The Jersey Census: an historical perspective

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Introduction

The 2021 Jersey Census was conducted on 21 March. At the time of writing, the census forms were being processed and the results of the Census will be published in a series of reports beginning early in 2022. This paper briefly describes the history of censuses of Jersey. Its purpose is to put the 2021 Census in context and to provide a comprehensive description of sources of information from previous censuses.

The purpose of censuses

The page on the Government of Jersey website states that the census: –

- gives us the most accurate and up-to-date estimate of the number of people and households in Jersey
- asks questions about you and your household to build a detailed picture of Jersey today
- provides a snapshot of who we are as a community and how we live together.

It goes on to say that the census information is used by government, businesses, the public and family historians (after 100 years). Specifically, it states that the Government of Jersey uses the information to develop policies and plan services such as schools, hospitals, housing, and transport.

Governments in different jurisdictions use censuses for different purposes. Commonly, they are used in determining electoral boundaries and the allocation of government funding between areas.

Businesses now probably make limited use of census data, partly because the information is historic and also because there are now many

other sources of information about the population that provide more relevant and timely information.

For family historians, censuses are vital information and for them the real excitement in 2022 will not be the publication of the results of the 2021 census, but rather the publication of the individual census returns completed by people 100 years ago in 1921.

For historians, censuses provide vital information not only about the population but also about key variables such as housing, employment, education, and migration. The historian is interested not only in the census for a particular year but also in trends over time.

Inherent problems with censuses

Census forms are completed by individuals, or on the basis of information provided by individuals, and then aggregated and analysed professionally by statistics experts. The aggregate data are only as good as the data that are recorded, or not recorded, either by individuals completing a census return themselves or by enumerators. Until the 2021 Census, armies of census enumerators were employed, responsible for distributing census returns, providing some assistance to people in completing them and collecting completed returns to forward them to the appropriate central office. The 2021 Census was largely done online, although the option of using paper forms remained.

There are inevitable difficulties in ensuring that census returns are completed accurately. Three problems have existed for all censuses: –

- There are some 'difficult to reach' people who for whatever reason cannot be found when census forms are distributed or when they are collected. This applies particularly where people have informal living arrangements or they travel frequently, such as seamen.

- Some people struggle with completing forms either because they do not know the information that is being sought or because they are not very good at filling in forms. And some people simply cannot be bothered to complete the census form.

- Some people deliberately wish to conceal information. Although census information is regarded as strictly confidential, some people make the assumption that as it is an official form, the data they provide might be used by other relevant officials. So people living in a jurisdiction where they have no right to do so may simply not complete a form at all, or alternatively, provide incorrect information, for example in respect of place of birth.

> The same applies in respect of personal information. A completed census form may list people as being married when they were not or may incorrectly record a person as a son or daughter.

There are also very real definitional problems, particularly related to the concept of residence. Censuses are completed on a particular day and therefore record people not normally resident in an area as well as excluding some people who are normally resident but are not at home on the day in question. The figures are adjusted to exclude short term visitors and include people normally resident but not present on the census day. In the 2011 Jersey Census the figures were 2,052 and 6,061 respectively. However, there remains a particular problem in areas with significant seasonal fluctuations in the population, such has been the case in Jersey for many years. As will be shown subsequently, Jersey's involvement in the cod fishing and wider maritime industry in the 19th Century led to a significant undercount of the male population and therefore an implausibly high female/male ratio. The dominance of the tourist industry in the 1960s in particular resulted in the censuses not adequately recording either population or employment.

Comparisons between censuses are complicated by changes in definitions and also by deliberate changes in coverage. The effect of these is generally well reported for a particular census but can rather get lost over time. For example, the 2011 Jersey Census included for the first time an attempt to measure the 'undercount', that is the number of people who should have been recorded in the census but were not. A total of 1,600 people came into this category and were included in the total population figure. If the crude figures are examined then the population increased by 12.2% between 2001 and 2011, whereas on a like-for-like basis the increase was 10.2%. There were particularly significant changes in definitions between the 1821 and 1851 and between the 1911 and 1931 Censuses, which materially influenced the headline figures for the rate of population change between those censuses.

The evolution of Jersey censuses

If the expression 'census' is taken in a wide context then the various censuses of Jersey population can be divided into five categories: –

- Various informal measurements of the size of the population dating from the earliest times until 1815.

- 13 formal censuses conducted between 1821 and 1951 as part of the national UK censuses.

- A census of the civilian population conducted at the request of the German occupying forces in 1940.

- From 1961 Jersey took responsibility for conducting its own censuses although to a large extent these have remained consistent with the UK censuses. Between 1971 and 2001 the censuses were conducted at five-yearly intervals and otherwise have been at ten-yearly intervals.

- Jersey, in common with many other jurisdictions, makes annual estimates of population based on analyses of births and deaths and net migration. These estimates are particularly important for jurisdictions such as Jersey where the rate of immigration is a politically sensitive point. These annual estimates are then reconciled every 10 years with the more accurate census results.

Sadly, a common feature of these census reports is that they are difficult to access. Hard copies simply do not exist or are very rare for many of the older censuses and they have not been readily available online. This paper now considers in detail each of the various categories of censuses.

Informal censuses prior to 1821

The earliest estimates of the population of Jersey come from historians and inevitably have a significant margin of error. Following is a summary of estimates prior to the landmark 1331 Extente.

- Syvret and Stevens (1998) suggest that human occupation of Jersey first occurred during glacial times, with the earliest reliable dated human occupation going back around 250,000 years.

