

**Weights and Measures
for Trade in
Guernsey and Alderney**



13th – 20th Century

The Copyright (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Ordinance, 2005

All rights reserved. This document, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without prior written permission from the author. Exceptions are made for brief excerpts with acknowledgement of the author.

Cover illustration – The Inspector’s Stamp 1991

Contents

	Page
Introduction:	4
The early systems of weights and measures.	5
Weights and measures in Guernsey from the 13 th century to the beginning of the 20 th century.	6
The Law relating to Weights and Measures, 1916 and the Provisional Ordinance entitled Verification of Weights and Measures, 1916.	13
The Law and Ordinances relating to the sale of House Coal, Milk and Bread, 1918-1922 together with the Bread Order of 1956.	16
The Alderney Weights and Measures Law, 1951.	18
The Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Ordinances, 1965.	19
The National Measurement System.	20
The Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 1991.	21
The United Kingdom Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Order, 1995.	24
Island Standards of Weight and Measure deposited with the Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery.	25
The Queen's (King's) Weights and The Weighbridges Department.	26
Appendix I Old Guernsey Units of Weight and Measure.	28
Appendix II Island and Working Standards together with other equipment provided in respect of the 1916 Law.	30
Appendix III Illustrations of the stamps used by the Royal Court and Inspectors since the 13 th century.	31
Appendix IV Weights and Measures Inspectors.	32
Appendix V Trading Standards Officers and Technical Assistants.	33
Appendix VI Weights and Measures Offices.	34
Appendix VII List of Previous and Current Legislation.	35

Introduction

Soon after Henry III became King of England in 1216, he gave instructions that stamped measures must be provided at mills in the island “for use of the good folk”. This simple statement sets out the basis of transactions involving measurement by weight or measure for trade and this still continues today. Both parties must know the quantity involved and that any equipment used is correct.

This summary follows the sequence of legislation enacted to specify the units of weight and measure to be used for trade in Guernsey since the 13th century. It also shows that the Royal Court and the States of Deliberation made repeated attempts to get residents to adopt common standards of weight and measure rather than continuing with a combination of old and new units which caused confusion between traders and purchasers. The Court and the States also legislated to ensure fairness between traders and their customers in respect of particular goods. During this long period of island history, matters slowly improved and the old Guernsey system of weights and measures was eventually made illegal and the Imperial system adopted. The metric system was also made legal and is now in greater use due to the influence of the United Kingdom and Europe.

The slow transition of Guernsey and Alderney to a modern system of weights and measures has now been recognised by the United Kingdom thus easing the export of equipment and goods. The current legislation is also comparable with European Community legislation again easing potential restrictions on local exports.

Acknowledgements

I have been grateful for the help of Mr A.J.Ingrouille, the first qualified Inspector of Weights and Measures in Guernsey, who gave me information on his time in office and that of his predecessor Mr J.H.Sibley who was the first full time civil servant to undertake the work of Inspector of Weights and Measures. I am also indebted to Mr B.Guilbert, Chief Trading Standards Officer, for giving me access to a number of documents and making many helpful suggestions on the contents of this document. I am also grateful for the help of Joanna Dyer who assisted me with the research undertaken at the Office of the States Archivist and with compiling this document.

D.R.Laine.

March 2012

The Early Systems of Weights and Measures

It is now recognised that early civilisations were making measurements, probably in respect of days and seasons, on the walls of caves. These measurements then developed into more sophisticated methods via the introduction of units and of simple instruments such as measuring sticks and beamscales.

Early rulers soon developed an interest in measurement primarily to assess the value of gold in their treasuries. In everyday terms, it also provided the means of imposing taxes, for example to extract rent for land occupied by feudal tenants.

The feudal system applied in most of Europe and was calculated to achieve both internal support for the ruler as well as to provide protection against foreign enemies. The King or Prince parcelled out land among a select number of subjects (distinguished for their skill in arms, piety or wisdom) who in return were bound to pay certain annual dues to uphold the dignity of the crown. Other issues to which they found themselves bound included assisting the King in his decisions in the legislative assemblies, to bear arms with their under tenants in his defence and also to see that the general laws of the country were being executed each within its fief or district.

This kind of government prevailed in much of France and in England. Consequently the ancient history of Guernsey shows that it also applied to the islands. Certainly in every part of the French dominions, including that part of Normandy belonging to Rollo (father of William the Conqueror), this was in force. However, when Rollo took possession of the Duchy of Normandy, he quickly realised that the oppressive way in which the feudal lords were obtaining dues from their tenants would ultimately end in unrest or even open rebellion and consequently he set up Courts to adjudicate on land and other disputes.

It was within this framework that the basis of measurement increased. Clearly a minor lord was required to pay more from his extensive lands than a farmer with a small holding and as payment was in kind, namely corn, barley, fowls and chickens, loaves of bread, eggs and other produce, the question of what quantities were required became fundamental to any transaction.

Weights and Measures in Guernsey from the 13th century to the beginning of the 20th century

13th to 15th Centuries:

The units of measurement used in Guernsey in the early days were those adopted from Normandy. Thus we see Guernsey land being measured by the perch and vergee; the volume of corn by the bushel and its subdivisions; liquids by a different sized bushel together with its subdivisions of pots and noggins; and weight by the “Poids de Marc” standards of the French regional capital of Rouen. However in practical terms, the standards of measurement in Guernsey were at best approximate. Beach stones marked with Roman numerals were certainly common on farms and the weighing equipment very basic.

The eventual loss of the French possessions resulted in the islanders continuing their allegiance to the English Crown but the payment of fief dues continued to both the King and the Bishopric of Coutances in France. Thus the basis of land measurement and the quantities for the payment of these rentes remained unchanged.

With the passing of time, however, we see that the English kings found it necessary to intervene in island affairs on various matters, usually regarding the ancient rights of the island. Disputes with the imposed English governors often arose, as did payment of taxes and questions of religion. Matters relating to weighing and measuring for trade did not normally arise and so the well-established payment of rentes to the King and the Bishop of Coutances continued as before.

There were, however, major disputes between farmers and millers during the 13th and 14th centuries. Consequently in the reign of King Henry III (1216 - 1272) orders were issued that “sealed (stamped) $\frac{1}{8}$ bushel, denereal and half-denereal measures should be kept for the use of the good folk when bringing their corn to the mills” (see Appendix I).

When Edward II (1307 – 1327) came to the throne he was unhappy with the situation and an Assize Roll in 1309 declared that all fines paid in the Parish of the Vale for false weights and measures belonged to the King and that a “surveyor” of weights and measures should be appointed in that Parish. It seems reasonable to assume that the Prior of the Vale must have been collecting fines for himself and the Abbey of Mont St Michel.

King Henry III’s orders regarding stamped measures were renewed again during the reign of Edward III (1327 - 1377). At that time Guernsey had several water and wind driven mills, including the water powered “Kings Mills” in the Castel Parish. The fact that both Kings chose to legislate on this matter suggests that disagreements between millers and farmers were widespread and ongoing. It is probable that the farmers suspected the millers of keeping some of their corn for themselves and both Kings must ultimately have decided that some means of measurement would resolve the situation. The importance of having correct measures for wheat and other cereals should not be underestimated as every household needed flour. The measurement of this important foodstuff was therefore crucial to a well-ordered society.

16th Century:

During the reigns of Henry VIII (1509-1547), Edward VI (1547-1553) and Mary I (1553-1558) documentation is sparse, consequently it is reasonably safe to assume that no significant changes in measurement practices took place. However the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) saw the issue of a “Papal Bull” transferring the payment of fief rentes to Winchester but it seems that payments to Coutances continued for many years after that, consequently the old measurements in use again remained unchanged.

During Elizabeth’s reign, being the year of 1574, another attempt to prevent unfair weighing and measuring practices took place. The Royal Court directed Her Majesty’s Procureur, Her Majesty’s Prevot (Sheriff) and the Constables of each parish to “make visits so as to ensure weights and measures are right for the future”. Clearly this was a significant and probably new use of the powers of the Court in that two of the most senior members of Her Majesty’s officials and the Parish Constables were sent to sort out what was more than likely a chaotic state of affairs. Many of the islanders were farmers with fields surrounding the homestead and a very self-sufficient life style. We have therefore to assume that they were very independently minded as to their rights!

