Accessing the Pas-de-Calais Archives online

Note: While Calais and its surrounds have, since 2016, been incorporated into a larger French department [administrative area] the website still uses the name of the previous department.

If you know that you have ancestor family members who were born, married, lived or died in Calais then you can probably find digitized copies of the event registration records, census forms and some maps on the Pas-de-Calais France Archives (Les Archives du Pas-de-Calais) website.

The website is of course in the French language. However, if your web browser (eg Google Chrome, Firefox) is equipped with a translation function it is easy to use the website.
Spoiler alert: Any registration copies found on the website will be in hand-written French so you might need to refer to the short article about translating these documents in the Australian Society of the Lacemakers of Calais Journal *Tulle* Issue 116 found on the DLC website at
https://www.lacemakersofcalais.com.au/tulle

Warning: The Pas-de-Calais Archives website is regularly revised, and the access method and the appearance of the pages noted here may vary with time.

The following notes assume that your page is translated but the French equivalents are generally given in brackets.

To search for a birth, death or marriage record you should first search the indexes to find the date of the event record. Then you can search the event record documents for the record.

1 Looking through the indexes
Step 1: To open the website use http://www.archivespasdecalais.fr as the search address.

Step 2: At the top of the left-hand menu is **Online Archives** Digitized documents (**Archives en ligne**) > Click

The new page lists the material titles available online as follows:

Descendants of the Lacemakers of Calais

https://www.lacemakersofcalais.com.au/

Story of a person (Histoire d'une personne) – BMD registrations and census forms and other sections

History of a place (Histoire d'un lieu) – includes Maps

  *At the bottom of the right-hand **Tools** menu is "Help with consulting digital archives". > Click this link for informative and easy to follow instructions including Manuals (Modes d'emploi) - the "Online Archives   Instructions for Use" link is very useful.*

Step 3: Assuming, for example, you want to find a birth registration for George Bromhead born in 1848, click on **Story of a person**

From here on you can substitute the name and details of your person of interest

  Birth, marriage and death registration documents are found under **Civil status (Etat civil)**
  Census forms are found under **Population censuses (Recensements)**
  At the top of the new page is another chance to open the user manuals - most pages show the menu to access the manuals.

Step 4: For birth, marriage and death registration documents under **Civil status** (**Etat civil**) > Click
The new page lists the following:
Decennial tables (Tables décennales) – which are indexes and
Acts (Actes) – the registration records (These are the events birth, marriage and death)

Step 5: *If you know the person's name and event date and you are now looking for the registration record, move to the Registration Record section. – link here???*
If you are starting from scratch, read on

Index section: First, you should check the indexes, **Decennial tables** > Click

(Once you are proficient you will probably skip this step)
In the new page **Decennial tables**, Click on the link "Search the digitized decennial tables"

Step 6:

In the search page, it is necessary to provide some search parameters:
> *The first parameter is **Location (Lieu)**,*

Type "cal" in the box and wait
> *St Pierre is now covered by the "Calais" place name and if you are looking for another place such as Boulogne-sur-Mer type in the first three letters of the name eg "bou".*

Select the place name from the drop-down list and move down the page
> *The next parameter is the type of event or **Type of act (Type d'acte)** which are Naissances*

(Births) or Marriages (Weddings) or Décès (Deaths),
Select one, say Naissances (Births)
> *The next parameter is the time frame **Year (Année)**. You have a choice of 4 period options available in the left-hand box: In (En or exact year) or Between (Entre) or Before (Avant) or*

After (Après)
Select one, say Between and then type 1840 into the left-hand box and 1850 into the right-hand box.
Enter the relevant dates and you are ready to go, Click on yellow box **Search** (**Rechercher**)

Step 7: The new page provides you with the documents available for you to search

Step 8: The digital document number, place and year range are shown plus the events contained in them.
Usually you want to search the document titled "Saint-Pierre-les-Calais"
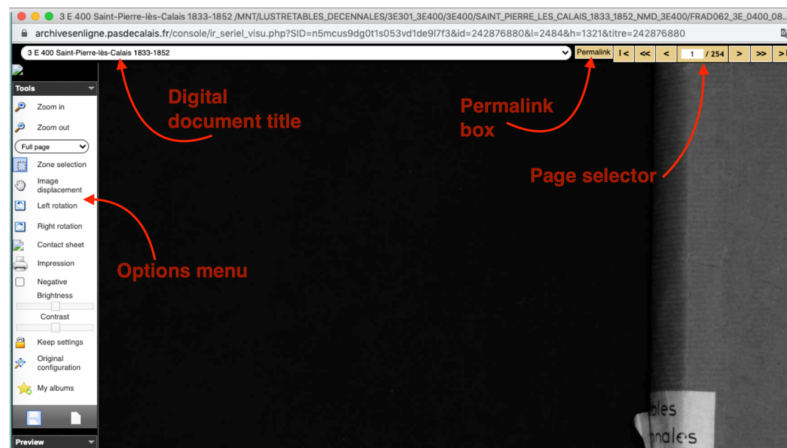Select document 3 E 400 and Click on the right-hand link **To consult** (Consulter) and wait

Step 9: *A page will open at page 1 of the digitized copy of the original hand-written index in alphabetical order of names.*

Your browser's English translator will NOT work here.
The page zoom can be varied in the left-hand menu – 75% is good.
The left-hand menu has other useful options to improve the view panel image and a print (Impression) option.
In a menu bar along the top is the name of the digital document – 3 E 400 Saint-Pierre-lès-Calais 1833-1852 – you will need this reference for your source documentation.

