre Bonamy and Pierre le Pelley, had been put in prison for a while. Later they were released and appeared before the Queen and Privy Council at Windsor. Considering the serious nature of the charges they had to answer, for which they most abjectly asked pardon, they were let off very lightly, being fined collectively £1,000 sterling, this money to be used for the repair of Castle Cornet. They were then allowed to come back to Guernsey, which one can be sure they lost no time in doing, poorer in pocket but glad to be alive. One Jurat, however, apparently did not come back with the rest, Pierre Brehaut. It was then that the legend of Brehaut and the Queen of England began to be spread about in the island. It was related to me quite recently, not yet quite forgotten in the Haut Pas, four hundred years later.

It seems that when the Guernsey party arrived at Windsor they were interviewed by the Queen and her Councillors. Brehaut caught her fancy, and she got him to talk to her about his home and the people of Guernsey. In fact he so charmed her that she insisted on keeping him by her side long after the others had returned to the island. She finally bought him a house so that he could live permanently near her Court. The legend alleges that he never returned to Guernsey, and his wife and children never saw him again.

Now the Brehauts were always noted to have what is known in Guernsey as "la langue bian pendue", a well-hinged tongue, "the gift of the gab", and it is quite probable that he and the others did have speech with the Queen (she would most certainly be curious about life in this, the most remote part of her kingdom). She might quite easily have singled him out for special attention. Also there is something rather peculiar about the collective fine of £1,000 as far as Brehaut is concerned, for apparently it did not include him. In the document containing the full account of this episode between the Jurats and other prominent Guernseymen on the one hand, and the Queen and Privy Council on the other, which is at Hatfield House, there is added almost as an afterthought, towards the end of the indictment:—

"It shall not be grievous for one Peter Brehaut to advance one hundredth poundes fyne that he and all others thereby be admonished to suffre no privy conventycles, procurations, or procurours agaynst the laws, usages and costumes of that Isle".

One Peter Brehaut may, or may not, have fascinated his sovereign but that was no reason why her Councillors of State should exempt him from punishment for all those clandestine rencontres at St. Pierre-du-Bois. He paid



up, and contrary to the legend, did come home again. He was a rich man, but £100 sterling in those days was wealth indeed, comparable at the very least to £10,000 today. Henceforward there were no more secret conclaves at La Tourelle. Brehaut became reconciled to the new order. Things became somewhat easier a few years later, when Dean Alter was succeeded as Rector of the parish by Mathurin Loumeau, a Huguenot refugee certainly but, by then, nobody expected anyone else. It was Loumeau who in 1574 when Pierre Brehaut lay dying in his house at La Tourelle, drew up the Will of his "meubles".

This Will is important. Sixteenth century Guernsey Wills are extremely rare, and it gives a very good insight into Brehaut's, and to a lesser extent, Loumeau's personality. We also get a picture of the way of life of those times.

From the most unlegal tenderness in which some of the legatees are described it was obviously written down word for word as dictated by Brehaut. The £100 fine did make considerable inroads into his fortune, but sheep still roamed over his lands. Even in late spring there was corn and to spare in his barn. There was silver and plate on his board and money hidden in whatever recess he kept it in. Servants were at his service. But the Catholic of previous years had become the Protestant in 1574. The usual pious preamble to Wills of the period contains no reference to the Virgin Mary or to the Saints. He recommends his soul to God on the merits of His Son, "mon seul Sauveur et Redempteur".

His body he wishes buried with his ancestors in the Church of St. Pierre-du-Bois and he gives £1 sterling to pay for this, the money to be used to build an annexe within the Church to store the parish munitions "auquel en pourra recueillir les poudres, bouletz, et austres munitions appartenant à laditte parroisse". Also he bequeathes another £1 to pay for the most urgent repairs to the Church.

To all his godchildren, both boys and girls, "mes filleuls et filleulles que jay nommez", two shillings sterling each. He seems to have been popular as a godfather. Fourteen people, who he names, get a similar amount, some are obviously paupers like "la femme reverend" but some are personal friends like "la femme Pierre Bonamy" the wife of Jurat Pierre Bonamy of St. Martin's.

The St. Peter's parish poor receive £1 sterling and were to be given also all the corn in his stackyard except that which was necessary for the sustenance of his family "pour l'entretien de la maison". He appoints Henri de Beauvoir to be responsible for distributing these bequests.

