

ON BRITISH SOIL – VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

THIS EXHIBITION WAS HELD AT GUERNSEY MUSEUM FROM 29 MARCH TO 12 MAY 2019

During the German Occupation of the Channel Islands 1940-1945, many thousands of people were persecuted, including slave labourers, political prisoners and Jews. Their story has been largely omitted from a British narrative of 'standing alone' against Nazism and British victory over Germany.

Based on the research of Dr Gilly Carr of the University of Cambridge, this exhibition tells the overlooked stories of the persecuted, and the post-war struggle to obtain recognition of their suffering.

It has been adapted from an exhibition previously shown at the Wiener Library for the study of the Holocaust and Genocide in London.



Joseph Gillingham (courtesy of the Island Archives)

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

After the British and French Armies were evacuated from Dunkirk in May and June 1940, British authorities decided not to defend the Channel Islands. The Islands were demilitarised and thousands of Islanders tried to evacuate. In total, 17,000 out of 42,000 left Guernsey and 6,600 out of 50,000 left Jersey. 471 remained in Sark and around 20 people stayed in Alderney. On 28 June 1940, German air raids on St Peter Port and St Helier killed 34 and 11 civilians respectively. Between 30 June and 4 July 1940, the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney and Sark were occupied by German forces. Islanders had no idea how long the Occupation might last or how German rule would affect their lives.

INVASION AND OCCUPATION

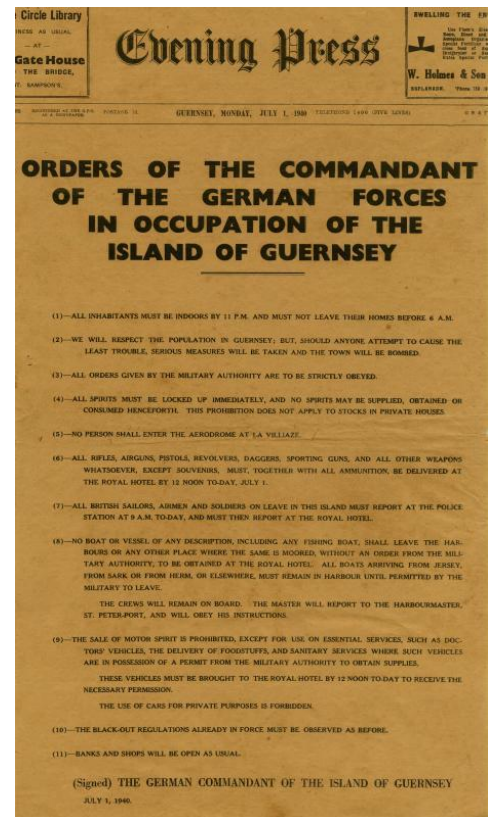
The Occupation was conducted by German military authorities. At its height, there was one German soldier to every three locals. The existing local administration in the Islands remained in place, operating under the jurisdiction of the Germans. A letter sent in June 1940 by the Home Office instructed the Bailiffs to remain in post in the event of an invasion. It asked them to “administer the government of the Island... in the interests of the inhabitants”. The exact meaning of this was not defined further.

The Occupation affected the local population in various ways. Islanders experienced many restrictions, including the censorship of mail and news, the rationing of food, petrol, fuel and clothing and the confiscation of their radios in 1942. The only direct communication with Britain was through short infrequent messages sent via the Red Cross.

Men born outside the Channel Islands and their wives and children, as well as former World War I officers, British Jews and those classed as ‘undesirables’ – some 2,200 people in total – were deported to internment camps in Germany in 1942-43. Jews without British nationality were deported in April 1942. At least 220 Channel Islanders were deported to Nazi prisons and concentration camps for acts of protest, defiance and resistance. By 1944, food shortages worsened, and starvation was only alleviated from December by a monthly Red Cross ship, the SS Vega, bearing food.

On 9 May 1945, Guernsey and Jersey were liberated from Nazi Occupation. Sark was officially liberated on 10 May and Alderney on 19 May 1945. Evacuees began returning to the islands in July 1945 and deportees in August 1945. That same month, those who had been deported to Nazi prisons and concentration camps for acts of resistance began to return home.

A former exhibition from Guernsey Museums



Guernsey Press (Guernsey Museums & Galleries)



German troops in St Peter Port, summer 1940
(Guernsey Museums & Galleries)

RESPONSES TO THE OCCUPATION

Channel Islanders responded to the Occupation in a complex variety of ways. Local authorities cooperated with the occupiers in an effort to ensure the general wellbeing of the population. Some residents engaged in acts of protest, defiance and resistance. These acts included providing humanitarian aid to slave and forced labourers, spreading the BBC news on illegal radios, writing underground newsletters and stealing weapons. Others participated in sheltering Jews, intelligence gathering, forging identity cards, and forms of symbolic resistance.

“It is desired by His Majesty’s Government that the Bailiff should discharge the duties of Lieutenant-Governor... and that he should stay at his post and administer the government of the Island... in the interests of the inhabitants, whether or not he is in a position to receive instructions from His Majesty’s Government.”

Extracts from a letter sent to each of the Lieutenant-Governors by the Under Secretary of the Home Office instructing the Bailiffs to remain in post in the event of an invasion, 19 June 1940.