Also included were the feudal Seigneurs who kept measures and weighing equipment of their own for the receipt of rentes. It is highly likely that resistance was anticipated during this ‘intrusion’ by the Royal Court officials as the activities of the seigneurs in this respect would certainly have been seen as their own prerogative.

Those islanders with no land, however, were generally very poor (referred to as “les pauvres”) and consequently relied on the farmers for work, probably receiving payment in kind. Most would have lived in little more than a stone hut and at best may have kept a couple of sheep on common land. This situation must have been of concern to the Court and probably a factor in deciding to send senior officials to ensure fair measurements and trading for the future.

The manufacture of candles, being the only source of illumination, was another major economy in Tudor times. However their variation in size and shape were infinite, again a cause for argument and discontent. Consequently in 1581 the Royal Court passed an Ordinance requiring that all candles be sold by weight. This requirement was soon extended to all other “merchandise” suitable for sale by weight. This was a significant step as it extended control from the accuracy of equipment to the manner in which goods were sold. Later that year H.M. Procureur was directed to make island-wide visits to ensure that dry measures of various sizes were correct.

Clearly the attempt to confirm that measures were correct had run into difficulties and a year later (1582) H.M. Procureur was again instructed to carry out visits and mark all correct measures with the official stamp of the “rose et fleur de lys” (see Appendix III). Later in the year another effort was made by the Court and this time to clearly state the depth of a “boisseaux” (a bushel measure). This was required to be 8 inches, thus preventing the making of very tall and thin measures that diminished the size of the cone of corn above the measure top when the common practice of “heaped measure” was used. Measures in pubs were also to be tested and stamped if correct.

The following year being 1583 the Court made the use of “heaped measure” illegal for the measurement of wheat. Thus the only method of legally filling a measure with grain was by drawing a small wooden board across the top and thereby causing any excess to be pushed over the side (struck measure). An exception was however made in respect of wheat already contained in bags.

17th Century:

The 17th century brought increasing prosperity to islanders. The wool trade made a significant impact on life in general. Over 200,000 pairs of stockings were produced annually and these together with other woollen goods were exported to many countries including North America. Other industries also prospered, including drying fish for export and the trade in wine. Wine was collected from France, stored in St Peter Port and then slyly exported to England thus making a tidy profit during this period of war between the two nations. Apple trees were grown and the making of cider also became a minor industry. Measurement must have been an increasingly important factor with this large increase in trade and this will have contributed to the decision by the Court in 1611 to review all the existing weights and measures legislation.

At the Easter Chief Pleas in 1611 the Royal Court clarified which units and weights and measures equipment would be legal for use for trade. The law also included previous legislation regarding the manner in which certain goods were to be sold.

Article 1 stated that the pound weight of Guernsey consisted of 18 ounces weight of Rouen. This confirmed the continued use of the Poids de Marc of Rouen that had been used for many centuries. This made the Guernsey pound (Livre de Guernesey) heavier than the English Avoirdupois pound by 3¼ ounces and 1¼ ounce more than that of Jersey. The Poids de Marc ounce was thus 2.539 grams heavier than the English ounce. However in 1730 two ounces were removed from the Guernsey pound thus making it equal to that of Jersey.

Items to be sold by Guernsey weight, whether they were sourced locally, from England or elsewhere, included wool (both as fleeces and when combed), local and imported butter, tallow, suet, candles, hemp and flax used in the making of linen. All items normally made by hand and sold by weight were required to use only the Guernsey pound. Article 2 contained a general catchall provision that all other items normally sold by weight were to use the Guernsey pound.

Article 3 retained the previous requirements, originally set out in 1582, regarding the height (8 inches) of the bushel to be used for wheat and added that the inside diameter had to be 16 inches with a capacity of 13 ½ pots. Article 4 specified a bushel for the measurement of water and salt, referred to locally as the “ordinary measure”. This was one sixth larger than the bushel for wheat and had a capacity of 15 pots and 3 pints. All bushel measures in the island were to be stamped (branded) inside on the bottom with the “rose et fleurs de lys” and on the outside at the top edge as required by Article 11.

Article 5 dealt with the size of bushel to be used for the sale of coal. This was required to have a diameter of 18 ½ inches and a capacity of 16 pots and 3 pints. A new measure was introduced in Article 6 for charcoal. This was based on a “barrel” of 120 pots as used in the town of Bordeaux in France.

Articles 7 and 8 required that the “verge” of Guernsey (a measurement stick) for the measurement of woollen cloth sold by retail or wholesale was to be 38½ inches English measure. A “verge” of 44 inches could be used for locally produced woollen cloth. In Articles 9 and 10 the English “verge” of 36 inches and the English “ell” of 45¼ inches could be used for the measurement of silks, wools, cambrics (fine white linen) and lawns (linen from Holland).

Article 12 set out the manner in which cereals were to be measured. Wheat was required to be pressed down twice with two hands and then levelled by drawing a small board across the top of the measure (struck measure). All other grain could be sold heaped measure but oats and barley were often sold by struck measure, which was accepted by the Court.

Articles 13, 14 and 15 set out penalties for incorrect equipment and other infringements and authorised the “Justice” to appoint a person to measure salt and wheat offered for sale. The appointed person was to receive payment for any measures stamped in accordance with the law.

Although the 1611 Ordinance outlined above made a significant step towards uniformity, problems still surfaced, most obviously because of the potential for misuse of three bushel sizes and four different measures of length. As early as two years later the Sheriff was instructed to have two measures constructed and kept as standards for the measurement of coal and charcoal, both with iron hoops to maintain accuracy. Inevitably there remained the confusion as to which bushel measures were to be used for the sale of coal and charcoal, prompting the Court to decide that only dry measures should be used.

The following year being 1614, Monsieur Thomas Beauvoir was appointed as “Jauge” for measures and was equipped with suitable test measures. This was the first time that a person other than an official of the Royal Court or a Parish official was appointed. Whether problems had arisen is not mentioned, but in 1617 H.M. Procureur and H.M. Sheriff were directed to revisit all premises to stamp measures and collect the appropriate fees.

In 1623 a further direction from the Court required the stamping of all weights and measures and two years later it was declared that measures must be used for the sale of barley and salt. At this time it was also declared that only stamped measures could be used for the payment of “rentes and chef-rentes”. Increasingly non Royal Court personnel were given authority and in 1631 the appointment of a “public measurer” was made. He was to be equipped with “gauges” in order to check the measures used by sellers of wheat and coal and was authorised to charge for the tests.

A person unknown was taken to the Royal Court in respect of an offence in 1632 resulting in a protracted legal argument regarding the accuracy of the Island Standards. No changes appear to have been made in the years following this Court case, consequently we must assume that the Court decided all was well with the accuracy of its standards. Indeed, the only notable change made by the Court that year was that rye, oats, peas etc. must be sold by the measure used for the sale of salt. This was followed by instructions to H.M. Procureur and H.M. Sheriff to visit all taverns and to ensure that all measures were tested and stamped.

The millers were in trouble again in 1649, the Court declaring that the flour derived from the grain provided by a farmer should be equal in weight. A further reminder of a trader’s duties came in 1658 when the Court listed several items including butter, tallow and candles that were to be sold by the 18 oz pound of Rouen as previously required.

As a result of complaints in 1668 the Court decided to take a stronger line than had been the case in the past. H.M. Procureur, H.M. Sheriff and an Advocate were directed to seize and dispose of all measures found to be unjust. The use of the bushel was again the subject of complaint in 1674, consequently the bushel for barley was declared to be 17¼ pots and could be used for all other grains and vegetables.

The Constables of St. Peter Port found themselves once more involved in weighing matters in 1684 and were equipped with weights and a beamscale for the weighing of bread for prescribed monthly checks. The Constables were also directed to provide H.M. Law Officers with a list of taverns in the town.

The last direction of the Court during the 17th century was made in 1699. This required all weights in use for retail trade to be correct and that copper weights could not be used for trade. Weights made of such a soft metal would clearly have become unjust after very little use. Lead weights had probably been banned some time earlier.

18th Century:

Exports increased significantly in the 18th century; shipbuilding was in progress and the export of grapes, grain, potatoes and beans, as well as granite, increased significantly. Over 2000 tons of stone were exported in the year 1810; 120,000 tons in 1854 and 458,000 tons in 1910.