The poor in each of the island parishes are left a similar sum of money (£1), and one wonders how deep Pierre Brehaut's Protestantism went, for the men he appoints to be responsible to handle these bequests are all known Catholic sympathisers. The reinstated rector of St. Saviour's, Jacques Amy, and Jurat Jean Blondel are given this charge for their parish; Colas Halouvriz for the Forest; Master Guillaume Paquet and Edward le Feuvre for the Câtel; Colas Lihou, St. Andrew's; and Master François Regnant, Rector of St. Sampson's.

To his wife Genette, Brehaut gives £60 sterling and three silver cups or tazzas, the second-best one, the fourth, and one of the smaller cups "ung des petites tasses".

His elder son, Pierre, "mon fils Perot" the best silver cup. The younger, Thomas, is bequeathed £40 sterling and two silver cups. His daughter,

Perotine, wife of Pierre Robillard, also receives £40 but only one cup, and some livestock, "une vache et le bœuf que jay presté à son mary".

Perotine's little daughter, which her fond grandfather called "la petite Marie, sa fille, ma filleule" was also given a cup and £5 sterling.

Pierre Brehaut's other grandchildren, the two eldest of "Perot mon fils" who were born by that date were not forgotten. The little boy, Leonard, received a silver salt-cellar and goblet and £10 sterling, all these to be placed in the care of his maternal uncle, François Allès. One senses a small family mystery here and some mistrust. Had the younger man embraced the Calvinist religion too enthusiastically? Had he reproached his father for the loss to the family of that £100? The little girl, Leonard's sister, "Marie, fille de Perot mon fils" was left her grandfather's personal cup "ma petite tasse" and £5 sterling.

Brehaut's wife and the younger son Thomas were also bequeathed all his flock of sheep "tout mon bercail", excepting five pairs each which were to go to his grandchildren, young Leonard, his sister Marie and the little daughter of Perotine and Pierre Robillard. All the spring crop of lambs, however, were to go to the poor children of St. Pierre-du-Bois "les pauvres filz et filles de cette parroisse".

The two maidservants were not forgotten, Marriette was given a year-old heifer and the other maid, Lawrence, a cow. The valet, Ingrouille, was given a two-year-old cow.

Thomas Brehaut being still a minor in 1574, his father appointed 'syre' Thomas Effart, Jurat and Queen's Procureur, to be his guardian entreating him to take good care of the lad "for the sake of the affection there has been at all times between us, and also because he is Thomas' godfather".

One cannot but be conscious of the strong emotion Pierre Brehaut must have felt as he dictated these words, and Loumeau, who must have known all the implications that phrase "the affection there has been between us at all times" conveyed, good Huguenot pastor and strong anti-papist that he was, wrote it all down faithfully, word for word. It was gentle ministers such as he who smoothed the Reformation into the fabric of people's lives, and got it finally accepted, which an ambitious and autocratic man like Dean After could never do.

Brehaut's Will concludes "Faict et passé en la maison du testateur par devant moy, Maturin Loumeau, ministre de la ditte parroisse en la presence de Colas le méssurier, jurat et Pierre robillard, temoignes Le vingtième jour du mois de mars l'an de grace mil cinq cents soixante quatorze" and is signed "M. Loumeau" with an elaborate flourish.

In his turn Jurat Pierre Brehaut was gathered unto his fathers. Against the south wall of the Church, outside, there is a large flat stone, taken from inside the building many years ago. On it is the matrix for a brass figure believed to be of a man, circa 1580, attired in the clothes of the period, a flat square bonnet 'barrette' and ample quilted angle-length mantle, the 'cadeau'. He looks very dignified. If this date, 1580, is correct, there is a strong possibility that this figure represents this particular Pierre Brehaut.

It will be noted that there is no mention of furniture in the Will. At that period life was still extremely primitive and even in the houses of the rich there was very little comfort. Beds were very rare. The family and servants slept on rushes (du jaönc) spread on the earthen floor. The master and his wife occupied the 'llet d'fouaille' wrapped up in his capacious quilted 'cadeau' (a quilted bed-cover is still called a cadeau in Guernsey French). The house table was constructed by the joiner inside the living

room, and was too big to be taken out of it. This table and the 'lliet d'fouaille' or 'jônctierre' were always considered 'immeubles'. They do not appear in inventories. The 'lliet d'fouaille' is the oldest piece of Guernsey furniture in our homes. It is the direct successor of the crude platform of stones and clods that in primitive times was raised around the walls when the building was erected.