HEDWIG BERCU – A JEW IN HIDING

Hedwig Bercu (1919-2009) arrived in Jersey from Vienna in 1938. Even though she had registered with the authorities as a Jew in 1940, Bercu obtained work as an interpreter for the Germans in spring 1942. She began a relationship with a German officer whom she met through work, Lieutenant Kurt Rümmele. In 1943, Bercu moved into hiding with a local woman, Dorothea Weber née Le Brocq, a Jersey woman who had married an Austrian man who was later pressed into the German army. Rümmele occasionally supplied the women with food, and Bercu remained hidden with Weber until liberation. After the war, Bercu converted to Protestantism and went to Germany where she married Rümmele. In 1960 she learned that her parents had been murdered in Auschwitz.



Hedwig Bercu (courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

JEWS UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

At the start of the German Occupation, it is thought that at least 30 Jews remained in the Channel Islands. In the main, they were either British citizens or those without British citizenship who had fled the Nazis. The Jewish population of the Islands suffered persecution, terror and even death during the Occupation.

Nine anti-Semitic regulations (Orders) were passed through the Royal Courts in Jersey and Guernsey between October 1940 and August 1942. The measures included compulsory registration of those 'deemed to be Jews', the forced sale of Jewish businesses, and a ban on Jews visiting places of public entertainment. Jews in the Channel Islands were also subject to a curfew.

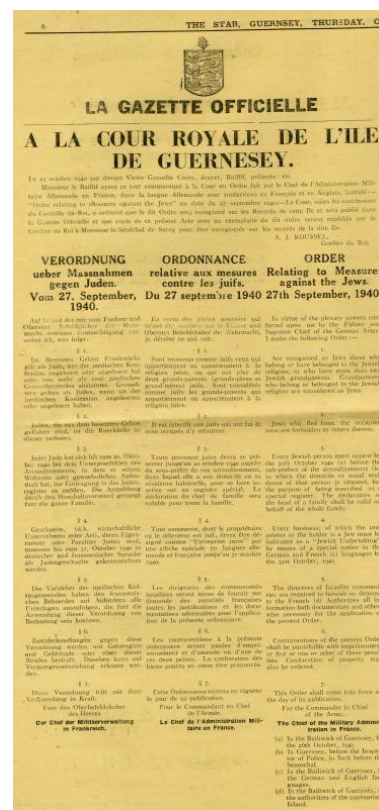
In February 1943, some of the British Jews living in the Islands were deported to civilian internment camps in Germany. All survived the war; even John Finkelstein who was taken from Laufen internment camp and sent to Buchenwald concentration camp, where he suffered greatly.

Non-British Jews faced worse treatment: three such women were deported in 1942 and three months later murdered in Auschwitz. A group of between 850 and 2,000 French Jews and those of Jewish heritage who were sent from camps on the continent as slave labourers to Alderney were particularly badly treated. We do not know how many survived. A total of seventeen people out of a total Jewish population of at least 30, registered as Jews across the Channel Islands.

Miriam Jacobs was a British Jew from Bethnal Green, London, who was resident in Guernsey. She changed her surname to Jay in 1937 to appear less Jewish; she also concealed her Jewish identity during the Occupation. Her partner, George Ridgway, was Solicitor General in Guernsey and involved in the drawing up of anti-Semitic measures. It is likely that Ridgway knew Jay was Jewish. In a postcard sent to her family at Liberation, she wrote: "The joy of freedom once again. It is hard to realise...How I loathe the Germans."

Esther Pauline Lloyd registered as a Jew in 1940 and was deported to civilian internment camps in France and Germany in 1943. She launched an extraordinary campaign against her own deportation and, remarkably, was repatriated to Jersey in 1944.

"6 May 1943: Never shall I be honest again – if I had not declared myself this wouldn't have happened – it's dreadful". From the diary of Esther Pauline Lloyd, Wiener Library Collections.



The Star, 24 October 1940 (Guernsey Museums & Galleries)



Esther Lloyd (courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

DEPORTED TO AUSCHWITZ

Marianne Grunfeld was born in Katowice, Poland in 1912 to a German Jewish family. She moved to Reading in 1937 to study horticulture at the University of Reading.

In early 1939, Grunfeld took a job at Duvaux Farm in Guernsey. Grunfeld's file in the Aliens' register at Guernsey Archives shows that she was registered in the island on 20 April 1940 to be employed as a land worker, attending cattle. Grunfeld was Jewish but she did not register as a Jew in accordance with the First Order relating to Measures against the Jews, registered in the Royal Court of Guernsey on 23 October 1940. It has been suggested that she was denounced but there is no evidence for this and she may have been identified from her surname or her presence on the list of Aliens.

On 17 April 1942, Marianne Grunfeld was interrogated by the German authorities for the second time in 12 months. She was warned, this time, to get ready for deportation. Ted Ogier, her employer, tried unsuccessfully to appeal, obtaining a letter of introduction to the Feldkommandantur from John Leale, the President of the Controlling Committee. The Reverend Douglas Ord, who kept a diary during the German Occupation of Guernsey, noted on 18 April 1942 that "a friend [presumably Ogier] stopped me outside Grand Lodge, the Zivilkommandantur [sic] to vent his rage and sorrow. He had gone to appeal for a girl employee who is only just within the forbidden degrees of Jewish birth and is to be carried off. The officials listened to the arguments but were powerless to resist the inhuman decree of the Nazi Frankenstein."

Marianne Grunfeld was deported to St Malo on 21 April 1942. Two Austrian-born Jews, Therese Steiner and Auguste Spitz who were both employed at the Castel Hospital were also deported. Ultimately, the three were transported to Auschwitz via Drancy internment camp, arriving on 23 July 1942. Of their transport of 824 people, only eighteen men and two women survived the war.