The first item of weights and measures legislation passed by the Royal Court in the 18th century was in 1717 and in this case H.M. Procureur informed the Court that traders were using different weights and measures to that permitted by law, leading to confusion among buyers. The Court declared that only authorised weights and measures should be used for trade and increased the fines for these offences.

Two years later all sellers and buyers were instructed to use the “ell” of 4 ft (48 inches), the English yard of 36 inches and the pound weight of 16 oz avoirdupois. Ten years later in 1729, the Court issued notices to all inhabitants reminding them that the avoirdupois 16 oz pound was legal.

In 1728 the responsibilities for testing weights and measures in use for trade was offered to the highest bidder (a ferme). This was the first occasion that the testing of weights and measures was hired out in this manner. The operating of the Queen’s (King’s) Weights for the weighing of meat sent to the Meat Market was also offered to the highest bidder at about this time.

In the same year it became apparent that limestone was often being sold underweight. As an important material of the building trade and the growing industry the Court agreed that it must be sold by the same measure as used for coal.

19th and 20th Centuries:

Registered in 1819 was a new Ordinance outlining the size of the different bushel measures that were authorised for trade including those of smaller denominations.

In 1846 the Royal Court issued directions concerning the size of coal sacks to be used for the unloading of coal boats. At that time coal arrived loose in the hold of a boat and was put into bags till conveniently full. Bags were then lifted several at a time straight on to the waiting carts for delivery to customers. Clearly the opportunity for using small sacks amongst those of normal size had become standard practice and was causing much discontent. Seeing that it would have been impractical to weigh each sack, the Court decided that the remedy was therefore to control the dimensions of sacks.

It was common practice for the farming community to take “pats” of butter (varying rather considerably in weight) to the St. Peter Port market and retail shops in town. Consequently in 1852 the Constables of St. Peter Port began to stop farmers at the main roads and cross roads leading into town. The process of weighing the butter “pats” in public caused major uproar, described as “vexatious, offensive and humiliating for the country persons who bring their butters to town”. The Constables confiscated any that they considered lightweight and resold them making a profit for the Parish.

An appeal was made to the Royal Court and much legal argument ensued as to whether the Constables had the legal right to weigh the “butters” on behalf of H.M. Sheriff. The outcome resulted in the petitioners putting forward three requests:

- (1) That only the H.M. Sheriff should decide on whether “ butters” and other goods are underweight and that any seized should be made available for collection by the owner for up to 72 hours (after which they could be forfeited);
- (2) That all goods should be sold by legal Guernsey weight except those imported from England and that a Committee should look at the whole problem of imported goods; and
- (3) That all the existing legislation be reviewed and consolidated into a single Ordinance.

This Court case and the demand for a complete review drew a line under the complex legislation of 1611 and the mixture of units and practices still used for trade. Also deemed unsatisfactory were the arrangements for administration of the law. H.M. Procureur, H.M. Sheriff, the Constables of the various Parishes and in particular those of St. Peter Port, together with the individuals appointed by means of the “ferme” system, had all undertaken weights and measures inspection duties, resulting in a great deal of confusion and inconsistency.

Two other matters were dealt with before the end of the century. On the 21st June 1884 an Ordinance was passed requiring that all liquor, spirits, wine and beer, if sold in bottles to retail customers, must contain at least 1 pint. The second made changes in the way harbour dues were levied, namely that 2000 livres (Guernsey pounds) should be taken as 2000 lb avoirdupois and that 210 gallons should be read as 210 gallons Imperial.

Although the long-standing feudal system ensured that the King had ultimate authority, generally matters such as weights and measures were passed down through the administrative chain in each area. Thus responsibility for the Island standards of measure and weight in Guernsey lay firmly

with the representative of the King, namely H. M. Sheriff, even though responsibilities for testing trader's equipment had been delegated to various officials.

Following the “butters case” in 1852, the role of the Parish Constables in matters relating to weights and measures came to an end and the actual testing of weights and measures in use for trade was thereafter undertaken by the authorised person who had made the highest payment for the job. Gradually more power was given to the Courts and consequently by 1606 King James I had handed responsibility for the island standards to the Royal Court in return for a token sum of £1. The Royal Court continued the previous arrangements and rented the responsibilities for the inspection of trade equipment to Edmund Elfort. Then in 1830 a further change took place when custody of the Island Standards was given to the States of Guernsey for an annual payment of £117 but the position of H. M. Sheriff as the Court official responsible for the Standards remained unchanged. In 1832 the inspection duties were again rented to the highest bidder and this time to John Cochrane and his family who held the role until the last of the family died in 1917.

This was the end of an era. Three hundred years had passed and the system was clearly inadequate for the future. Both Imperial and Guernsey weights (some marked underneath with a letter G) were in use by traders and presumably metric weights also added to the confusion. Another problem arose in the use of the “hundred livres de Guernesey”, which equated to 109 lb in English weight. It was therefore essential to determine which “hundredweight” (100 lb) was to be used in any transaction.

The States wrote to King George V in 1913 asking if the Guernsey Pound could be the official weight of the island and this to be equal to a half-kilogram. There were two objections, one from the Chamber of Commerce and another from a group of islanders. The King’s Privy Council suggested that Imperial weight or Metric weight, or both, should be adopted, but strongly resisted the concept of mixing both Imperial and the Guernsey weight as the States were suggesting. In 1915 the States finally agreed a “Projet de Loi” prepared by the Crown Officers, entitled “Loi relative aux Poids et Mesures”, which was put forward for Royal sanction. This Law made both the Imperial and Metric systems legal in Guernsey and finally abolished the Guernsey pound that was being used much less as time went on.

The Law relating to Weights and Measures, 1916 and the Provisional Ordinance entitled Verification of Weights and Measures, 1916

The States approved the new law on the 7th April 1915 but amended it on the 13th October. This was then approved by His Majesty in Council on the 12th January 1916 and became effective on the 1st February 1916. The law dealt firstly with renewing some of the features included in previous legislation relating to units but also by introducing power to civil service inspectors and new requirements such as periodical testing.

The term “Weights and Measures” was applied to every item of equipment used in commerce for measuring weight, capacity or length. This definition also applied to every contract, purchase, sale or agreement made by weight or measure. This was followed by a clear statement that after three months only weights and measures recognised by English Laws would be permitted. Thus the pound, gallon and yard were defined but the Guernsey Quarter, Bushel, Deneral, Pot and Quint were retained for payment of rentes and chef-rents (see Appendix 1). The “Guernsey pound” was made illegal by omission following the disagreement with the UK Privy Council.

The second issue dealt with by this new law was the appointment of an Inspector of Weights and Measures and if necessary Sub-Inspectors, whose duties were to verify weights and measures. These officials were required to be sworn in before the Royal Court composed of the Bailiff and at least two Jurats.

The third requirement placed an obligation on the States to provide at least two sets of weights and measures; one set to be in the custody of H. M. Sheriff and kept in a convenient and safe place approved by the States, the second set to be held in the custody of the Inspector.

The verification of weights and measures was required to be periodical and that this interval should be fixed by Ordinance of the Royal Court. Authority was, however, also given for the Inspector to examine and verify equipment at any other time. Verification was required to be in the manner prescribed by the UK Board of Trade Regulations for which fees were to be charged as laid down in an Ordinance.

All weights and measures used in commerce were required to bear the stamp of the English Government or that of H.M. Sheriff and were to be presumed correct for two years.

A further Article dealt with the marking of denominations on equipment and the following Article banned the use of weights made of lead or pewter or of any metal including a proportion of either.

The remaining Articles dealt with offences such as unstamped equipment, presumption as to use, illegal equipment, hindrance of an inspector, false or inexact weights or measures, fraud, the sale of a weight or measure bearing an illegal or counterfeit stamp and illegally altering a stamped weight or measure. The Court was given powers to order the confiscation and destruction of such weights and measures.

Schedule I set out denominations of Board of Trade Standards, i.e. Imperial weights and measures; Metric weights and measures and Metric Carat weights. Schedule II listed equivalents of metric weights and measures in terms of Imperial weights and measures for use for trade.

The Provisional Ordinance relating to the Verification of Weights and Measures, 1916

This provisional Ordinance was made permanent in January 1932 and remained in use until replaced 59 years later by the Law of 1991.