- Renouf (1989) suggests that between 4000 and 3000 BC it is unlikely that the population of Jersey was less than 2,000 but may have been double this. This is based on between 10 and 20 separate communities each with a population of between 200 and 250. Renouf then suggests that there was a significant decline in the population largely because of the loss of land to a rising sea level. The population may have fallen to about 500 in the middle Bronze Age (2000–1500 BC).

- There are no estimates from this time until the second millennium.

- Rybot (1937–40) used the accommodation provided by parish

> churches as a pointer to the population of the Island. He concludes that in the year 1050 there were not more than 6,000 people.

The first substantive 'census' in Jersey was the 1331 Extente, sometimes referred to as the 'Jersey Domesday Book'. It was not a census of population as we know them today but rather a record of the rents and other levies due to the King of England by tenants of Crown possessions in Jersey. That was its sole purpose. The Extente recorded, in addition to liabilities to the King, for each parish the total revenue that would be raised from the 'fouage', a tax collected every three years from all households, with some exceptions. The best translation for fouage is 'fireplace', which has led both Syvret & Stevens and Platt (2009) to describe it as a hearth tax. In England, the hearth tax was not introduced until 1692. Syvret and Stevens's analysis of the figures was:

> The hearth tax helps to assess the population of the Island; for every house had to pay a shilling and 1,865 shillings were collected. However, as certain people who owed special services were exempt from this tax, there must have been at least 2,000 houses in the Island. And, if one allows an average of six persons to a house (by no means an excessive figure in those days of large families), the population cannot have been less than 12,000.

This analysis seems reasonable. However, the average of six persons per house may be on the high side. A figure of five is probably more reasonable, which would give a figure of nearer 10,000. Five parishes had the highest estimates for total fouage liability, suggesting a population of around 1,000 each. They were Grouville, St Martin, St Ouen, St Saviour and Trinity. St Mary, St John and St Lawrence were the smallest with populations of around 500. The population of St Helier was estimated at just 800. However, all these figures are subject to a wide margin of error and can be taken as no more than rough indications.

Platt (2009) comments that the average death rate in the Black Death of 1348-9 was 30-40%, and he suggests that by the early 15th Century the population may have fallen to 4,000-5,000.

A letter sent by Henry Cornish, Lieutenant of the Earl of Hertford, estimated that there were 1,418 houses in 1541; assuming five persons to a house would give a total population of about 7,100. St Ouen, St Martin and Trinity had the largest number of houses, these three parishes being among the five largest in terms of population estimated from the 1331 Extente. Rybot (1937) quotes some later estimates:

> Heylyn [1629] was much struck by the numbers and poverty of the people. He was told that there were between 25,000 and 30,000 persons on the island. Poingdestre [1682] states that it was commonly held that the population of the island was formerly 50,000 – but does not believe it. He thinks however, that the planting of orchards at the expense of wheatlands and the neglect of agriculture due to the frenzied manufacture of knitted goods had tended to diminish the population. He says that there are 'not past twenty thousand' persons in the island.

The paper cites Dumaresq (1685) as quoting a house census in 1594, which gave 3,200 houses and one in 1685 giving 3,069 houses. Allowing five persons per house would give a population in 1594 of 16,000 and in 1685 of 15,300.

Nicolle (1991) analysed in detail evidence on the population in the 17th and 18th Centuries. A Militia roll in 1617 recorded 2,675 men, which Nicolle extrapolated to a total population of 9,900 –10,000. Nicolle suggests that the 1685 housing census implied a population of 16,200, a little above Rybot's estimate, both of which are in line with the estimate by Falle (1734) of between 15,000 and 20,000 for 1694.

Nicolle (1991) describes a manuscript copy of a 1737 census in the University of Cambridge library, probably prepared to provide evidence to support the retention of Jersey's special tax status. The document was incomplete, not covering St Helier or St Ouen, but combined with other evidence led him to suggest a population of 18,400 in 1737. Trinity was listed as the parish with the largest population and St Clement as the smallest.

The Société Jersiaise Library includes a single sheet of paper giving the population of each parish and a total population in 1770 of 19,788 and in 1788 of 20,025. It is not known how the figures were compiled. In this sheet in 1770 St Helier's position as the parish with the largest population is apparent, followed by Trinity, with St Clement having the smallest population.

The 1770 and 1806 population estimates

Censuses in 1806 and 1815 were conducted by General Don, the Governor of Jersey, specifically to provide an accurate estimate of the number of men available in case of an attack by France during the Napoleonic Wars. The 1806 census includes the names, but not ages, of the head of household, either male or female, along with their Militia rank, and the number of women and children living in the household. It also lists those that are absent. The figures by parish are included in a paper in the Société Jersiaise library together with the 1770 estimates. The 1815 census recorded, by parish, the names of males over the age of 17, their age and position in the Militia along with the