Let us picture a Guernsey farm of Brehaut's time. It was fragmented and its fields scattered very much like a present day farm. One sees an effort at concentration as when he acquired la Ville Hérode; but really all through the 16th century this Brehaut family sought to increase their land holdings in the top of St. Peter's and St. Saviour's area.

The Guernsey farmer of the period seemed to be more concerned with sheep than cows. Pierre Brehaut's Will makes it clear that he had quite a large flock. With so much land still subject at certain seasons to 'bonaön', sheep were easier animals to let roam 'à bonaön' than cows which needed daily milking. Possibly the sheep, like the Cornish sheep, were milked after the Spring lambing when 'bonaön' ceased to be lawful until the following Michaelmas. There were strict laws against overstocking, always a temptation when there are common rights to pasture. In general it was the rich man's sheep that roamed over the winter pastures. These sheep have been described as small, with four or more horns and scanty fleeces. They provided their owner with most of his meat; the fleeces provided the wool for part of the knitting industry and their skins were used for footwear and parchments for the many legal documents of the time. And tough, enduring documents the Guernsey sheep gave, as the many which have survived the neglect of the centuries shew.

Oxen did all the heavy work on the farms and were often lent or leased to other farmers. Pierre Brehaut's son-in-law was working one of Brehaut's oxen at the time the Will was drawn up. There is no mention of a horse. In fact it is rare to find horses mentioned at all much before the late 17th century. It seems incredible that there might not have been any in the island in the 16th century but it is quite possible. They were a dispensable luxury. Ox-carts wended their cumbersome way to the weekly market at les Landes du Marché or the town, and the only people who could have a conceivable use for horses were Jurats, clergymen, or parish officials to go into Town for Court sessions. As these people were all farmers they would naturally come with their own produce, for there was no idleness and no shame in work. Rich and poor worked long hours, and this on a diet that was often meagre and always monotonous.

Parsnips and corn were the two chief crops grown. The corn, wheat, barley and oats, was by far the most important. It was more than a crop. It was the staple currency. Rentes, feudal dues, and tithes were mostly payable in corn. The price of land was valued at so many quarters per vergée, a practice still usual until lately, when fields have practically ceased to be of value for themselves but as areas capable of division into tiny plots for house building.

The price of corn varied from year to year, but was mostly fixed at from 20 or 30 sols a quarter. When there was what was considered in those days a good harvest it was permitted to export a certain quantity to France. The yardstick of sufficiency was the price. When this rose to over 24 sols none was allowed to be shipped. The nearest year to the time of Brehaut's death that a sort of price index is available was the year 1581. Then we find that the Royal Court fixed the price at 28 sols or groats. A loaf (weight

unspecified, but probably a quarter) cost 3 sols at the baker's. It was cheaper to buy a hen; they were only 2 sols. At the same sitting of the Court craftsmen's wages and hours of work were also established. Hours of work were from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. in summer and from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset in winter. By comparison with the rates of pay we can get some idea of the value of Brehaut's bequests.

Skilled artisans, that is, joiners, master masons, thatchers, wool-carders and the like, were paid from 1 sol tournois to 4d sterling daily. Brehaut's domestic staff would get even less, being paid yearly. From this it will be noted that an ordinary artisan had to work at least one month or more to earn a quarter of corn. It took him at least two days to earn enough to buy a fowl and if he had a family we can surmise in what state of absolute poverty most islanders were existing, even if the poorest possessed a goat or two and perhaps a small patch of ground.

To get his alms into perspective, each poor St. Pierrais who received two shillings sterling (20 sols tournois) got the equivalent of one man's labour for several weeks, or, in sustenance nearly a quarter of corn. The £1 sterling bequeathed to the poor in the various parishes meant nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton of corn in cash to each parish. Pierre Brehaut considered that a similar sum of £1 would cover the cost of the munitions annexe to the Church. The major bequests to his family, £160 sterling, reveal what an extremely rich man he was.