Marianne Grunfeld

(courtesy of Island Archives)



Therese Steiner

(courtesy of Island Archives)



Auguste Spitz

(courtesy of Island Archives)

FOREIGN LABOURERS ON THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

The German occupiers made extensive use of foreign labourers in the Channel Islands. A minority of workers were volunteers, whilst others were forced labourers who received wages, or slaves who did not. Labourers included Soviet citizens, Eastern Europeans, Spaniards, French citizens, North Africans, Dutch, and Belgians. The workers all suffered from maltreatment, including brutal beatings, and a lack of food, but Jews and Soviet citizens were especially badly treated. Many slave workers were murdered; forced labourers also died, and there were many industrial accidents in the construction of the bunkers. Labourers were not given any safety clothing to protect them during their work.



Members of Feldkommand 515 watch the progress of fortifications in 1942
(image courtesy of Damien Horn)

Labourers engaged in construction projects, primarily the fortification of the Islands as part of the Atlantic Wall. All worked for Organisation Todt (OT), the Nazi engineering and construction organisation. At its peak, 16,000 OT workers were based on the Islands.

In the Island of Alderney, there were at least four OT labour camps and two SS-run concentration camps. There were also significant numbers of slave labourers in Jersey and Guernsey. Conditions in Alderney were particularly brutal and exploitative.



German concrete gun position at the end of the Model Yacht Pond pier, circa 1943

Festung Guernsey (Guernsey Museums & Galleries)

In excess of 1,000 foreign forced and slave labourers died in the Channel Islands during the Occupation, mainly from malnutrition. Between 437 and 1,000 predominately Soviet citizens died in Alderney alone.

FORCED AND SLAVE LABOUR

GEORGI KONDAKOV'S MEMORIES OF ALDERNEY

Georgi Kondakov (c1923-unknown) was working in a shell factory in Orel, a Russian city south west of Moscow, when the German invaders arrived in 1941. He was forced into labour service for the Germans in 1942. Kondakov survived forced labour in Alderney and northern France. After the war, Kondakov returned to Orel. In retirement, he traced sixty-three other Soviet survivors of Alderney.

"All our conversations on Alderney were about food or the death of someone we knew. On our one day off a month we discussed home and the progress of the war. If my brain was not too exhausted I would always dream of home..."

Many times when I was on Alderney I thought death was close. Most of my worst memories come to me now as nightmares...

The Germans started shooting prisoners who were stealing potatoes out of the fields, but the desire for food was much stronger than the fear of death...

We were... determined to defy the will of the Germans who had told us that no one would leave the island alive."

Georgi Kondakov quoted in Madeleine Bunting's *A Model Occupation – The Channel Islands under German Rule 1940-1945* (1995)

Francisco Font (1919-1981) was a Republican fighter during the Spanish Civil War, a slave labourer in Alderney and a forced labourer in Jersey. After the war, Font married and settled in Jersey and campaigned successfully to get a memorial to forced and slave labourers erected.



Francisco Font (courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

GUERNSEY'S POLITICAL PRISONERS

At least 1,300 Islanders are known to have been held in prisons in Jersey and Guernsey during the Occupation for acts of protest, defiance and resistance. Of these, more than 220 were deported to prisons and labour and concentration camps abroad.

Acts of resistance included stealing weapons, sabotage, espionage, underground distribution of news, producing anti-Nazi graffiti, and sheltering or giving aid to forced labourers or Jews.

There was also symbolic resistance, such as wearing clothes in patriotic colours, and some civil servants, teachers and clergy used their position to undermine and find ways to evade the rules of the occupiers. Defiance of the radio ban was common among large numbers of Islanders.

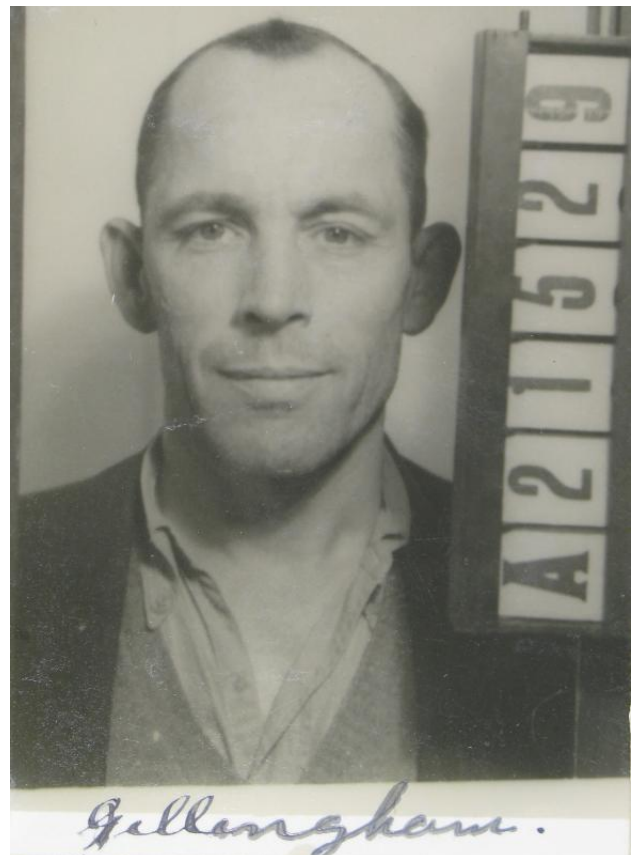
There were some small resistance networks in the Islands, including the Guernsey Underground News Service (GUNS), and some small armed groups of teenage boys in Jersey, but no large underground movement as seen in France. Resisters were hampered by a lack of weapons, the size of the German garrison, and by the hostility of the local authorities who were concerned at the threat of reprisals against the entire population. Arrested resisters generally faced a military court martial, and some were tortured by the German secret police.