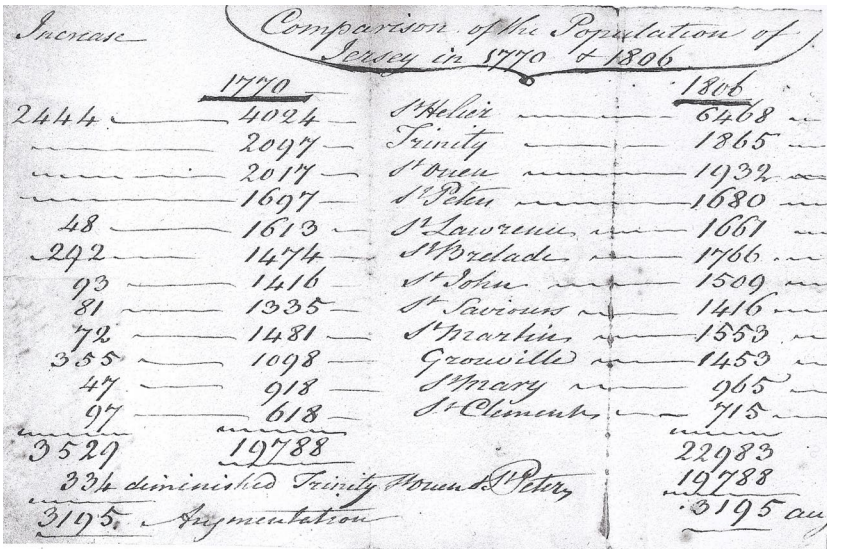


Figure 1: Jersey population by Parish 1770 and 1806. From General Don's Military Census. *Jersey Heritage, L/F/95/C/2*

number of women and children within the household.[1]

Table 1 brings together these estimates to show long-term trends in the population The table shows a modest rate of increase between 1655 and 1788, followed by a rapid increase, which continued throughout the first half of the 19th Century.

Table 1: Population of Jersey, long term-trends

Year	Population	Increase	Annual rate of increase
3000BC	2-4,000		
2000BC	500		
1050	6,000		
1331	10-12,000		
1400	4-5,000		
1541	7,000		
1617	10,000		
1685	16,200	62% (68 years)	0.70%
1737	18,400	14% (52 years)	0.25%
1788	20,025	9% (51 years)	0.16%
1821	28,600	25% (15 years)	2.40%

1 General Don's Military Census L/F/95/C/2 Jersey Archive. A full listing of the 6,000 men identified in the census is available on 'General Don's 1815 Muster'at www.theislandwiki.org/index.php/General_Don%27s_1815_Muster

1821 and 1831

The first comprehensive census of the number of people in Jersey was in 1821. This recorded the number of houses, numbers and ages of males and females and the number of people employed in agriculture, in trade, manufactures or handicraft and in neither. Names of people however were not recorded. The population was duly recorded as 28,600 but the number of females at 15,544 exceeded the number of males at 13,056 by an implausible 19%. Almost certainly this partly reflected an undercount of men, many of whom would have been on fishing vessels in the north Atlantic. In just ten years the population increased by 27.9%, an annual rate of 2.49%, to 36,582 in the 1831 census, with again a significantly higher number of women than men.