These documents often contain many more years than you are interested in and it will be necessary to click through to find the relevant event type and year range. This is assisted by the page selector, a yellow box at the top right and some trial and error selection is now used to find the relevant letter range required.

Permalink box- see notes below

Step 10: We are looking for Births in 1848 and as this document contains information up to 1852, the page we are looking for will be towards the middle/end of the document.
Type 118 into the page selector and press Enter
Page 118 is the start of the Births for St Pierre les Calais for the period 1843 to 1853.
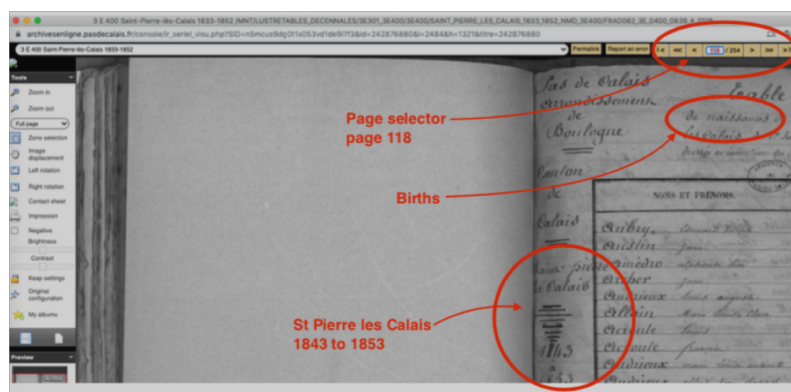
We are looking for the "B"s (Bromhead) so use the page selector arrows to scroll through the pages searching the names as the years move forward. The single arrow will advance or return the pages by one while the double arrow will advance or return the search by 10 pages.
In this case the relevant page is 124 where the name Bromhead is recorded twice for the twin boys Joseph and George Bromhead and the **registration** date of the event is noted as 16 Janvier (January) 1848.

We have the event **registration** date so now we can locate the registration documents to confirm the actual event date and details such as name, parents and location.

Note: The Decennial tables file also contains the registration records for Marriages and Deaths. Search for these the same way as noted for Births

Permalink
Before moving on, note the small yellow box on the top of the page titled "Permalink" which can save you a lot of time. Having now found the required page, click the Permalink box and wait. A box will appear on your screen with instructions and a URL address. Copy the address and save it. At any time later, paste the address into your browser, hit enter and it will take you directly to the relevant page in the digital document file.
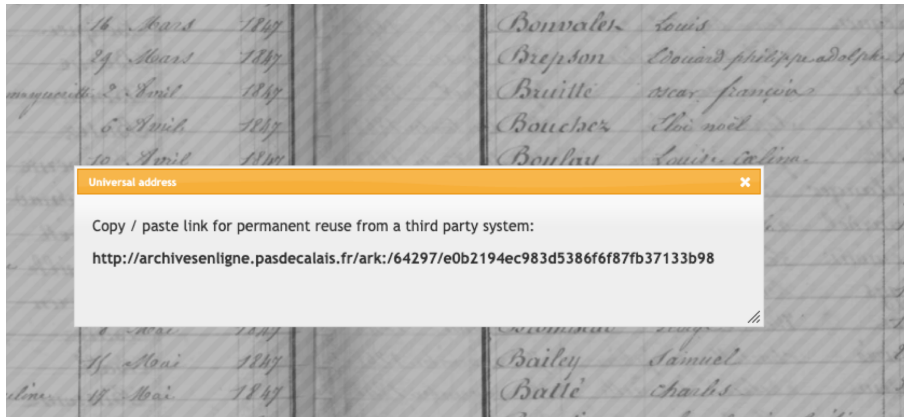
2 Finding the registration record

Step 11: To now search for the event registration record, return to the **Civil status** (**Etat civil**) page as for step 4 above but now you want **Acts** **(Actes)** > Click

Step 12: In the new page **Acts**, Click on the link "Search the digitized parish and civil registers"

Step 13:

As for the previous search, you must enter search parameters

The first parameter is **Location (Lieu),**

Type "cal" in the box and wait

St Pierre is now covered by the "Calais" place name and if you are looking for another place such as Boulogne-sur-Mer type in the first three letters of the name eg "bou".