28 of those deported from the Channel Islands for acts of resistance died in incarceration.

JOSEPH GILLINGHAM – DIED IN A GERMAN PRISON

Joseph Gillingham (1901-1945) was a member of the Guernsey Underground News Service. The people involved in GUNS secretly listened to the BBC news on hidden radio sets, wrote the news down and shared it with other islanders in daily printed news bulletins. The publication of GUNS from May 1942 to February 1944 was a significant act of local defiance. It was also an important link with the outside world for islanders after radios were confiscated in June 1942 and it became a punishable offence to retain a radio set or listen to the news. Gillingham received a ten-month sentence for his involvement and was deported to prisons in Frankfurt and then Naumberg. At the end of his sentence, he was supposed to be released to a civilian internment camp. His actual fate and whereabouts remained unknown to his family for over 70 years.

Recent research has revealed that Gillingham had been taken to another prison and not an internment camp. He was buried in a cemetery in Halle, Germany, after dying in the town's police prison in March 1945. In March 2016, his only daughter Jean was finally able to visit her father's grave.



Joseph Gillingham (courtesy of Island Archives)

SIDNEY ASHCROFT – DEPORTED FOR THEFT OF FOOD

21-year-old Sidney Ashcroft spent time in eight German prisons following his arrest for stealing food from a German kitchen. Sidney was challenged by two German soldiers, and the family story is that his mother, who probably tried to intervene, was pushed by them. The soldier or soldiers struck Sidney, who returned the blow(s). For this offence, Sidney was brought to the Guernsey prison on 1 May and convicted by court martial on 14 May 1942 to 2 years and 9 months hard labour. His offence was registered as 'serious theft and resistance to officials'.

Sidney spent time in eight Nazi prisons before he died aged 23 of tuberculosis and starvation in Straubing Prison shortly before the end of the war. He was buried in the unmarked political prisoners section of a graveyard in the town. In September 2015, a short BBC documentary was made in which Chris Roberts, a relative of Sidney's, and Dr Gilly Carr went to Straubing to find Sidney's last resting place. A plaque was laid in Sidney's memory on the site which read 'Sidney Ashcroft, Guernsey political prisoner, 2.6.21 – 15.5.45.'



Sidney Ashcroft (courtesy of Island Archives)

JERSEY'S POLITICAL PRISONERS

LOUISA GOULD AND HAROLD LE DRUILLENEC: ANOTHER MOTHER'S SON

After her son was killed in action, Louisa Gould (1891-1945) felt she should do something to help 'another mother's son'.

In September 1942, she took in an escaped Russian slave labourer, Feodor Buryi. For eighteen months, aided by her brother Harold Le Druillenec, Gould sheltered Buryi. She taught him English and the two appeared in public together. Gould also illegally spread the BBC news to customers in her store in St. Ouen, gathered from a hidden radio.

Gould was betrayed by two neighbours and arrested in May 1944 along with her brother and others.

Louisa Gould was deported to prisons in France and then Germany. She died in Ravensbrück concentration camp on 13 February 1945. Harold Le Druillenec survived forced labour at a number of concentration camps. Le Druillenec was the only British survivor of Bergen-Belsen camp at the time of liberation. Buryi lived undetected until the end of the war under an assumed identity, Oscar Le Breuilly.



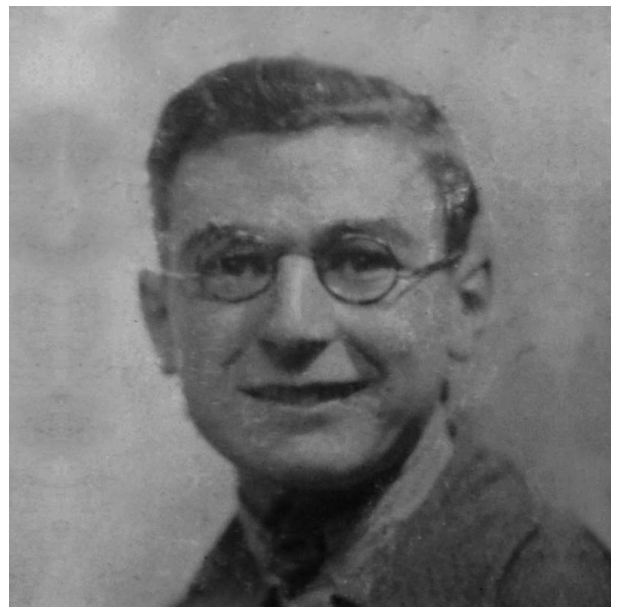
Louisa Gould (courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

JOSEPH TIERNEY – DEPORTED FOR DISTRIBUTING THE NEWS

Joseph Tierney was deported from Jersey in 1943 for listening to the BBC and distributing news illegally. In Frankfurt and Naumberg prisons, he met Joseph Gillingham. When the two reached the end of their sentences, they were supposed to have been taken to a civilian internment camp.