Although Pierre Brehaut died more or less reconciled to the Protestant faith, the religious squabble between Reformers and Romanists went on for quite a number of years after his death, but from then on his descendants kept well out of trouble. Pierre, or Perot, the elder son, Jurat in 1592, became one of the deacons or elders, the Presbyterian equivalent of Churchwarden, of the Church, representing the parish at the island Colloque at various times. He was one of the deacons in 1598, along with James le Hurel when not only the parish consistoire but the island colloque was being defied by a young woman of the parish, his own niece, la petite Marie, Marie Robilliard. Marie had been forced into a betrothal by her parents to Roger Langlois and had pledged her vows before the colloque. Betrothal promises were held by the colloque to be as binding as the marriage vows, if not more so; no marriage was legal without its consent. Marie was deeply in love with a St. Saviour's man, James Martel, and he with her and when the time came for her wedding to Langlois she flatly refused. By a colloque ruling a marriage had to follow the engagement vows within three months, so when this interval was up Roger Langlois was summoned before it to explain the delay. "She will not marry me", complained Langlois, "she only wants Martel". Marie and James were then brought before the colloque and were then forbidden to see each other again, and the girl ordered to marry Langlois. That was in July. In September her father was ordered to keep her under control, a prisoner at home and not allow her to go anywhere outside. Despite this the lovers managed to see a good deal of each other. For two years the colloque, the parish consistoire, her parents, the unwanted fiancé tried by all possible means to bring Marie Robilliard 'au porche d'Eglise' with Langlois, but she stubbornly held out. Finally, faute de mieux, the colloque gave in. Langlois was released from his promise to marry Marie Robilliard 'on account of her sin' and she and James Martel were permitted to marry if they did public penance for their offence in their respective parishes. This entailed Marie standing in St. Peter's Church bare-foot and bare-headed, in full view of the congregation, wrapped in the

penitents' white sheet and confessing her wrong-doing so that all would hear her. She did it. Her shame was public, her head bent, but her heart was singing, for after all, she was marrying her true love. It is hoped that they lived happily ever after. This episode is worth mentioning. It was practically the only time the powerful colloque was worsted, and this was done by a simple country girl from the Haut Pas. One can imagine how glad and proud her Brehaut grandfather would have been had he lived to see it.

Jurat Pierre (Perot) Brehaut the second, was married twice. His first wife was the daughter of François Allès, his second Michelle Jenemie, daughter of Michel, of St. Saviour's. His family increased from the two born before their grandfather's death, until he had four sons and four daughters, all of whom married and had children. The eight sons and sons-in-law all became parish dignitaries in their time and three of them sat on the Jurats' bench. They took a leading part in Church affairs in their respective parishes serving as anciens and collecteurs. The Protestant ascendancy so far as the Brehaut family was concerned was complete.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks for the loan of documents to the following: The Rector and Churchwardens of St. Pierre-du-Bois, Messrs. J. H. Lenfestey, S. M. Henry, Victor Coysh, and Horace Bougourd. I wish particularly to thank Mr. T. F. Pricaulx for reading the first draft of this paper and for suggestions and corrections. Especially are my thanks due to my husband, who has undertaken a great deal of research for it.

#### SOME REFERENCES

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3. Livres de Perchage of the period.
4. 'Recueil d'Ordonnances de La Cour Royal de Guernesey'.
5. Salisbury M.S.S., Vol. 141 (Trans. Soc. Guern. 1936).
6. 'Actes du Colloquo' (1585-1619), typewritten volumes in Pricaulx Library.
7. Rental in the possession of Rector and Churchwardens of St. Pierre-du-Bois Church.
8. Various Papers by Miss E. F. Carey.
9. Reminiscences of the Brehaut family from Mr. H. Bougourd, to whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Bougourd they were related by Mr. Frederick Mansell Allès, one of the founders of the Guille-Allès Library, when he sold them La Tourelle estate. Mr. Bougourd told the writer that he himself had seen the document summoning Pierre Brehaut to Windsor in 1564, which has since been lost.

[The doggerel at the beginning of this paper and other Guernsey-French words are written in the Haut Pas form of pronunciation of our native tongue, as the Brehauts, "les Berhaöuts", themselves spoke it. "aöut" is pronounced as the English "ow" in "low", "ll" as "y", "ail" the same as "aisle".]