Article 1 required the States to provide an office for the inspector in St. Peter Port. The States Treasurer was instructed to name the site and to state the times of opening. During opening hours every person entitled to submit equipment had the legal right to do so. Although this may seem odd, this was new ground for the States who did not wish to see a return to the old days of part time enforcement.

Duties were then placed on the inspector to rectify and adjust weights and measures if necessary and to stamp them if correct. Such equipment was then presumed accurate for the following two years, as specified in the Order in Council. The inspector was then given powers to visit “at all times” stores, workshops, offices, public markets, farms horticultural estates and other places of trade. He was also given powers to take equipment to his office for verification and the authority to confiscate weights and measures found incorrect. In cases of dispute access to those standards held by the Sheriff was permitted.

Article 7 defined ownership and subsequent Articles dealt with the payment of fees for verification and adjustment and the allocation of fines; half to the States and half to any informer.

Schedule A set out the scale of charges for the verification of different types of equipment (i.e. 2d for a 1 lb weight) and Schedule B stated the scale of charges for adjustments (i.e. 3d for a 1 lb weight).

Amending Ordinances increased the fees for stamping and adjusting equipment in 1967 and again in 1970.

The First Annual Report

The first inspector Mr J.H. Stribley (see Appendix IV) produced an annual report after the first year of operation. Dated 18th April 1918, this provides a good insight into the type of equipment in use, the extent of his operations and the conditions under which he had to work:

Verified and stamped

Weights	Imperial	4454	Measures	Imperial	614
	Metric	22		Metric	626
Weighing Instruments		Beamscales		71	
		Counter scales		703	
		Steelyards		3	
		Spring balances			1211
		Dead weight machines			58

Platform machines	34
Weighbridges	24

Weights adjusted	Imperial	1724
	Metric	19

Visits to trade premises	185
Liable to visits	152

Visits to trade premises started on the 18 December 1917 and a total of 185 were visited. Appliances were examined and tested; 644 were found to be correct while a further 341 were incorrect. Under the Control of Food Supplies No. 9 (in place due to the 1914-1918 war) quantities of bread were checked for weight but no details are given.

The report indicates that during this time Mr Stribley needed to assist a number of weighing machine repairers on the best way to get their equipment sufficiently accurate to be stamped.

The final section of his report shows that the department was deficient of a number of important items of equipment: a Standard Yard, a set of iron test weights, a set of grain weights, a set of pipettes, a 7 lb portable beamscale and a sandblasting machine. Finally there was a request for “conveyance for travelling”. As far as it is possible to ascertain all the above items were provided except for the 7 lb beamscale and the sandblasting machine. In the case of transport, an Austin 7 van was eventually provided. Visits to premises not requiring heavy weights were undertaken by bicycle during this first year!

One item of interest in this report is the number of metric measures in use. Whether these were used by farmers for milk or by the liquor trade is not stated. The 24 weighbridges that required testing seems high and again no detail is given as to whether some were tested more than once. At that time the States charged a duty per ton on all granite exported from Guernsey and so weighbridges were required at the harbours. The States had seven 20 ton weighbridges at St. Sampsons Harbour and one at St. Peter Port, as well as one other weighbridge situated at St. Andrews. Each of the 5 large quarries had 20 ton machines installed while it is reasonable to assume that some of the small quarries would probably have used a 1 or 2 ton capacity machines with a plate size of approximately 6 ft by 6 ft, this being sufficient for the wheels of a horse drawn box cart (the weight on the shafts being supported with a piece of wood while being weighed).

Much of the work of the inspector during the first half of each year involved adjusting weighing machines and weights for the growing industry. The remainder of the year was spent making visits to trade premises.

The Law and Ordinances relating to the sale of House Coal, Milk and Bread, 1918 – 1922 together with the Bread Order of 1956

The Sale of House Coal Provisional Ordinance, 1918

The sale of house coal by the bushel had ceased many years prior to 1918. Selling coal by weight was now the norm however short weight bags and even delivering less bags than was agreed was commonplace. Consequently the States “ in the interest of the public and to prevent fraud” passed the following Regulations. These were made permanent in 1929.

Regulation 1 defined “coal” as house coal and a “vehicle” as any carriage, cart, wagon, truck, barrow or any vehicle used to carry coal. “Lawful authority” included the Inspector of Weights and Measures, a Parish Constable and a member of the Police Force. It is interesting to note that following the “butters case” in 1852 the Parish Constables seemed no longer to be involved in matters relating to the weight of goods. However in this piece of legislation they were authorised to act and this may reflect the seriousness of the problems existing at that time. Bearing in mind that a seller could remove coal from the open sacks on his vehicle in any quiet lane of a country parish it was probably considered prudent to include as many “lawful authorities” as possible.

The primary statement of this Ordinance was that all coal must be sold by weight, except, where by written consent of the buyer; it was sold by the complete boatload.

Regulation 2 concerned the sale of coal in quantities exceeding 2 hundredweight. This required that before any coal was unloaded a delivery ticket in the form prescribed in the Ordinance must be sent or handed to the buyer. This ticket was required to show the total weight whether in sacks or bulk and the names of both the buyer and seller. A States weighbridge ticket could be substituted for that prescribed in the Ordinance. Re-weighing of coal could be demanded by anyone involved in the transaction including any official provided that the distance did not exceed ½ mile. Presumably this distance limit was included so as to prevent excessive demands in those cases where deliveries were being made with a horse and cart. In the case of the purchaser demanding to have a load re-weighed he was responsible for paying all reasonable costs if the weight was found to be correct.

Regulation 3 related to sales not exceeding 2 hundredweight. This limit may seem small by today’s more affluent times but in 1918 deliveries of coal would have been made on a weekly basis bearing in mind that wages were paid every Friday. Any person selling, exposing for sale, hawking or delivering after sale had to be registered with the Inspector of Weights and Measures. Sacks were required to be labelled with a small metal disk in quantities of 2 cwt, 1 1/4 cwt, 1 cwt, 1/2 cwt, 28 lb. or 14 lb. A suitable weighing machine was to be carried on the delivery vehicle and was required to be tested every 3 months. A seller was obliged to weigh bags both full and empty if requested by the purchaser or inspector. Sales from fixed premises were required to be weighed and sold in the prescribed quantities and the Inspector could require sacks to be re-weighed.

Penalties were included covering a number of different offences.

The Order in Council relating to the Sale of Milk, 1919

The preamble to this Law clearly sets out the reasons for this piece of legislation. The Guernsey Farmers Federation, together with members of the States wished to have “uniformity among milk sellers and to safeguard consumers”. The reasons set out were firstly that public opinion was being roused to the fact that milk was being bought wholesale by Imperial measure and retailed by the litre measure. Secondly that milk was being sold by the litre and charged for at the rate of the Imperial quart and finally that the abolition of dual measure would prevent any further deceitful dealing.

On the 13th December 1919 the Law was approved and stated that milk must be sold by Imperial measure and not by metric measure.

The Sale of Bread Provisional Ordinance, 1922

This provisional Ordinance was made on the 28th January 1922 and made permanent in 1932. It required that bread must be sold by weight. Bread reputed to be of a prescribed weight was required to be of that weight but if deficient could be added to at the moment of sale i.e. by cutting a slice off another loaf!

All sellers of bread either from premises or a vehicle were required to have a “balance” complete with appropriate weights and purchasers could require bread to be weighed. Exempt were small loaves, fancy bread and French bread. Also exempt was bread to be consumed at a restaurant, hotel or licensed premises.

Offences were included to cover refusal to weigh or for under weight loaves.

The Bread Order, 1956

This Order was made under the Defence (General) (Guernsey) Regulations 1945. A previous Order had been made in 1953. This was however eleven years after the end of the 1939 - 1945 war but the austerity years were still having an effect on islanders. It was therefore decided that these additional measures were still required to control the sale of bread.

The first requirement was that no person shall sell or have for sale any loaf or roll of bread (including any bap) unless its weight is 14 ounces or a multiple of 14 ounces or is 10 ounces or less. However other types of bread were permitted to be sold provided that standard 14 ounce loaves were available.

The Court could disregard any inconsiderable variation in the weight of a single loaf but take into account the average weight of a reasonable number of loaves on sale.

The Alderney Weights and Measures Law, 1951

The decision to apply the Guernsey Weights and Measures Law 1916 to Alderney was considered in relation to the circumstances affecting Alderney after the end of the 1939 – 1945 war.