Recent research has revealed that after Naumberg, Tierney spent brief periods in a labour camp and a concentration camp, before being put on a cattle truck convoy bound for Theresienstadt concentration camp/ghetto. Conditions were very poor and Tierney died in the cattle truck in late April or early May 1945, shortly before liberation, and his body dumped in a mass grave.

In the summer of 1945, his body was exhumed from a mass grave in Czechoslovakia and reburied in a Catholic cemetery. His location was identified in 2016 and his daughter Pat was able to lay flowers at the site.



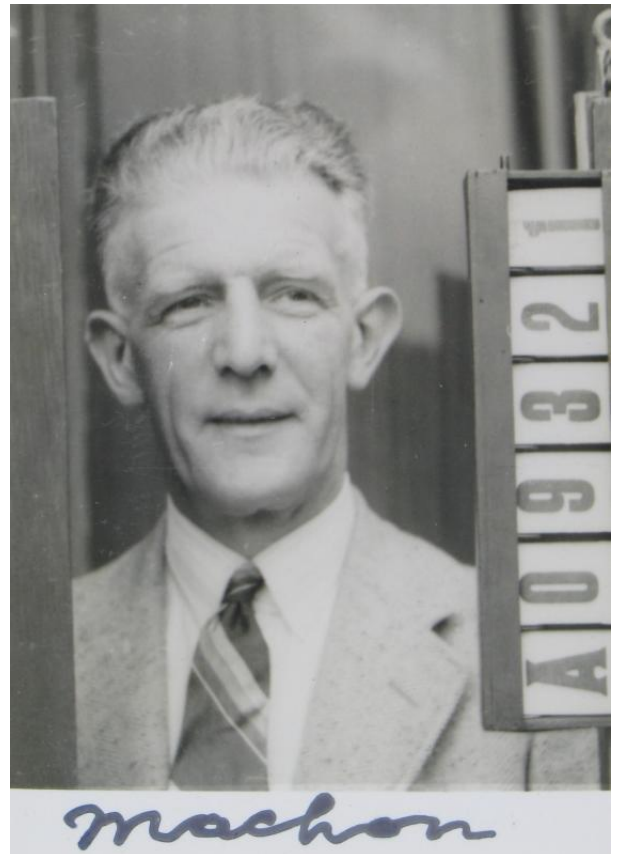
Joseph Tierney (courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

GUERNSEY UNDERGROUND NEWS SERVICE (GUNS)

During the Occupation, Frank Falla was invited to join an underground newspaper. After radios were confiscated in June 1942 and listening to the BBC made a severely punishable offence, Charles Machon, Falla's colleague and typesetter at the Guernsey Star newspaper, decided to set up the news service. He had to be careful not to let each member of the group know who else was involved in case any of them were caught. The other members of the group were initially husband and wife team Joseph and Henrietta Gillingham, and Henrietta's brother Ernest Legg. Later on, Frank Falla and Cecil Duquemin joined. It was Falla's idea to name the news service GUNS (Guernsey Underground News Service). The newssheet was distributed throughout St Peter Port where all the members lived and further afield. It was also smuggled to Sark where baker Hubert Lanyon made it available to customers.

The men were informed on and arrested. Henrietta's brother and husband covered for her and she was not arrested. The five men were deported but Lanyon was fortunate to serve his sentence locally. Charles Machon as the ringleader was given the longest sentence. He was separated from the group and sent to Rheinbach Prison on 22 May 1944 and then Hamelin Prison. Charles Machon died on 26 October 1944 in Hamelin prison hospital of a gastric ulcer and haemorrhage. His unmarked grave was located in Hamelin graveyard in 2016. On 12 June 2018, a new memorial was unveiled to Charles Machon in Am Wehl cemetery, Hamelin. Charles Machon's grandson, Philip Machon, was able to attend the ceremony with his wife, Diana Hill.

In June 1944 the others involved were sent to Frankfurt am Main prison followed by Naumburg where they had to carry out forced labour. As an indication of the conditions, of the eleven Islanders in Naumburg, five died within six months. Conversely of nine Channel Islanders sent to Buchenwald concentration camp, all survived. Falla and Legg were lucky to survive, days from death, until their liberation in April 1945. Gillingham died in March 1945 in Halle prison, but this fact was unknown for another 70 years. Duquemin was taken from Naumburg in October 1944 enduring forced labour camps and a prison, before he was able to escape from a forced march. He finally returned to Guernsey in October 1945.



Charles Machon (courtesy of Island Archives)

POST-WAR THE COMPENSATION CLAIMS

In 1964, the West German government awarded one million pounds as compensation for British victims of Nazi persecution. The British government decided that the money was for those who had been in 'a concentration camp or comparable institution'. It would eventually take until at least 40 years after the War began for it to be recognised that German prisons were also part of Nazi political repression. People were compensated for the amount of time spent in a camp and the percentage of permanent disability they suffered. Channel Islanders were only included in the scheme after a campaign by Guernseyman Frank Falla.

The scheme was advertised widely and people were invited to apply with evidence of their imprisonment. Those claiming for disability had to attend a medical board. The experience of claiming compensation was not easy. It meant writing down their experiences and for many, reliving them. Not all Channel Islanders who deserved compensation applied for it. For some it was too difficult to face the events again, for others their trauma or physical disability left them incapable of applying, and some were too proud to accept compensation from the Germans.