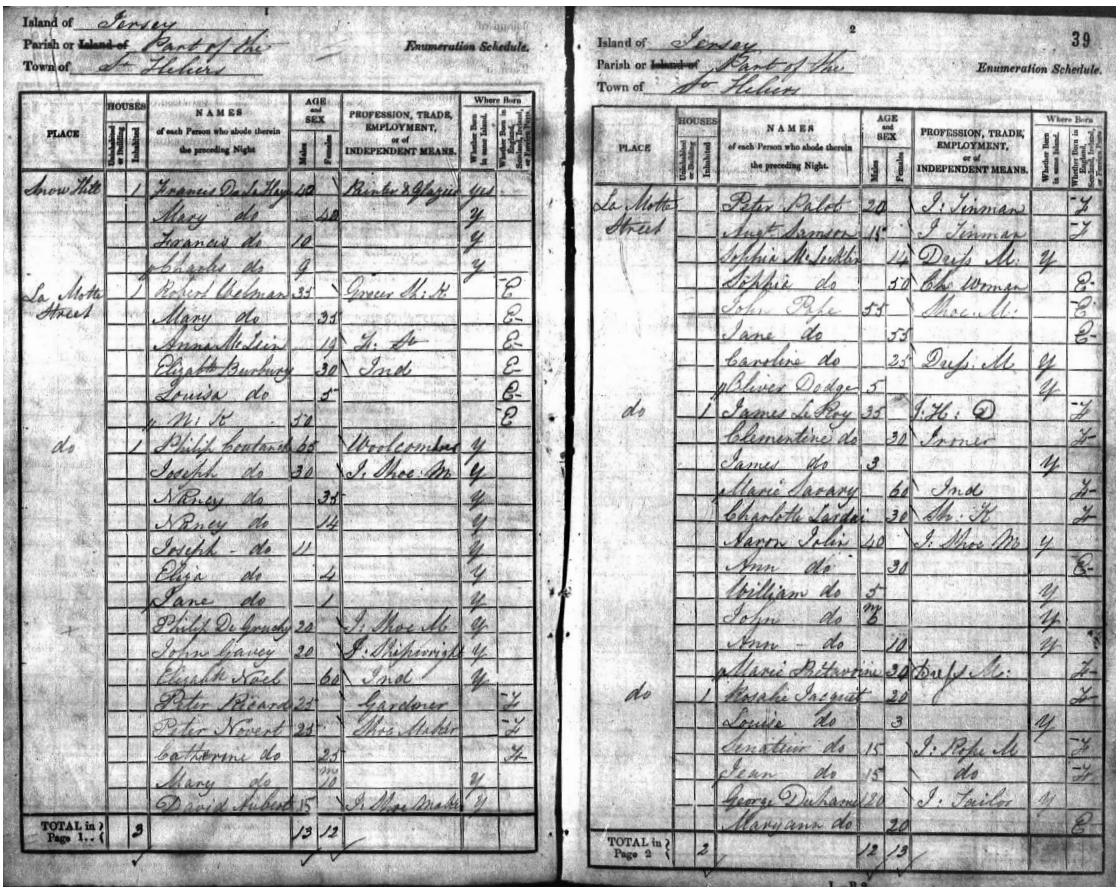


Figure 2: Extract from 1841 Census. *National Archives*

1841 – 1911

The eight censuses between 1841 and 1911 are broadly consistent with each other, although the number of questions was expanded substantially from 1851 and there were some changes in definitions. The censuses were conducted as an integral part of the UK censuses. Until 1871 the aggregate figures were included in the *General Report for England and Wales*. Subsequently, a publication was produced covering *Islands in the British Seas*, with detailed tables being produced separately for the Isle of Man, for Jersey and for Guernsey and adjacent islands.

The 1841 Census is the first that recorded names as opposed to just numbers. People were listed by street. The information given for each person was name, sex, age, occupation and whether born in Jersey or 'England, Scotland or foreign parts'. This census showed a further significant increase in the population, by 30% from 36,582 to 47,544, although as in 1831, the number of men was probably significantly undercounted. The increase was also overstated because of a significant change in coverage by including the military population, seamen ashore and people on board vessels adjacent to the Island, who had been excluded from the 1831 census. The census showed that 69.4% of the population was Jersey-born, with 24.2% coming from the UK and the remaining 5.9% from 'foreign parts', largely France. So, by this time immigration was well established.

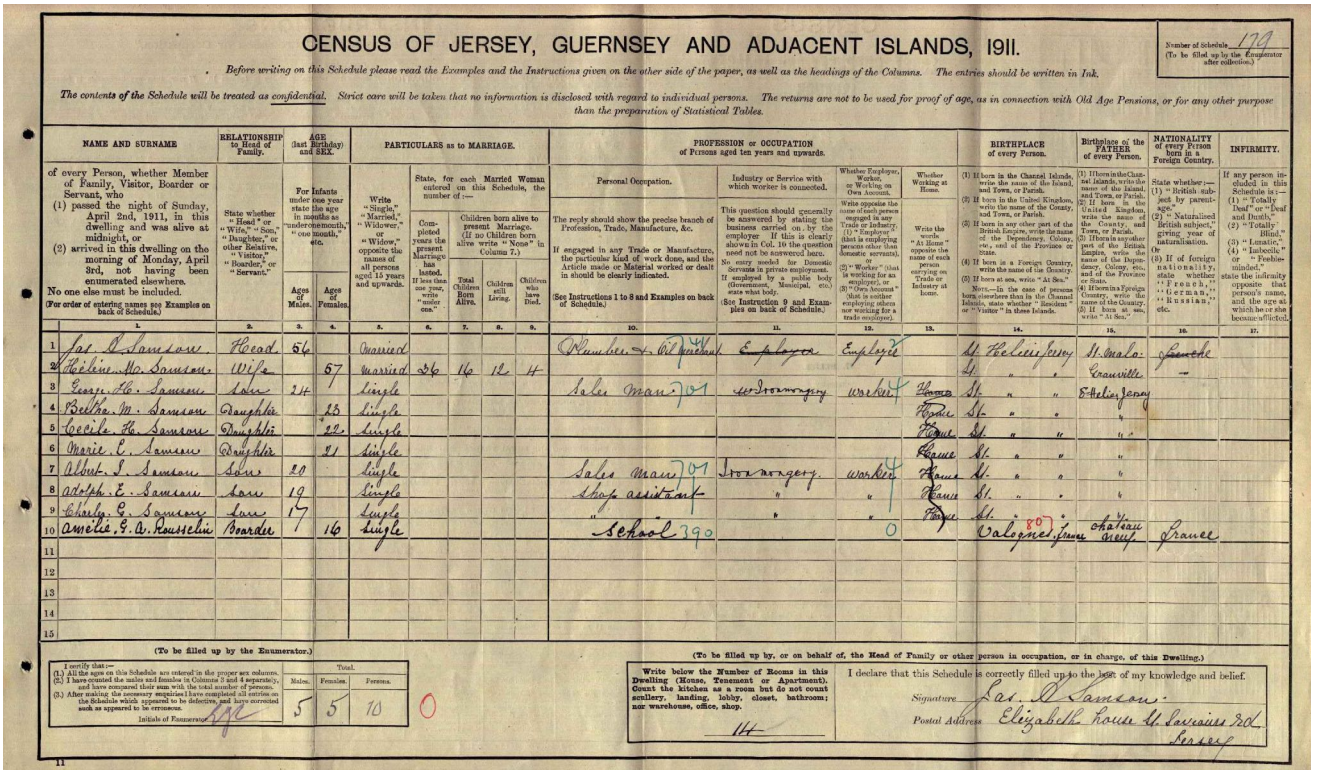
Information collected in the 1841 and 1911 censuses

The 1841 census data was recorded by enumerators and merely showed name of street, name, age, occupation and place of birth, although only as Jersey, England, Scotland and 'foreign parts'.

The 1911 Census forms were completed by the head of household and show far more detail including relationships, precise place of birth, and also the place of birth of the father.

Note at the bottom of the first column in the 1841 Census Peter Novert, a shoemaker, born in foreign parts, and Catherine Novert, his wife, although the census did not show relationships, and at the top of the second column Auguste Samson, a 15-year-old 'tinner', born in Jersey. The Jas (James) Samson in the 1911 Census is the son of Auguste, and the Hélène Samson is the daughter of Peter Novert.