The islanders returned to the island to find virtually nothing in their houses and all the shops stripped of their furniture and weighing equipment. In some cases the occupying forces had even ripped out the wooden wall linings for firewood.

Regrettably almost all of the records prior to 1939 were lost; consequently there is no evidence of any arrangements regarding weights and measures in the island. However during a conversation with one elderly resident he seemed to recollect that the arrangements for the testing of weighing and measuring equipment in use for trade centred on the annual visits of the Constables on the morning of 1st January. Reputedly it was an occasion of much merriment regardless of whether the equipment was right or wrong!

The first visit of the Guernsey inspector six years after the end of the war found that the impact of the occupation was still very much apparent. The equipment in use amply demonstrated the urgent arrangements made by the UK military to get the island re-populated and functioning again.

The inspector and his assistant arrived by boat and the boxed precision test equipment was placed in rope nets and “dumped” on the quay by a very worn crane. The States of Alderney paid for this first visit by the inspector at a very difficult time financially. Everything was done to keep costs to a minimum. The Alderney staff arranged for equipment to be kept in a police cell and workshop facilities were made available for adjusting weights on the end of a bench at the States Works Department. The local carter gave free transport after he had finished his ex. ship delivery round!

Technical problems were highly apparent as many of the weighing machines were what are now referred to as “cooking scales” and many of the weights were not only incorrect, but also non-adjustable. The nozzle of the petrol pump, used to refill fishing boats and cans, had been cut off and refitted at the end of a 30 ft length of garden hose and consequently when the pump was switched on the quantity delivered was often short by as much as 1 pint. Many of the shopkeepers and business people were struggling to make a living and business was minimal resulting in part-time opening. Also apparent was the fact that new owners and their employees often had no experience of the correct methods of operating equipment. Such expertise would normally have been handed down to younger employees by more experienced staff but sadly this was now lacking.

As the economy of the island improved, matters gradually returned to normal and better equipment was purchased to the benefit of traders and their customers. This is now evident to the extent that Alderney was included in a UK Weights and Measures Order in 1995.

The Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Ordinances, 1965

The first amendment to this Ordinance resulted from complaints that measures used by the liquor-licensed trade varied considerably. Initial research showed that most “thimble” measures could not hold the quantity marked and were unstamped. Similarly “optic measures” were “5 out” or “6 out” and even “7 out” being “in theory” the amount obtainable from a standard gill of 5 fluid ounces. These were often in a poor condition, unstamped and leaking. Often the glass was so black that it was impossible to see if the “optic” had been properly discharged. Glass “elgin” measures used for the sale of sherry and other fortified wines varied so greatly in size that the quantity sold bore no relationship to the price paid.

The amendment required that spirits, namely; brandy, gin, vodka and whisky, sold retail and for consumption on the premises, could only be served in quantities of $\frac{1}{5}$ gill or in a multiple of $\frac{1}{5}$ gill. Also that port, sherry, vermouth and any other fortified wine must be sold only in quantities of $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{rd}}$ of a gill or multiples thereof. However, following representations from the conference trade, a second amending Ordinance permitted port, sherry, vermouth and any other fortified wine to be sold only in a quantity that was not less than $\frac{1}{3}$ gill. This change enabled the conference trade to cope with filling a large number of glasses quickly prior to an event and thus to operate within the terms required by the Ordinance. The effect of this change was to require all glasses used in licensed premises and at conference events to be large enough to contain the required $\frac{1}{3}$ gill. Initially many were not and like the optic measures were found to be of assorted small “out “sizes.

The Labour & Welfare Committee (now the Commerce and Employment Department) began its review of the limitations of the Weights and Measures Law of 1916 early in the 1970's. Recognising that this was no longer an insular matter the Committee noted that the Island's national and international trading partners had moved on and consequently there was a great deal of new information that the Committee needed to consider.

Measurements had now become integral with our modern way of life; industry, science, commerce and the law all demanded accuracy. Delivering this accuracy became the first aim of the Committee and hence required proper attention to the principles of metrology (the science of measurement) and how its application allowed components to fit together, processes to be reproduced and facilitate technological advance. Accurate measurement had also become an essential component of quality. In transactions it was recognised that measurement standards needed to be acceptable to both buyers and sellers. The following summary is one of the documents considered by the Committee.

“In the United Kingdom the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) is responsible for the integrity and functioning of the National Measurement System. The extent of this system may be judged by the fact that the NPL is responsible for over 100 units of measurement extending all the way from atomic units to the basic units of every day trade. Thus legal metrology, science and innovation, trade, safety, health, the service industry, manufacturing, emergency, defence and the environment all use measurements for which the NPL provides the nucleus. It is also essential that nations agree on the units of measurement and that measurement systems relate together. The International Bureau of Weights and Measures in Paris is the body responsible for a system of inter-comparison between national standard laboratories.

The National Measurement System is transmitted through a chain of calibration services, ensuring traceability at all levels. One is the National Measurement Accreditation Service and another is the National Weights and Measures Laboratory. This Laboratory has responsibility for legal metrology (metrology for trading purposes), which provides measurement standards and visits to local authorities to ensure accuracy”.

It is to this interconnected and traceable international system that Guernsey and Alderney are now linked both legally and in practical terms.

International Standards (in Paris)

National Standards (UK-NPL)

Secondary Standards

Tertiary Standards

Bailiwick Standards

Working Standards

Trade equipment

The Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 1991

A preliminary draft report of a Project de Loi was prepared during 1981 and 1982 as the Labour and Welfare Committee (now the Commerce and Employment Department) acknowledged that much of the old legislation was spent and that those parts that were still effective made some equipment illegal. However, early in 1983 the Law Officers became aware that the United Kingdom had in preparation a new Act that would consolidate three previous Acts. On the advice of H. M. Procurer it was therefore decided to await the UK legislation in order to ensure that the Guernsey law would be compatible.

The new UK Act was enacted in 1985 and a new Guernsey draft was commenced in April 1987. The draft law needed to be comprehensive so as to encompass the wide range of equipment now used for trade and to remove some of the outdated requirements placed on non-portable equipment such as weighbridges and petrol pumps. It also needed to include the requirements of previous legislation in respect of the sale of various goods such as bread and coal together with provisions for the sale of other goods now sold by quantity. The Committee also considered it essential that goods packaged locally should be made up in the same quantities as those imported and that the option of using the “average system” should be made available to local packers. Regulations were also prepared to ensure that technical and legal requirements were compatible with UK legislation, bearing in mind that the island had substantial trading links with the UK mainland and particularly in respect of our tomato exports. The regulations were also prepared so as to comply with a number of EC Directives.

The original draft referred to the “Bailiwick of Guernsey Law”, however a visit to Sark confirmed that the Sark authority did not wish to adopt this legislation and consequently the title was changed to the “Guernsey and Alderney Law”.

The new law was finally registered on the records of the island on the 30th September 1991 and came into force on the 12th December 1991. All the regulations came into force on the 17th December 1991 and were laid before the States of Deliberation at the first available meeting in January 1992.

Part I of the new law set out that the basis of measurement would be the yard or metre as the units of measurement of length and the pound or kilogram the units of measurement of mass. Multiples and fractions of these units are listed in Schedule 1 and the Committee is authorised to add or remove units to that Schedule if considered necessary. However the mile, foot, inch, gallon and pint are not to be removed without a Resolution of the States. Other units not to be used for trade were listed in Schedule 1, Part VI (i.e. the furlong and rood etc.).

The Committee is directed in Section 2 to provide and replace as necessary “Bailiwick Standards”. These to be kept in premises approved for the purpose. The Committee are also directed to have the value of the Bailiwick Standards determined or re-determined as and when necessary by the appropriate “United Kingdom Authority”. All “Bailiwick Standards” are deemed to be fit for purpose only if a certificate issued by the Authority is in force.

The Committee is also directed to provide “Working Standards” and testing and stamping equipment to ensure that the Inspector can efficiently discharge his duties. The “Working Standards” to be of a form and material approved by the “United Kingdom Authority”. Regulations (S.I. Nos. 43, 44 and 45) prescribed the methods of testing and the limits of error for working standards used by inspectors for testing trade equipment.