Over 100 Islanders applied for compensation and around 50 were successful. For some, the compensation was badly needed as they had been unable to work since the war due to physical or psychological impairments. Compensation gave a sense of vindication. They had been badly treated and the financial recompense meant they could usefully contribute to their families.

"I spend my life in some degree of pain (almost unbearable at times)... due to a spinal injury caused by a blow from a German guard... What disability and bad health has cost me since the war, it is impossible to estimate."

The testimony of Frank Tuck, one of sixteen policemen deported from Guernsey for stealing food from German stores to give to the hungry.

GERALD DOMAILLE – ESCAPED FROM A FORCED MARCH

Gerald Domaille (1915-2004) of Guernsey was falsely accused of receiving stolen goods and was sentenced to a year in prison. He served time in various Nazi prisons, and at the end of the war was sent on a forced march to Dachau concentration camp. Domaille and two friends from Guernsey escaped from the march and sheltered in a number of farms, from where they were liberated by the Americans. A kit bag given to Domaille by a US soldier at this time can be seen in the exhibition.

Domaille contracted tuberculosis as a result of the hardships he endured in Germany. He received compensation as a victim of Nazi persecution. He settled back in Guernsey after the war and had three sons.



Gerald Domaille (courtesy of Island Archives)

EFFECTS OF INCARCERATION

The compensation claims written by Channel Islanders reveal that many of those deported to Nazi prisons, labour and concentration camps suffered from long-term mental health issues after their return, including nightmares, emotional numbness, anxiety, amnesia and flashbacks. Some tried to block painful memories in self-destructive behaviour including alcoholism. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health conditions were not recognised for what they were at the time of the compensation claims in the mid-1960s.

BUCHENWALD CONCENTRATION CAMP

Nine Channel Islanders were imprisoned in Buchenwald Concentration Camp. It was the largest concentration camp in the German Reich with over 280,000 prisoners from all over Europe, more than 64,000 of whom died either as a direct result of conditions or execution. All of the Channel Islanders incarcerated in Buchenwald personally experienced the suffering for which the camp was notorious: forced labour on minimal rations, beatings and diseases. They were also witness to murder at the hands of the guards.

“we slept out in the little lager [camp] with only a blanket each for cover and the earth for our bed... We started our day’s work at five in the morning... we were joined by an SS Patrol... who loved to set his dog on us. My leg was always swollen and very painful through the bullet I inherited from the SS getting on the train. I had to conceal it from the SS in the camp because they did not want cripples. They just disappeared.”

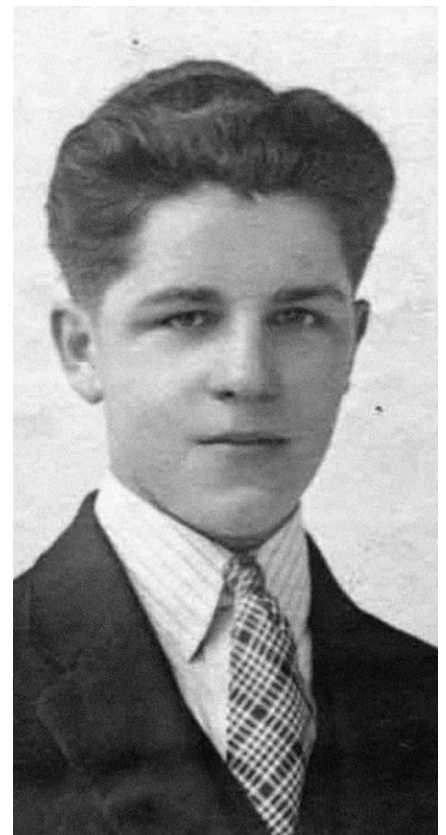
Harry Dubois, 11 March 1965

Although all of the Channel Islanders imprisoned in Buchenwald survived the war, they would suffer from a variety of chronic physical disabilities and post-traumatic stress disorders for the rest of their lives.

FLAVIAN BARBIER

Flavian Barbier was considered the ringleader of the spontaneous mass demonstrations in Jersey against the civilian deportations in September 1942 to German internment camps. Barbier was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment. He was deported and spent time in prisons in France and Germany and in Nieder-Roden concentration camp. Barbier’s brother submitted his compensation claim as he was in St. Saviour’s Mental Hospital. His brother wrote that Barbier’s condition was “mainly due to his wartime experiences” and that he had been unable to stand without aid when found “due to weakness induced by illness, malnutrition and ill-treatment”. Barbier also turned to alcohol perhaps to cope with his experiences.

Without enough awareness of mental health problems those who suffered resorted to self-medication or silence. Some families have spoken about violence, alcoholism, eating disorders and a lack of affection from fathers who survived Nazi prisons and camps. This impacted their own lives and which in turn had an impact on the next generation.



Flavian Barbier

(courtesy of Jersey Heritage)

THE ROLE OF FRANK FALLA

Frank Falla (1911-1981) was a journalist who worked on the Guernsey Star newspaper and secretly on the Guernsey Underground News Service (GUNS).

Along with most other members of GUNS, Falla was caught in 1944 and deported to prisons in Germany, from where he was liberated in April 1945.

Whilst in captivity, Falla swapped his bread ration one day for a pencil stub, and made note of the Islanders with whom he was incarcerated, and the dates that they died. This was the first step in Falla's 25-year campaign to remember the victims of Nazi persecution in the Channel Islands.