Further enhancements were made to the census in 1851: precise addresses, the relationship of each person to the head of household, more detailed information on place of birth (parish if born in Jersey, otherwise country) and whether a person was blind or deaf and dumb. The population census was accompanied by censuses of schools, Sunday schools and



CENSUS OF JERSEY, GUERNSEY AND ADJACENT ISLANDS, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

Number of Schedule 179 (To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection.)

	NAME AND SURNAME of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder or Servant, who (1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or (2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere. No one else must be included. (For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family. State whether "Head" or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX. For Infants under one year state the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc. Ages of Males.	Ages of Females.	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE. Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of:— Completed years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year, write "under one."	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no Children born alive write "None" in Column 7.) Total Children Born Alive.	Children still Living.	Children who have Died.	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards. Personal Occupation. The reply should show the precise branch of Profession, Trade, Manufacture, &c. If engaged in any Trade or Manufacture, the particular kind of work done, and the Article made or Material worked or dealt in should be clearly indicated. (See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	Industry or Service with which worker is connected. This question should generally be answered by stating the business carried on by the employer. If this is clearly shown in Col. 10 the question need not be answered here. No entry needed for Domestic Servants in private employment. If employed by a public body (Government, Municipal, etc.) state what body. (See Instruction 9 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account. Write opposite the name of each person engaged in any Trade or Industry. (1) "Employer" (that is employing persons other than domestic servants). or (2) "Worker" (that is working for an employer), or (3) "Own Account" (that is neither employing others nor working for a trade employer).	Whether Working at Home. Write the words "At Home" opposite the name of each person employed on Trade or Industry at home.	BIRTHPLACE of every Person. (1) If born in the Channel Islands, write the name of the Island, and Town, or Parish. (2) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town, or Parish. (3) If born in any other part of the British Empire, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State. (4) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country. (5) If born at sea, write "At Sea." Note.—In the case of persons born elsewhere than in the Channel Islands, state whether "Resident" or "Visitor" in these Islands.	Birthplace of the FATHER of every Person. (1) If born in the Channel Islands, write the name of the Island, and Town, or Parish. (2) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town, or Parish. (3) If born in any other part of the British Empire, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State. (4) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country. (5) If born at sea, write "At Sea."	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country. State whether:— (1) "British subject by parentage." (2) "Naturalised British subject," giving year of naturalisation. Or (3) If of foreign nationality, state whether "French," "German," "Russian," etc.	INFIRMITY. If any person included in this Schedule is:— (1) "Totally Deaf" or "Deaf and Dumb," (2) "Totally Blind," (3) "Lunatic," (4) "Imbecile," or "Feeble-minded," state the infirmity opposite that person's name, and the age at which he or she became afflicted.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
1	Jas. A. Samson	Head	56		Married					Plumber & Oil merchant	Employer	Employer		St Helier Jersey	St Malo	French	
2	Hélène M. Samson	Wife		57	Married	36	16	12	4					St " "	Granville	"	
3	George H. Samson	Son	24		Single					Sales man	Ironmongery	worker	Home	St " "	St Helier Jersey		
4	Bertha M. Samson	Daughter		23	Single								Home	St " "	" "		
5	Cecile E. Samson	Daughter		22	Single								Home	St " "	" "		
6	Marie C. Samson	Daughter		21	Single								Home	St " "	" "		
7	Albert I. Samson	Son	20		Single					Sales man	Ironmongery	worker	Home	St " "	" "		
8	Adolph E. Samson	Son	19		Single					Shop assistant	"	"	Home	St " "	" "		
9	Charles C. Samson	Son	17		Single					"	"	"	Home	St " "	" "		
10	Amélie G. A. Rousselin	Boarder		16	Single					School		0		Calognes (80) France	Channel Isl.	France	
11																	
12																	
13																	
14																	
15																	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

I certify that:—
(1.) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex columns.
(2.) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sum with the total number of persons.
(3.) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Initials of Enumerator AJC

Total.	Males.	Females.	Persons.
	5	5	10

0

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this Dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.

11

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature Jas. A. Samson.

Postal Address Elizabeth House St Saviours Rd Jersey

11

Figure 3: Extract from 1911 Channel Island Census. *National Archives*

literary and scientific societies. The Channel Islands Family History Society has published an excellent description of the conduct of the census (Le Pivert, 1996).

With only minor modifications, the format of the population census was retained until the 1901 Census. The information was expanded in the 1901 Census by recording the number of years of a marriage, number of children born alive and who had died and more details on employment.

The 1911 Census added significant additional information, in particular the birthplace of each person's father, the nationality of those born in a foreign country and the actual address. It was the first census for which forms were completed by householders rather than enumerators. Unlike previous censuses, where individual forms were destroyed after the data had been transcribed by officials, the returns completed by each head of household were retained and in 2011 were made available on family history websites. These various changes are illustrated in the box which shows limited information in 1841 and the greatly expanded information in 1911. The censuses from 1821 to 1911 show the significant variations in the rate of population change. The period can be divided into two distinct parts:

- From 1821 to 1851, a period of rapid growth from 28,600 to 57,020, an increase of 99% in 30 years, 2.3% a year
- From 1851 to 1911, a steady decline of 9%, 0.16% a year, to 51,898

But some things were little changed. The proportion of the population born in Jersey was fairly constant throughout this period, varying from 68% to 73%. Within the total of non-Jersey born, the main trend was an increase in the French-born population from about 5% at the beginning of the period to 11.4% in 1901; the latter figure, together with the large number of children born to French-born parents, was sufficient to cause the States to establish a special committee 'to examine the whole question of the immigration of foreigners to this island'.

