

### Fort Pezeries.

This little fort is called Pezeries Castle on maps of Guernsey and it is right at the end of Pleinmont in Torteval. It is shaped like a star, something quite rare. It seems that it was built some years before 1621 because it was inspected by the Captains of the Parish at this time, but we do not know its original date. In 1689 appeared on a map drawn up for the Bishop of Coutances (who still counted Guernsey in his diocese) by Mariette de la Pagerie. It was not in good repair and in 1804 the Governor Sir John Doyle (he who reclaimed the Braye du Valle and who wanted it as a defence against invasion by the French,) ordered that this old fort should be repaired and put in order. The building was examined, the parapet was fortified and a magazine for ammunition was built as well. All this work was the responsibility of the parish of Torteval overseen by a jurat of the Royal Court and it was finished in 1806.

In 1807, during the night of 28<sup>th</sup> December, the warship *H.M.S. Boreas* sank on the Hanois reef and many sailors were drowned. It seems that the soldiers on watch did not alert the authorities as they should have done –they were too busy with the “invalids and their women” who were in the fort!

During the middle Ages this fort was, with the Pions' Table (known as the Fairy Ring) which is a little further away, the place where the Chevauchee de St. Michel stopped each year to eat and rest before continuing towards the Vale. Whilst the “pions” (from the Latin for footman) were served at their “table”, the officers were served in the fort. This procession stopped in the time of the Reformation, but it was revived in 1966 to celebrate the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Conquest of England by William the Conqueror, and once more since then.

In 1850, responsibility for Les Pezeries was transferred to the War Department in London, but it was returned to the States in 1908. The last time that it was used was during the Occupation, but now it is looked after by the States.