After release, Falla wrote articles for the Guernsey Evening Press and the Jersey Evening Post detailing the experiences of Islanders who had died in German prisons. He later organised the efforts of Channel Islanders to get compensation, contacting political prisoners to provide application forms, and helping people to complete testimonies. His archive of original correspondence with MPs, the Foreign Office and other Channel Island victims of Nazi persecution has been placed with the Island Archives in Guernsey.

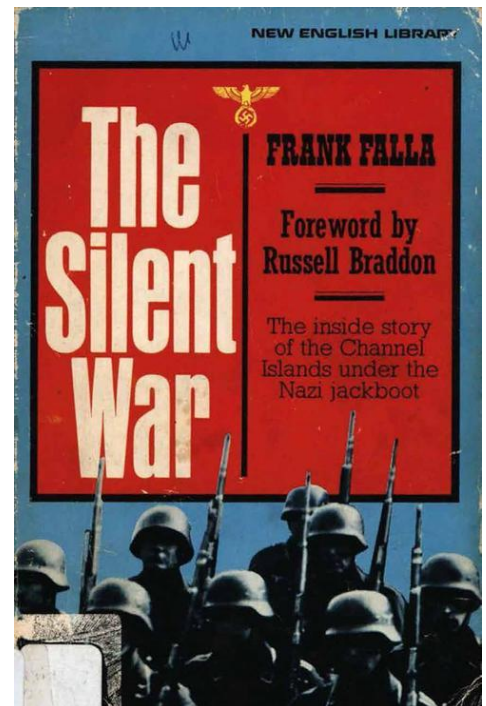
In 1967 Frank published his memoirs, *The Silent War*. As he wrote later, it helped him to get his wartime experiences out of his system. Frank Falla wrote that after he returned to Guernsey in 1945, he experienced "severe sweats at night and the haunting hallucinations that I was back again in my prison cell at Naumburg".

THE FRANK FALLA ARCHIVE

In 2015, the German EVZ Foundation (Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft – Remembrance, Responsibility and Future) awarded sponsorship of a website named in Frank Falla's honour to put online all information about Channel Islander victims of Nazi persecution. This website provides images of and information on each person's German Occupation identity and registration cards, court martial and island prison records, camp and prison records from the International Tracing Service (courtesy of the Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide), and their compensation testimony where



Frank Falla (courtesy of Island Archives)



Falla's book *The Silent War* was published in 1967 (courtesy of Island Archives)

available. Interactive maps of Europe and the Channel Islands enable people, prisons and camps to be located, and profiles and histories of each of these are provided.

www.frankfallaarchive.org

MEMORY AND REMEMBRANCE

The victims of Nazi persecution in the Channel Islands have often been forgotten, and no person who committed acts of resistance ever received public recognition or honour by the Channel Islands or British government in their lifetime. In the 1960s, the Soviet Union recognised some of those who had sheltered escaped slave workers.

Although Channel Islanders had similar experiences to those living in occupied Europe, their war narrative was tied firmly to that of the British mainland. This emphasised the British victory and glossed over questions of victimhood and suffering. In recent years, this narrative has begun to change.

POST-WAR ATTITUDES

Those who committed acts of protest, defiance and resistance were not treated as heroes after the war. Many people, particularly those in positions of authority, regarded the resisters' behaviour as reckless and dangerous. They had worried about the threat of reprisals which could have endangered the general population. It was not until the mid-1990s that attitudes began to change.

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS IN JERSEY

On the fiftieth anniversary of liberation in 1995, victims of Nazism were publically acknowledged in Jersey. At this time, the Bailiff, Sir Philip Bailhache, made speeches and unveiled memorials to victims, including resisters. Other memorials in Jersey include the Internees Memorial, the Jewish Memorial, the Political Prisoner Memorial, the Westmount Memorial and the Occupation Tapestry.

GUERNSEY REMEMBERS

THE RESISTANCE MEMORIAL

In May 2015 a memorial was erected in Guernsey in memory of the 'Guernsey Eight' who died after being jailed for acts of resistance in Nazi-controlled prisons, labour camps and concentration camps in France and Germany. They are Sidney Ashcroft, Joseph Gillingham, John Ingrouille, Charles Machon, Percy Miller, Marie Ozanne, Herbert Smith and Louis Symes. The plaque is "dedicated to the memory of all Islanders who committed acts of protest, defiance and resistance". The Bailiff Sir Richard Collas unveiled the plaque near the Liberation Monument at North Beach in St Peter Port. Families of those who died laid wreaths at the ceremony.



The Resistance Memorial, Guernsey

THE RESISTERS WHO DIED

Sidney Ashcroft 2.6.1921 - 25.5.1945

Convicted of serious theft and resistance to officials in 1942. Ashcroft died aged 23 of tuberculosis and starvation in Straubing Prison shortly before the end of the war.

Joseph Gillingham 12.9.1901 - 11.3.1945

Arrested and imprisoned for his part in distributing the news via the Guernsey Underground News Service (GUNS). He died in a police prison in Halle, Germany in March 1945.

John Ingrouille 3.4.1920 - 13.6.1945

Falsely accused of treason and espionage and sentenced to five years hard labour. He survived a hard labour prison in Brandenburg, but died in a displaced persons camp on 13 June 1945

Charles Machon 10.9.1893 - 26.10.1944

The brainchild of GUNS, he received the longest sentence of the five arrested and was sent to Rheinbach prison in May 1944, then four months later on to Hamelin prison where he died on 26 October 1944.