1921, 1931 and 1951

The 1921 Census was unusual in a number of different respects. It followed World War I with the loss of life and disruption which that had caused, and also the consequences of the Spanish flu which killed more people than had died in battle in the War. The census was further complicated by being delayed to 19/21 June rather than the original planned date of 24 April. This meant that the population was inflated by about 3,000 because of visitor numbers. On a like-for-like basis the population fell by 10.3% between 1911 and 1921, and the total fall from 1851 was 18.5%.

The 1931 Census was similar to that of 1921. However, all the records were destroyed in a fire, unrelated to the War, in 1942, so family historians will have nothing to look forward to in 2032. The 1951 Census was the last to be conducted as part of UK censuses.

1939 and 1940

In September 1939 a census was conducted in England. The information provided was basic: name, date of birth – recorded for the first time as opposed to age – occupation and address.

The aggregate data was important for the war effort and also filled an important gap, as no census was conducted in 1941 and the 1931 records had been destroyed. All the data for people known to be no longer alive has been published – vital information for family historians, particularly given the inclusion of dates of birth.

No such census was conducted in Jersey, although an estimate was made of the total population in mid-1939. However, following an order by the occupying forces, the Department of Labour in Jersey conducted a census of the civilian population on 10 August 1940. Because of the Occupation, unlike other censuses there were no complications caused by visitors to the Island and Jersey residents being temporarily out of the Island.

The headline figure was that the population in August 1940 was 41,101, a reduction of 9,979 (19%) on the mid-1939 estimate of 51,080. The number of males was 18,766, a reduction of 5,190 (21%) and the

number of females was 22,335, a reduction of 4,789 (17%). Interestingly, the reduction in population seems to have been largely concentrated in two parishes – St Helier and St Brelade. The 1939 count did not give parish data and this conclusion is based on comparing the 1940 figures with those from the 1931 census.

1961 onwards

After 1951 Jersey took responsibility for conducting its own censuses, although to a large extent these have remained consistent with the UK censuses. Between 1971 and 2001 the censuses were conducted at five-yearly intervals and otherwise have been at ten-yearly intervals. It is worth noting that the population in 1951 (57,310) was almost exactly the same as it had been 100 years earlier in 1851 (57,020). Subsequently, Jersey has experienced fairly continuous growth to the 2011 figure of 97,857 and the latest estimate for 2019 of 107,800.

There were significant changes in coverage between the censuses, notably –

- The exclusion of visitors in 1961.
- The inclusion of those normally resident but not in the Island on census night in 1981.
- The inclusion of an estimate for the 'undercount' – 1,600 people – in 2011.

Annual estimates

Statistics Jersey publishes annual estimates of the population which, given the political sensitivity of the issue, tend to have a high profile. These estimates take as the baseline the most recent census, currently that for 2011, and then use a range of data including –

- Birth, marriage and death figures from the Office of the Superintendent Registrar.
- Labour market data collected by the Population Office under the Control of Housing and Work (2012) Law; and statistics compiled by Statistics Jersey.
- Data on the migration of pre-school and school-age children from the Departments of Health and Community Services and of

Children, Young People, Education and Skills, respectively.

- Population projections, the most recent ones of which were published by Statistics Jersey in 2016.

The annual calculation is fraught with difficulty as data collected for one purpose is never ideal when used for other purposes and there is a significant amount of uncertainty in respect of all the data. The further away from the hard data in a census, the less reliable the annual projections. These points are all carefully explained by Statistics Jersey, but this does not stop the annual estimates as being treated as more precise than they can ever be or of Statistics Jersey being criticised for 'getting it wrong'. The inherent difficulty in making the annual estimates was illustrated when the full results of the 2011 census were published. These showed a population figure of 97,857 whereas the annual estimates suggested a figure of 93,100. The increase since 2001 was therefore 10,700 rather than 6,000. This was partly explained by the addition of the undercount of 1,600 but more significantly by net migration between the two censuses at 6,800 being twice the level estimated in the annual estimates. The 2012 annual estimate explained in detail the reasons for the discrepancy.

What the 2021 Census will show

It would be a brave person to predict the results of the 2021 Census. Based the 2019 estimate and assuming a continuation of recent trends, then a population of around 109,000 could be expected. This would imply an increase since the 2011 Census of around 11%, very similar to the increase between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses.

However, there are grounds to assume that there will not be a continuation of previous trends, and that the 2021 figure could be lower. The pandemic is of course the explanation for this. In one respect it will have made the 2021 Census relatively easy to conduct as there will have been few non-residents in the Island on census night and equally few residents out of the Island. However, the pandemic may have caused a reduction in the population as many workers in the hospitality industry will have returned to their home country. On the other hand, there would have been some people doing a job from Jersey that previously they may have been doing from the UK and other countries.

It is also the case that the exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic will make the census less useful than usual because it will reflect a period in which economic activity was significantly depressed, which in turn will have resulted in a lower population and distorted figures for employment in hospitality, travel and other sectors. If international travel

gets back to more normal levels in 2022 then by the time the 2021 Census results are published the Jersey population could be significantly higher.