Select the place name from the drop-down list and move down the page

The next parameter is the time frame **Year (Année)**. You have a choice of 4 period options available in the left-hand box: In (En or exact year) or Between (Entre) or Before (Avant) or After (Après), however, as you want 1848 enter that number into the In box

The next parameter is the type of event or Type of act (Type d'acte) which are Naissances (Births) or Marriages (Weddings) or Décès (Deaths),
Select one, in this example say Naissances (Births)

You are ready to go, Click on yellow box **Search** (**Rechercher**)

Step 14: The new page provides you with the documents available for you to search

Step 15: The digital document number, place and year range are shown plus the events contained in them.
You are looking for a birth in 1848 in Saint-Pierre-les-Calais so you want the document titled Calais – 1847-1859 (content Saint Pierre-les-Calais Births, 1847-1859) so Click on the title or the link **To consult** (Consulter) and wait

Step 16: *A page will open at page 1 of the digitized copy of the original hand-written birth registration records for the place and time range that you require.*

Step 17: Each year of the records contained in this film has an alphabetical index and its END. You are searching for the name Bromhead in 1848 so as this film starts at 1847 the 1848 index should be at about 200 to 250 of a total of 1783 pages. As before use the page selector in the yellow box to move through the pages. In this case you want page 223.

The two Bromhead names are noted with the date of the registration in the right-hand column (16 January) and the registration number in the left-hand column (15 and 16).

Step 18: Use the page selector to go back to the start of the 1848 section for mid-January – try page 125
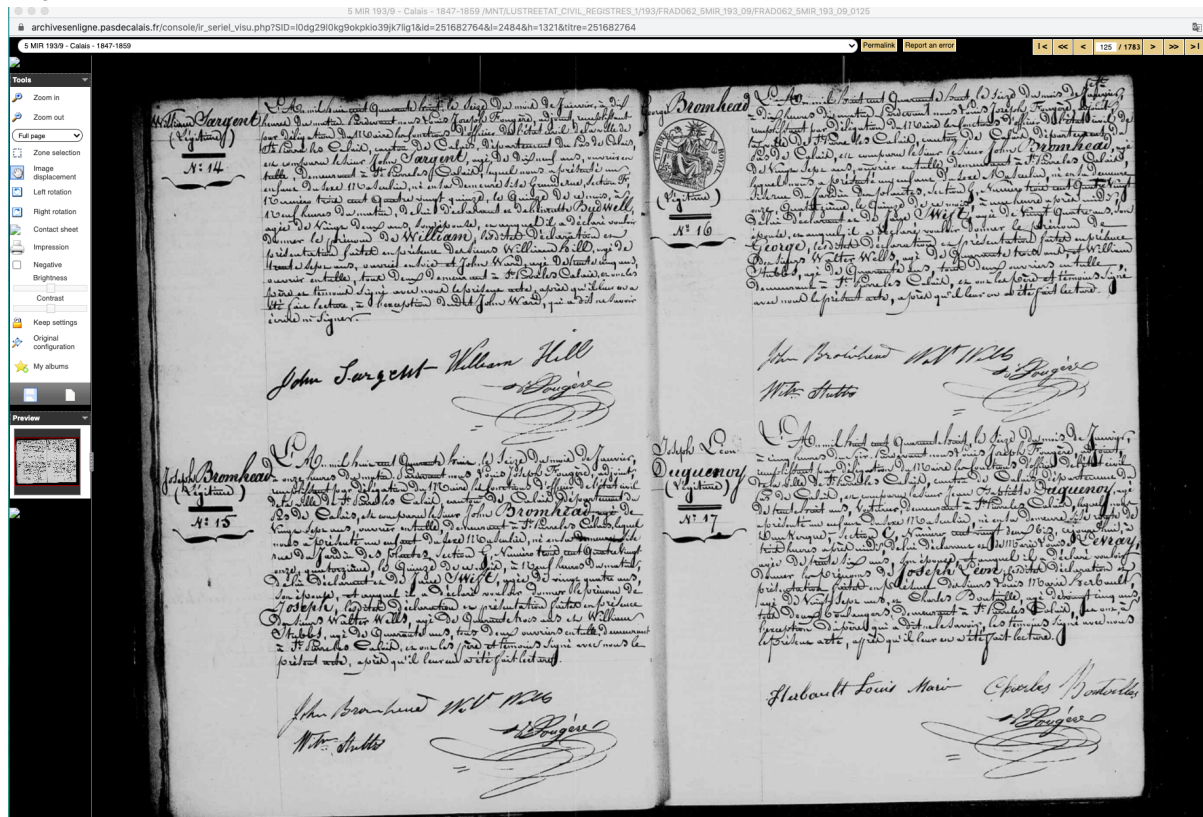
The Bromhead registrations are on the same page. Take screen shots for your records and use the Permalink function (yellow box at top) to record the link to this page for future use.

The records states a lot of information including the child's name, say George Bromhead, that he was born legitimate (Légitime) and includes details of his birth date (15 January) , where and when he was born, his parent's names, occupations and place of residence as well as the names, ages and occupations of the witnesses (Walter Wells and William Stubbs).