Percy Miller 1.3.1883 - 16.7.1944

Sentenced to 15 months for wireless offences he was sent to Frankfurt Preungesheim in July 1943 where he was caught passing a note to a fellow prisoner and confined in a punishment cell where he died on 16 July 1944.

Marie Ozanne 10.9.1905 - 25.2.1943

Refused to accept the ban placed on the Salvation Army; she would preach in public and was vocal in her protests about the treatment of Jews and slave labourers and became ill in the Guernsey prison. She grew weaker and was released but without antibiotics she died on 25 February 1943 aged 37.

Herbert Smith 15.2.1904 - 5.4.1943

One of eighteen Guernsey policemen convicted of stealing from German stores in 1942. He was sent to prisons in Paris, Karlsruhe and Landsberg then on to Neuoffingen Labour Camp, a satellite of Augsburg Prison. He was deprived of food and clothes, tortured and left to die on 5 April 1943

Louis Symes 30.3.1885 - 22.12.1940

Sheltered his son 2nd Lieutenant James Symes, who was on a commando mission to the island with 2nd Lt Herbert Nicolle. Mr Symes was sent to Cherche-Midi prison in Paris where he died in unconfirmed circumstances on 22 December 1940.

MEMORIALS IN GUERNSEY

Jewish Women's Memorial

This memorial was unveiled on 27th January 2001, the first Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). HMD is held on this date each year to commemorate the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. The memorial is dedicated to the three Jewish women (shown above) who were deported from Guernsey by the German occupying forces in April 1942 to their deaths at Auschwitz. It is located at the White Rock in St. Peter Port. Each year, a ceremony takes place in their memory and a wreath is laid.



Jewish Women's Memorial, Guernsey

Deportees Memorial

The Deportees Memorial was erected in 2010 and unveiled by the then Bailiff, Sir Geoffrey Rowland. It was erected at the instigation of the Guernsey Deportees Association, chaired by Tom Remfrey, and remembers those who died in the civilian internment camps of Compiègne (near Paris), Laufen (on the German-Austrian border) and Biberach (in southern Germany). On 23 April each year, in memory of the day of their liberation from their camps, former deportees gather and lay flowers in memory of those who died and did not come home.



Deportees' Memorial, Guernsey

Foreign Workers Memorial

A plaque installed in 2001 in St Peter Port commemorates 'all foreign civilians who lost their lives in Guernsey while working as forced labour under the German occupying forces, 1940-1945'. Every year, on Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January, the Bailiff lays a wreath at this memorial.



Foreign Workers' Memorial, Guernsey

BLUE PLAQUES

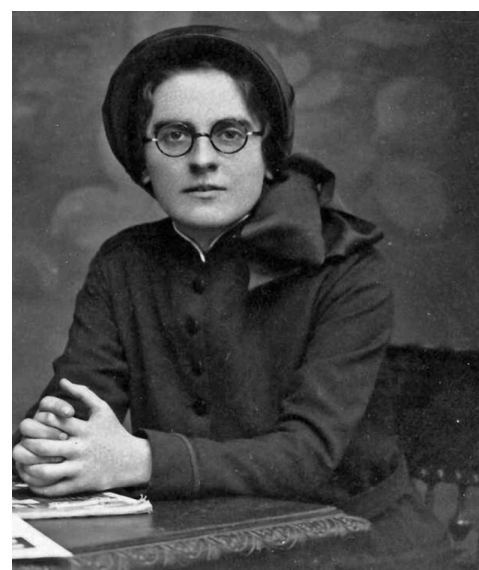
The Guernsey Blue Plaque scheme recognises Guernsey people who have made an important contribution to the Bailiwick and the wider world. Two blue plaques have been awarded to victims of Nazi persecution in Guernsey.



MAJOR MARIE OZANNE – A RESISTER TO OPPRESSION

In 2013, a Blue Plaque was unveiled on the former home of Major Marie Ozanne of the Salvation Army. Marie wrote letters of protest to the occupying authorities for the way in which they were treating the Jews and the foreign workers in the island. She was arrested in September 1942 and sent to Guernsey prison to await court martial. She was let out of prison in mid-October after her health began to fail. In November she was diagnosed with a stomach abscess. She grew weaker and, without antibiotics, she developed septicaemia and died in February 1943 aged 37.

Unveiled 2013, located on Aquarius, Dehus Lane, Vale.



Marie Ozanne (courtesy of Bill Ozanne)

GUERNSEY UNDERGROUND NEWS SERVICE (GUNS)

On 23 April 2017, a Blue Plaque was unveiled to the men and women involved in the Guernsey Underground News Service (GUNS). The plaque was placed on the former offices of the Star newspaper in memory of Charles Machon, GUNS ringleader, and one of the Guernsey Eight. The production of the news service was prompted by the confiscation of radios by the German authorities in June 1942, who made owning a radio and listening to the BBC news a punishable offence. The families of all of those involved in GUNS were present for the unveiling of the memorial plaque by the Bailiff of Guernsey, Sir Richard Collas.

Unveiled 2017, located at the Bordage, St Peter Port

More information on the Blue Plaque scheme can be found at the website:

www.museums.gov.gg/plaques

THE STORY CONTINUES

Research into the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and the Channel Islands remains ongoing. The stories of Channel Islanders deported to Nazi camps and prisons continue to be collected, and more archival material is still coming to light as more families come forward and discoveries are made in archives across Europe. The collection of a large body of material means that Holocaust education using local material is now possible in Channel Island schools. It also means that for the first time, the stories of these British political prisoners can be placed alongside those of other occupied countries.

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