For a small jurisdiction, Jersey has a very effective statistics function, and it will need all its expertise to try to disentangle the various effects so as produce data that provides a suitable basis on which policy decisions can be made. There will also be a duty on those who use or comment on the results to study carefully the accompanying analysis and qualifications and not to 'blame the messenger' for significant changes in population estimates made over the next few years.

Long term trends

The history of the Jersey population is covered in my book on the subject (Boleat, 2015), which will be updated with the results of the 2021 Census. This section draws on that book and highlights a key issue, that is the seemingly inexplicably high female/male ratio in the 19th Century.

The aggregate statistics from the censuses conducted since 1821 enable long term trends to be identified. Table 2 shows the key data.

Table 2: Jersey population statistics, long-term trends, 1811-2011

Year	Official count	Corrected increase %	Female/ male ratio	Population Over 60	Proportion Jersey-born %	Population/ houses ratio
1811	[25,000]					
1821	28,600	15.4	1.19			6.99
1831	36,582	27.9	1.15			7.17
1841	47,544	24.5	1.2	7.4	69.4	6.85
1851	57,020	16.8	1.17	7.3	68	6.91
1861	55,613	-2.5	1.24	8.8	68.9	6.39
1871	56,627	-1.8	1.28	9.6	69.3	6.15
1881	52,445	-4	1.23	10.9	71.5	5.55
1891	54,518	4	1.18	11.2	71.8	5.61
1901	52,576	-3.6	1.2	12.4	72.6	5.21
1911	51,898	-1.3	1.16	12.8	72.5	
1921	49,701	10.3	1.22	14.7	71	
1931	50,462	6.6	1.15	15.8	73.0	4.63
1939	51,080	1.5	1.13	19.4*		
1951	57,310	10.2	1.1	17.7	63.1	3.73
1961	59,489	12.6	1.08	19	60.6	3.31
1971	69,329	16.5	1.05	20.6	55	3.11
1981	76,050	5.2	1.08	19.7	51	3.1
1991	84,082	10.6	1.06	18.7	51.5	2.93
2001	87,186	3.7	1.05	18.9	52.6	2.67
2011	97,857	10.4	1.03	20.6	49.7	2.52**

Notes:

1. The 1811 figure is an interpolation using the 1806 and 1815 General Don censuses.

2. The 'corrected increase' figures allow for changes in coverage and definitions between censuses and are a more accurate measure of rate of change than simply looking at the headline figures.

3. *The proportion of over 60s for 1939 is the figure conducted during the Occupation in 1940 and therefore takes account of those who had been evacuated.

4. ** The definition of a dwelling was significantly changed for the 2011 Census, which had the effect of increasing the reported housing stock by over 6,000. The population/houses ratio has been corrected to be compatible with the 2001 figure.

Some clear trends are evident in this table:

- Four distinct periods in respect of population growth – rapid increase until 1851, decline until 1911, recovery such that the 1951 population was much the same as the 1851 population, and rapid growth since 1951.

- A very high female/male ratio until the post-War period, although this probably partly reflects an undercount of men.

- A steady rise in the proportion of people over 60 from 7.4% in 1841 to 20.6% in 2011 and probably around 22% in 2021.

- The proportion of the population who were Jersey-born fluctuated within a narrow range of 68-73% between 1841 and 1931, then fell sharply to 51% in 1981 since when it has been fairly stable.

- The population/houses ratio has fallen from over 7 in 1831 to just 2.5 in 2011.

Table 2 shows a seemingly very high female/male ratio – 1.15 or higher until 1931 and reaching a peak of 1.28 in 1871. There are two questions:–

- Whether these figures accurately reflect the position and if not, why not.

- If, as seems certain, they at least partially reflect the position, then why.

This paper has already suggested that the cod fishing and wider maritime industry partly explains the position, as many Jersey men would have been away from the Island on the days the censuses were held. To try to understand the position it is helpful to compare the figures for Jersey with those for Guernsey, which had a significantly smaller maritime industry than Jersey, the Isle of Man, which had virtually no maritime industry, and for England. Table 3 shows comparative figures for the censuses between 1821 and 2011 and Table 4 shows a breakdown by age and sex for 1871, the year when the female/male ratio peaked at 1.28.

Table 3: Female/male ratio, Jersey, Guernsey and England, 1821-2011

Year	Jersey	Guernsey	Isle of Man	England
1821	1.19	1.19	1.09	1.05
1831	1.15	1.18	1.1	1.05
1841	1.2	1.2	1.08	1.05
1851	1.17	1.15	1.1	1.04
1861	1.24	1.13	1.12	1.06
1871	1.28	1.2	1.09	1.06
1881	1.23	1.09	1.08	1.06
1891	1.18	1.07	1.11	1.07
1901	1.2	1.06	1.17	1.07
1911	1.16	1.03	1.21	1.08
1921	1.22	1.1	1.21	1.1
1931	1.15	1.07	1.2	1.09
1939	1.13		1.2	1.14
1951	1.1	1.06	1.14	1.08
1961	1.08	1.08	1.18	1.07
1971	1.05	1.08	1.14	1.06
1981	1.08	1.07	1.09	1.05
1991	1.06	1.08	1.07	1.06
2001	1.05	1.05	1.04	1.05
2011	1.03	1.03	1.01	1.04

Table 4: Sex ratio by age, Jersey, Guernsey and England, 1871

Age	Jersey	Guernsey	Isle of Man	England
< 20	1.04	1.04	0.98	1.00
20-39	1.54	1.34	1.19	1.10
40-59	1.38	1.30	1.18	1.08
60-79	1.34	1.38	1.20	1.14
80+	1.76	1.77	1.34	1.40

Table 3 shows that the ratios for the Isle of Man in the 19th Century are broadly similar to those of England. The ratios for Jersey are much higher than for England, particularly between 1851 and 1881 but persisting until 1931. The figures for Guernsey are lower than those for Jersey, but significantly higher than those for England, but only until 1871. Table 4 shows that the female/male ratio in Jersey in 1871 in the under 20 age group was similar that that in England, but massively higher in the 20-39 age group and significantly higher in the 40-59 age group.