The Prescribed Stamp Regulations (S.I. No. 46) set the form of stamp to be used by inspectors for stamping weighing and measuring equipment that they have passed as fit for use for trade. The stamp used since 1916 consisted of a G and U in a circle. However the Committee decided that this was inadequate and that a version of the design used prior to 1916 was more acceptable. This now consists of a lion, a sprig of genista and the letter G (see Appendix III).

Part II, Weighing and Measuring for Trade, commences with the definition of “use for trade”. This is a fundamental statement in this law as it clearly defines the extent and exemptions (i.e. the weighing of a coin) of equipment to be used for trade. This Part is closely linked to Schedule 2 that lists denominations of measures and weights lawful for use for trade. Also connected with this Part are a number of Regulations (S.I. Nos. 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54) specifying materials, principles of construction, marking, the manner of use, testing procedures and limits of error. A wide range of equipment used in commerce is included, namely: measures of length, weights, capacity measures for liquid fuels and lubricants and for intoxicating liquor, public house optics, measuring instruments for liquid fuel (i.e. petrol and diesel pumps), measuring instruments fitted to road tankers, non-automatic weighing machines (i.e. normal shop scales, platform machines and weighbridges) and automatic machines (i.e. milk carton filling machines). This part also provides for offences concerning stamping of equipment, false or unjust equipment and fraud.

Public weighing or measuring equipment made available to the public is now controlled to the extent that those who offer this service must be competent. This requirement is contained in Part III and enables the Committee to also provide this service if necessary. This section relates principally to the use of weighbridges.

Part IV introduced detailed requirements in respect of a wide range of goods. Titled “Transactions in Goods”, this Part replaced some of the old Ordinances in respect of the sale of bread, meat, intoxicating liquor, coal etc. The Committee and subsequently the States considered it essential that goods packaged locally should be made up in the same quantities as are imported and should be clearly marked where necessary or, alternatively, that the quantity be made known by some other means (i.e. providing suitable weighing equipment for use by customers). Indeed, the Committee felt that in general purchasers in the island should have available the same standards of clarity and protection as in the UK. The consequence was that this Part and Schedules 3 to 8, together with S.I. 1991 No. 56 regarding quantity marking and abbreviation of units, is comprehensive and detailed in respect of a wide range of foods such as cheese, fish, fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, intoxicating liquor and many other miscellaneous foods. Sand and ballast, solid fuel, miscellaneous goods other than foods, composite goods and collections of articles are also included.

The Committee considered that the UK legislation relating to the application of the “average system” to packaged goods should be available to Guernsey and Alderney packers. This system is set out in Part V and is applicable to quantities made up by weight or volume. The average system requires that the actual contents of packages must be not less than, on average, the nominal quantity marked on the package. It sets out the duties to which packers and importers must comply having particular regard to the quantity of goods that packages must contain and the statement of quantity to be marked on them. It also makes provision for the EEC mark to be placed on packages and states that packages must not be sold if they contain less than the prescribed quantity of the contents.

The Packaged Goods Regulations 1991, S.I. No. 55 specify in detail how this system must be implemented. There is, however, no obligation to pack to the average system tolerances, as it is permissible to ensure that packages contain no less than the declared quantity marked on them in the usual manner.

The United Kingdom Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Order, 1995

This Order states that weighing and measuring equipment which would have to be stamped in accordance with the UK Weights and Measures Act 1985 before it could be used for trade in Great Britain, can be treated as if it were so stamped when it has been stamped under the Guernsey and Alderney legislation.

The Order also makes provision for the Guernsey and Alderney Law to have effect in relation to parts of the UK Act concerning the regulation of trade and weights and measures equipment used for trade. The Order also applies to goods for “despatch to a destination in Great Britain and to any designated country.” The Order declares that Guernsey and Alderney may be deemed to be a “designated country” in this respect.

Due to this mutual recognition in the European Community, barriers to trade have been significantly reduced and thus retesting and re-certification are kept to a minimum as products pass between Member States.

Island Standards of Weight and Measure deposited with the Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery

As already established, the Island Standards of weight and measure were in the custody of H.M Sheriff for many years. However as time passed, new standards were obtained to match the move from the old Rouen standards to those of the present day. Many of these old measures and weights are now held in the Guernsey Museum and Art Gallery, originally the Candie Museum.

The first group of standards to be deposited in the Candie Museum was in 1934. These had become obsolete following the adoption of the Imperial system of weights and measures in 1916. The main items are:

- 5 measures in denominations of the bushel, deneral, pot, quint and pint, all marked 1615;
- 2 nests of “cup weights” forming the Guernsey pound of 18 ounces originally referred to as of the Marc de Rouen; and
- A number of branding irons for marking wooden measures.

The second group of standards are all items that became obsolete following the introduction of the Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 1991. These included:

- A standard yard and sets of Imperial weights, 28 metric weights and 17 apothecary weights;
- Glass pipettes and measures together with the relevant certificates of examination issued by the UK Board of Trade: and
- Standard beamscales and a portable beamscale in a shutter case for testing weights at traders’ premises.



By kind permission of the Guernsey Press Co.

The Ancient Weights and Measures of Guernsey
with branding irons and punches to certify
correctness of other measures.

The Queen's (King's) Weights and The Weighbridges Department

The States of Guernsey operated two weighing departments, namely the Queen's (or King's) Weights in Market Street, St. Peter Port and the Weighbridges Department based mainly at St. Sampson's Harbour.

The Queen's Weights:

The Queen's Weights existed firstly to obtain tax revenue but also to ensure that farmers were paid the correct amount for meat carcasses sent to butchers in the Meat Market. Meat was brought from the slaughterhouse if sourced in Guernsey and imported in carts direct from the ship if being imported from England. Much later meat was sent in containers and eventually these were refrigerated.

The legislation normally refers to the King's Weights being the reigning monarch at that particular time. However the building in Market Street was built during the reign of Queen Victoria and consequently marked Queen's Weights 1876 above the doorway.

The operation of the weighing service and collection of dues was originally operated by a person appointed by the "ferme" system in the same manner as that of the weights and measures legislation.

Rates for weighing meat were originally set by the Royal Court and records show that these were specified as early as 1765. However, in 1822 it transpired that the farmers were going directly to the butchers and thus avoiding the payment of tax, prompting the Court to intervene and rule that such practice must cease. In 1823 tax rates were raised again. Following a dispute in 1837 the Court ruled that fees were payable to both the States and to the operator of the "ferme".

The "ferme" was renewed in 1895, on this occasion to Monsieur George William Cochrane who paid £240 for the "ferme" and £20 rent for the premises. A further £1 per quarter was to be paid into the "King's Revenues". He was also instructed to keep all weights and balances in good order. It was renewed again in 1901 but this arrangement ceased at about the same time as that of the weights and measures law in 1916. Operation of the weighing service was continued by the States thereafter.

In 1917 a provisional Ordinance was approved stating that any person "killing a beast" must have it weighed within 24 hours. This was required so as to exercise some control on the eventual weight paid to farmers. Clearly an animal drained over several days weighed considerably less. The fine for an offence was £3. Revised fees for weighing at the King's (Queen's) Weights were also included in this Ordinance.

Weighing was carried out on three large beamscales, the largest of which had a capacity of 1 ton. Sides of beef could be hung on a large hook attached to the weighing platform chains. Weights were kept on the premises up to ½ ton and these, together with the beamscales, were periodically tested by the Inspector of Weights and Measures.

The Weighbridges Department

Foundations (now covered by the Marina Restaurant) indicated that a small weighbridge was installed at the Victoria Pier, St. Peter Port. This would have been used in the days before the harbour was extended to its present size. Similar machines may have been installed elsewhere but certainly St. Sampson's harbour would have been similarly equipped. Later this Department operated seven 20 ton weighbridges at St. Sampson's Harbour and one at St. Peter Port. The main function of the Department was to levy tax on the export of granite to the UK but would also undertake the weighing of scrap metal for export. Imported coal and sand were also weighed so as to ensure proper distribution of the cargo between different companies. This also served to check the total quantity sent by the shippers. The weighing of new and modified vehicles for tax purposes was a significant part of the work of the Department as was the general weighing of assorted goods.

