

GUERNSEY OCCUPIED 1940-45

2

MILITARY OCCUPATION

On 30th June 1940 aircraft landed the first German soldiers at Guernsey's airport. Alderney was occupied on 2nd July and Sark on the 4th July.

The Germans rapidly imposed their rule on the Islands. Property, transport and supplies were requisitioned. Newspapers were taken over and censorship introduced. Clocks were changed to Central European Time. Traffic had to drive on the right and notices and road signs appeared in both English and German. German currency and metric measures were introduced alongside their English equivalents. The teaching of German became compulsory in schools.

In September 1942 Hitler ordered that all non-native Channel Islanders, specifically those who were English-born, were to be deported. Many people had less than 12 hours to tie up their affairs including disposing of the contents of their houses and family pets before having to arrive at the harbour with their families.

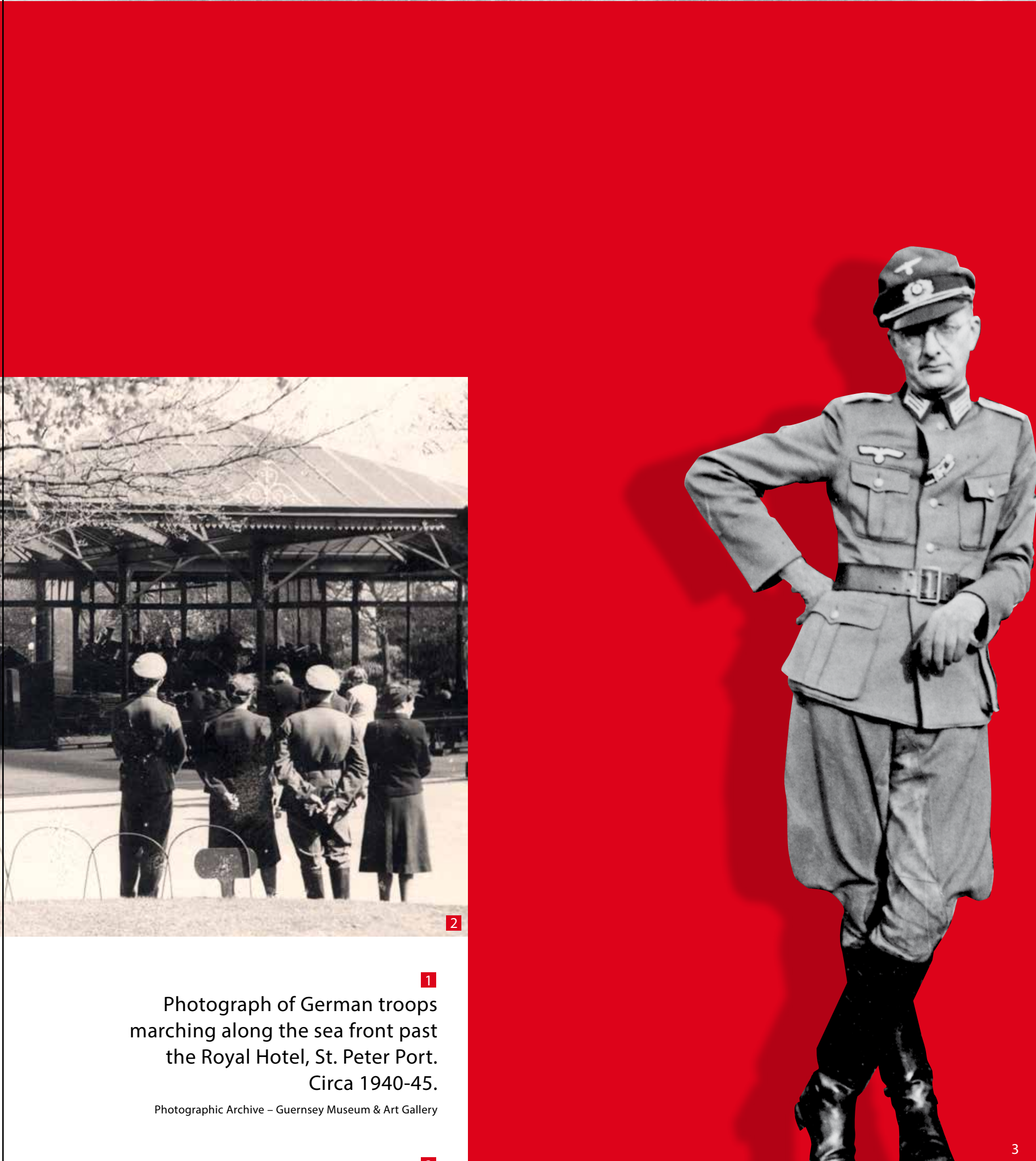
At their departure from the island the deportees were only allowed to take with them some warm clothes, strong boots, meal dishes, a drinking bowl, a blanket and whatever else they could manage to carry. They were allowed to pack a trunk of clothes, which was to be sent on after them.

A second wave of deportations took place in February 1943 which included former military officers, Jews, Freemasons and others.

By May 1943 there were 16,000 German personnel in Guernsey. These included army units, naval coastal artillery and airforce anti-aircraft units, customs officials, military police, administrators and construction workers.

German troops were under orders to behave courteously. Although some soldiers were frustrated by the lack of action, serving in the Channel Islands was a lot more pleasant than on the Eastern Front.

The islanders had no idea how long the occupation might last or how German rule would affect their lives.



1
Photograph of German troops marching along the sea front past the Royal Hotel, St. Peter Port. Circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

2
Photograph of German officers and local women listening to a German military band playing in the bandstand in Candie Gardens, St. Peter Port. Circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

3
Photograph of a German officer. Guernsey, circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery



4
Photograph of a German sign prohibiting civilian access to Fermain Bay and its environs. Circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

5
Photograph of a German military band marching up the Lower Pollet, St. Peter Port. Circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

6
Photograph of German troops marching up the Lower Pollet, St. Peter Port. Circa 1940-45.
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