These figures merit more detailed analysis, but it seems fairly certain that Jersey's maritime industry caused the census figures for much of the 19th Century to understate significantly the male population, perhaps by as many as 5,000 in 1871. A comprehensive study of the Jersey maritime industry (Williams, 2000) estimated that in 1851, 15% of adult men (about 2,000) were engaged in shipping-related activities and the general view is that at its peak, the cod fishing industry alone employed up to 2,500. The 1861 Census recorded 1,414 seamen and just 374 fishermen – probably all fishing in local waters. That the number of men was undercounted is also supported by a comparison of the number of married men and married women. Normally, one would expect the figures to be similar. However, in Jersey the number of married women exceeded the number of married men by 619 in 1851, 995 in 1861, 967 in 1871 then falling to 521 in 1881 and 309 in 1891, the trend mirroring the size of the cod fishing industry. In 1871 the number of married women exceeded the number of married men in Jersey by 10.7% whereas the comparative figures were 7.2% in Guernsey, 2.1% in the Isle of Man and 1.6% in England.

It is worth noting another factor which may explain the high female/male ratio, that is the high level of immigration combined with female immigrants outnumbering males, and after about 1850 significant emigration particularly of men. This factor was mentioned in the definitive study of Guernsey in the 19th Century (Crossan, 2007) which also mentioned the maritime issue:

> Both native and non-native populations contained substantially more females than males, and, in all censuses except 1841 and 1851,

> the relative dearth of males was more pronounced among non-natives. However, since there was also a marked deficit of males among the island-born, it is clear that the immigrant presence was not the sole or even the principal cause of the female bias in the all-Island ratio. Indeed, in 1841 and 1851, the overall balance would have been greater but for the immigrant presence. This leads to the conclusion that, though the proportionately larger influx of females amplified the existing disparity, the factor which essentially underlay Guernsey's nineteenth-century gender skew was the absence of native males. The reason for their absence was a combination of seafaring and sex-specific emigration. These two factors were both operative in the decades before 1881, when non-native males were themselves also reduced by seafaring. Hence sex ratios were then at their most unbalanced. After, this date seafaring ceased to be a major employer, and emigration took over as the single most important cause of the male deficit, which, from this point on, correspondingly diminished.

There is no corresponding detailed analysis for Jersey. However, my own analysis (Boleat, 2019) of emigration from Jersey to New Zealand in the early 1870s shows that the large-scale emigration was almost equally balanced between males and females.

A final factor explaining the high female/male ratio is simply that women lived longer than men. In 1851 there were 878 widowers but 2,975 widows and the number of women 60 and over at 2,382 exceeded the number of men, 1764, by 35%.

Besides being important in its own right, this issue shows just how complicated censuses are and the need to understand fully special factors that affect the data in one census and more importantly changes between censuses.

Availability of statistics

Censuses are key historical documents and one would therefore expect the comprehensive census reports to be readily available in hard copy form in libraries and on the Internet. In fact they are not – neither in the UK nor Jersey. This is in sharp contrast to the detailed information about individuals, now all up to 1911 readily accessible on family history websites.

The various 'informal censuses' are largely, although not entirely, available in the Société Jersiaise library.

The Channel Island Family History Society has published a series of papers: *The 1841 Census of Jersey: An All Island Index* and similar

titles for 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1901 and 1911. They describe how the censuses were conducted, give some key statistics and other information about the Island in the respective years and then give a complete listing, alphabetically, of all residents, showing basic information such as age, place of birth and parish.

The censuses between 1841 and 1931 were included in a comprehensive database of census reports assembled by the University of Essex and made accessible on the website Histpop. Unfortunately this website has not been maintained and now no longer functions effectively.

The 1940 Census has recently been published by Jersey Heritage on its website as part of the Bailiff's Occupation papers.

The 1951 to 1991 census reports are not available online; the 2001 and 2011 reports are on the Statistics Jersey part of the Government website. Guernsey does rather better in this respect – all the censuses from 1971 being available.

Hard copies of the census reports are available in the Jersey Library and the Société Jersiaise Library as follows: Jersey Library: all the reports from 1971; Société Jersiaise Library: 1891, 1951, 1961 and 1971 and extracts from other censuses.

A more comprehensive database of statistics reports is available at https://boleat.com/jersey_population/

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Sir Mark Boleat has held a number of leading positions in the public, private and voluntary sectors in the UK and Jersey. In Jersey he has been Chairman of the Jersey Competition and Regulatory Authority, Andium Homes and the Jersey Development Company. He has done consultancy projects for the States on housing policy, consumer policy, immigration and housing. Sir Mark was knighted in the 2017 Birthday Honours for services to the financial services industry and local government in London. He is the author of *Jersey's Population - a History* (Société Jersiaise, 2015) and several articles on Jersey migration and family history.