During the 18th century sailing vessels normally arrived ballasted with coal, chalk and other materials. This was swiftly unloaded so as to take on the granite exports and catch the tide. There was also great urgency to get loaded vessels away from the loading berths to make space for other empty vessels. At this time rumour has it that there were often so many ships awaiting cargoes that it was possible to cross from one side of the harbour to the other without walking on the harbour bed! Later steam ships became more available and while less in number these had significantly greater capacity. Consequently the urgency to load and unload was still required and this maintained pressure on the weighbridge staff to weigh as quickly and accurately as possible.

Stone came from the many quarries spread around the island but particularly from the northern Parishes. The weighing of carts, and later lorries as quickly as possible had the effect of producing a very professional and accurate method of working in which the weighing of individual loads (including the issue of a ticket showing total weighed weight, vehicle un-laden weight and the weight of the stone) could be done inside 30 seconds. The weight on the ticket was issued in tons, hundred-weights, quarters and 14 lb units and this resulted in staff, who were extremely good at mental arithmetic, automatically reducing the weights into hundredweights and multiples of 14 lb, making the subtraction of the empty lorry weight and then changing the quantity back to the four units again.

Running totals were kept so that the vessel was loaded to exactly the correct amount. Certificates were then issued to the shippers, boat owners and individual quarries.

Appendix I

Old Guernsey Units of Weight and Measure

Measures specifically used for liquids

1 Bushel (Ordinary)	= 15 pots & 3 pints
1 Guernsey Gallon (of wine)	= 2 pots
1 Pot	= 121 cubic inches
1 noggin	= $\frac{1}{8}$ pint

The Guernsey Wine gallon was approximately 20 cubic inches less than the English Gallon.

The Guernsey cider barrel measures containing 55 and 60 gallons eventually fell into disuse.

Measures for corn and general use

1 bushel (of wheat)	= 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ pots
1 bushel (of barley)	= 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ pots
1 Pot	= 121 cubic inches
1 quarter	= 4 bushels
1 bushel	= 2 cabotels
1 cabotel	= 3 denerals
1 deneral	= 5 quints
1 bushel (of coal)	= 16 pots & 3 pints
1 bushel (of charcoal)	= 120 pots

Weights

1 Guernsey ounce	= 2.539 grams heavier than the Avoirdupois oz
1 Guernsey pound	= 18 oz Rouen being $3\frac{1}{4}$ ounces heavier than the English Avoirdupois pound
1 Guernsey hundredweight	= 100 Guernsey Pounds & equalled 109 lb Avoirdupois
25 Guernsey pounds	= 1 Quarter

Wool was sold by the “tod” which weighed 32 Guernsey pounds.

Length

1 inch	often referred to as “une pouce”
1 ell	= 48 inches
1 verge (for wool)	= 38 1/2 inches
1 verge (for local cloth)	= 44 inches

Land Measurement

Foot	= 12 inches
Yard	= 3 feet
Perch	= 441 square feet or 49 square yards
Vergee	= 40 perches or 1960 square yards
Vergee (small measure)	= 36 perches or 1764 square yards

The perch and the small and large vergees have remained legal for the measurement of land.

Other measurements listed in old documents

1 carvee	= 12 bouvees
1 bouvee	= 5 Guernsey acres (20 vergees)
1 Guernsey acre	= 4 vergees

A stone mason’s perch = 161 ft 6 in. length by 1½ ft height by 1 ft width

Schedule I of the Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney), Law 1991 contains a more detailed list of old Guernsey units. Part VI of schedule I specifies 26 units that may not be used for trade. Equivalent values for those units are listed in metric terms. Equipment marked in those units is permitted to continue in use for trade.

Appendix II

Island and Working Standards together with equipment provided in respect of the 1916 Law.

Sets of Island and Working Standards in the custody of HM Sheriff prior to and following the enactment of the 1916 Law:

Weights Avoirdupois	56 lb - ½ dram
Weights Metric	5 kg – 1 mg
Weights (Apothecary)	10 oz - ½ grain
Weights (Grain)	4000 - 0.1 grain
Measures (Imperial)	1 gallon - 1 fluid oz
Measures (Metric)	1 - 0.001 litre

Island Standards in the custody of the Inspector after the commencement of the 1916 Law:

Imperial yard bed (subdivided), obtained 1917/1918
Measure (Imperial) ½ bushel
Measure (Imperial) 1 peck
Beamscales 56 lb, 7 lb and 1 lb capacity (used for comparison of Island and Working Standard weights and testing of traders' weights)

Working Standards and other equipment provided for the Inspector following the enactment of the 1916 Law:

Weights 56 lb Iron Bar (1 Ton)
Weights pairs of 14 lb, 7 lb and 4 lb (Iron bar)
Weights 14 lb – 4 oz (Iron ring)
Weights 1 lb (20 Iron bar) (in box for testing equipment in shops etc.)
Branding irons, tools and a drilling machine, tilting table, glass siphon and pipettes,
Rape-seed and a wooden dry measure
A bread weighing beamscale

Additional Standards and Equipment obtained for Inspectors (1953-1962):

Glass standard pipettes (1 set)
Additional 56 lb working standard weights (3 tons)
1-7 lb beamscale in shutter case
1 oz precision balance in glass case
Oxy/acetylene heating equipment

Appendix III

Approximate illustrations of the Official Stamp of the Royal Court and other stamps used by holders of the “fermes” and Inspectors of Weights and Measures, to confirm the accuracy of equipment as fit for use for trade.



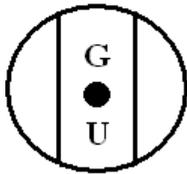
The “Rose et Fleurs de Lys” used by the Royal Court Officials
(first mentioned in 1585)

J G

Stamp used by Sheriff Jean Gosselin
(from 1761)



Various marks used for branding
wooden measures



Stamp introduced following the
commencement of the 1916 Law



The new stamp made legal by the
Prescribed Stamp Regulations, 1991

Appendix IV

Weights and Measures Inspectors

John H. Stribley. First full-time Weights and Measures Inspector appointed by the Royal Court on the 1st February 1916. Training received amounted to that passed on by the Parish officials who then ceased to undertake their part time duties. Mr Stribley also made a one-day visit to the Board of Trade offices in London. Retired in 1950.

Alfred J. Ingrouille. Joined the Department in 1946 and qualified on May the 25th 1951 as an Inspector of Weights and Measures (Certificate No. 2543). This was a United Kingdom qualification obtained following examination by the then Board of Trade in London. Mr Ingrouille was appointed as an inspector under the Guernsey Law of 1916 by the Royal Court on the 19th August 1950 and became Head of Department in that year on the retirement of Mr Stribley. Retired in 1980.

David R. Laine. Joined the Department in 1950 and qualified on 20th June 1957 as an Inspector of Weights and Measures (Certificate No. 2761). Mr Laine was appointed by the Royal Court as a Sub-Inspector under the Guernsey Law of 1916 on the 19th October 1957 and became Head of Department in 1978. Retired in 1992.

Appendix V

Trading Standards Officers and Technical Assistants

Trading Standards Officers:

During the years prior to 1979 a number of changes took place in the UK that increased the role of Inspectors of Weights and Measures so as to encompass greater support for consumers. This resulted in a significant change to the examination syllabus and consequently to the new professional title of Trading Standards Officer.

Bryan B. Guilbert. Joined as a Trainee in 1979 and qualified as a Trading Standards Officer (Diploma in Trading Standards, Certificate No.4205) in March 1983. Mr Guilbert was appointed as a Weights and Measures Inspector under the Guernsey Law of 1916 by the Royal Court on the 19th May 1983 and became Head of Department in 1992.

The following qualified Trading Standards Officers worked in the department in the years between 1982 and 2011. Nigel C. Clark and Helen L. Proudlove-Gains joined as trainees and subsequently qualified. Other qualified Trading Standards Officers, namely Peter H. Tompkins, Pamela Fleming, Richard F. Carr and Lesley J. Smith all worked in the department but were subject to the States 5-year housing licence requirements.

Technical Assistants:

The Department in the years following the end of the Second World War employed eleven weights and measures assistants. Several made a significant contribution to the development of the Department, primarily as Technical Assistants. These were Messrs. Terence Naftel, Richard Leaman, Richard Perkins, Peter Wilkinson and Kevin Hickman. All willingly undertook additional duties as the Department expanded into consumer affairs. This section cannot be closed without mentioning Mr. Ralph McKane who guided the Department through the many changes needed to take on the additional work of consumer affairs and the introduction of the computer age.

Appendix VI

Weights and Measures Offices

Following the enactment of the Law of 1916, the first Weights and Measures Office was opened at the bottom of Tower Hill. A Guernsey Press Directory shows that the Office had by 1940 moved to the former careening hard winch-house on the Victoria Pier. However during the occupation the Office had to vacate the premises and moved to Fountain Street occupying the corner of the Market nearest the Town Church (premises formerly occupied by ironmongers W.H. De La Rue).

The Office returned to the careening hard winch-house on the Victoria Pier in 1948. These premises are now part of the Marina facilities.

In March 1967 the Weights and Measures Department was made responsible for the operation of the six public weighbridges, five of which were situated at St Sampson's Harbour. Consequently it was decided to move the Inspector's Office to the weighbridge building at South Side. This building is adjacent to the junction with Church Road and had originally been the office of the St. Sampson's Harbour Master before he was moved to the "Clock Tower" building closer to the Bridge. An Ordinance was passed allowing the office to be moved from "la Ville de Saint Pierre-Port" in February 1967.

As the Department became more involved in consumer affairs including the calculation of the Guernsey Retail Prices Index the premises at South Side became too small for the number of staff working there. There had also been a significant reduction in the work of the weighbridges section and so it was decided to relocate the Department back to St. Peter Port. In January 1984 the Office moved to the premises formerly used by the Post Office Sorting Department in Le Truchot enabling all of the Department's heavy test equipment and vehicle to be in one location.

A further move was made in March 1986, this time to the former Girls Grammar School in Rosaire Avenue, St. Peter Port. This building later became Blanchelande College and is now sheltered housing accommodation.

In March 1992 the office side of the Department was moved to Longue Rue, St. Martin's and occupied part of a building formerly used by the States Agriculture and Horticulture Committee's Experimental Station.

The technical equipment moved into a specially converted building at Longue Rue in January 1994. This was the first occasion that the equipment was installed in a "purpose built" facility. Accommodation for most of the staff was made available within this building (except the Head of Department).

Appendix VII

List of Previous and Current Legislation

Ordres en Conseil

Loi relative au Poids du Roi, 1829
Loi relative au Droits percus pour l'usage des ponts-a-bascule, 1874
Loi relative aux Poids et Mesures, 1916
Loi relative aux Vente de Lait, 1919
The Alderney Weights and Measures Law, 1956

D'Ordonnances de la Cour de Guernesey

Tome I (1533-1800)

Poids et Mesures, October 1574, p.31
Poids et Mesures, 1581, p.47
Mesureur public, 1582, p.51
Boisseaux, 1582, p.52
Blés, comment seront mesures, 1583, p.53

Mesures, 1613-1614, p. 116
Jauges pour mesures, 1614, p.119
Visite de mesures, 1617, p.141
Poids et mesures, 1623, p.149
Boisseau à Orge, 1625, p. 153
Défendu de faire usage de mesures non étampées, p. 157
Mesureur public, et ses gages, 1631, p.163
Poids et Mesures, 1632, p.168
Seigle, avoune, etc se vendront à mesures raze, 1632-1633, p.171
Mesures seront visitées, 1632-1633, p.178
Meûniers sword des Pois, 1649-1650, p. 182
Merchandises se vendront au Poids de L'Isle, 1658, p. 187
Mesures seront visitées, 1668, p. 199
Boisseaux leurs dimensions, 1674, p.207
Connétables de la ville peseront le pain tous les mois et auront Poids et Balances, 1684, p. 216
Poids de Plomb défendus pour vente eu détail, 1699, p. 224

Poids et mesures, 1717, p.236
Mesures seront étampées, 1719, p. 242
Poids et mesures, 1720, p. 243
Poids, 1729-1730, p.256
Chaux, comment sera mesurée, 1759, p. 278
Droits du Prevôt sur marchandises qui se vendent pas le mesures, 1765, p. 284
Droits payables au Poids du Roi pour de la Viande, etc. p. 335

Tome II (1801-1831)

Mesures à Orge, etc, 1819, p. 231
Bouchers ne feront usage d'autres menus Poids que ceux qui leur seront fournis par le comite du
Marché, 15th April 1922, p. 273
St. Michel, 3rd October 1803, p. 29
Marché, Boucherie, etc, 6th October 1823, p.287
Marché à Poisson, 4th October 1830, p. 383
Attroupements défendus dans le marché, etc les jours de Bals, 18th October 1806, p. 55
Exportation de Comestibles, 8th June 1819, p.232/233

Tome III (1841-1860)

Pesage des Beurres, 1852, p. 234

Tome IV (1861-1900)

Détailleurs ne vendront sur les premises que les boissons en bouteilles, p. 284
Denrees alimentaires, 1889, p.302
Ferme de Poids de la Reine, 1895, p. 370

Tome V (1901-1931)

Tonneau de 2240 livres avoir du pois et tonneau de 210 gallons de mesure impériale,
1922, p.253

Ordinances enacted since 1916

Ordonnance Provisoire relative a la Verification des Poids et Mesures 1916
Ordonnance Provisoire reglant la Vente de la Viande III, 1917
Ordonnance Provisoire relative a la Vente de Charbon dit House Coal, 1918
Ordonnance Provisoire relative a la Vente de Pain, 1922
The Fees Amendment Ordinance, 1949
The Bread (Sark) Order 1956 No. 30
The Bread (Guernsey and Alderney) Order 1956 No. 31
The Weights and Measures (Amendment) Ordinance, 1967
The Weights and Measures (Amendment) Ordinance, 1970
The Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Ordinance, 1965
The Liquor Licensing (Amendment) (No.2) Ordinance, 1965

Some provisional Ordinances continued in use for many years while others were repealed or deemed spent due to non-renewal.

Legislation currently in force (as at December 2011)

The Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 1991

The Weights and Measures (Bailiwick Standard and Working Standard Weights and Testing Equipment) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 43

The Weights and Measures (Bailiwick Standard and Working Standard Linear Measures) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 44

The Weights and Measures (Bailiwick Standard and Working Standard Capacity Measures and Testing Equipment) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 45

The Weights and Measures (Prescribed Stamp) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 46

The Weights and Measures (Weighing Equipment) (Weights) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 48

The Weights and Measures (Measuring Equipment) (Measures of Length) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 49

The Weights and Measures (Measuring Equipment) (Liquid and Dry Capacity Measures) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 50

The Weights and Measures (Measuring and Equipment) (Intoxicating Liquor Capacity Servicing Measures) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 51

The Weights and Measures (Measuring Equipment) (Intoxicating Liquor) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 52

The Weights and Measures (Measuring Equipment) (Liquid Fuel and Lubricants) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 53

The Weights and Measures (Weighing Equipment) (Non-automatic Weighing Machines) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 54

The Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 55

The Weights and Measures (Quantity Marking and Abbreviation of Units) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 56

The Weights and Measures (Various Foods) (Amendment) Regulations, 1991, S.I. 1991 No. 57

The Weights and Measures (Weighing Equipment) (Non-automatic Weighing Machines) (Amendment) Regulations, 1993, S.I. 1993 No. 16

The Weights and Measures (Designated Countries) Regulations, 1993 S.I. 1993 No. 17

The Weights and Measures (Bailiwick Standard, Working Standard and Testing Equipment) (Amendment) Regulations, 1996, S.I. 1996 No. 10

The Weights and Measures (Fees) Regulations, 1997, S.I. 1997 No. 24

The Weights and Measures (Measuring Equipment) (Liquid Fuel and Lubricants) Regulations, 1999, S.I. No. 20

The Weights and Measures (Intoxicating Liquor) Regulations, 1999, S.I. 1999 No. 23

United Kingdom legislation noted in the main text:

The United Kingdom Weights and Measures Act, 1985

The Weights and Measures (Guernsey and Alderney) Order 1995 No. 1011

Additional references

The Weights and Measures of England – Connor R.D. 1987 (ISBN 0112904351)
The Channel Islands – Money, Weights and Measures "2nd edition" – Anstead D.T. 1985
(ISBN 0856943622)
Weights and Measures - T.F. Priaulx. The Guernsey Society
The Story of the Channel Islands – John Uttley, 1966 (Faber and Faber)
The Jersey and Guernsey Law Review
The Guernsey Law Review