

# GUERNSEY OCCUPIED 1940-45

6

## 1945 LIBERATION

**Planning for the liberation of the Channel Islands began at the end of 1943. Although the invasion of France in June 1944 bypassed the islands, the original intention was to recover them by force.**

Alternative plans, codenamed 'Operation Nest Egg' were also devised and it was these that were eventually put into operation. The plans depended on the unconditional surrender of German forces in Europe, and included highly detailed arrangements for putting the islands back on their feet. A military administration would govern until the islands themselves were in a position to do so.

Early in the morning after Churchill's VE Day announcement the representative of the German forces in the Channel Islands signed an unconditional surrender on board HMS Bulldog, anchored off Guernsey.

Operation Nest Egg and the Liberation of the Channel Islands was carried out by Force 135, a British task force of 6,000 men. The first troops landed in Guernsey and Jersey on 9th May and were greeted by cheering crowds. Although Sark was officially liberated on 10th May, no troops were available to be sent there and the Dame of Sark was put in temporary charge of the German garrison. Alderney was liberated on 19th May.

King George VI and Queen Elizabeth made a special visit to the Islands on 7th June 1945.



1  
Photograph of a British intelligence officer inspecting the credentials of Major General Siegfried Heine. Major General Heine had just stepped aboard HMS Bulldog in order to sign the official surrender of the German forces on 9th May 1945.  
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

2  
Photograph of Landing Ship Tank US 516 beached inside the inner harbour, St. Peter Port. LSTs were used to ferry vehicles, men and supplies ashore during and after the liberation of the Channel Islands.  
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

3  
Photograph of the official surrender of the German garrison holding Castle Cornet, St. Peter Port. The British troops marching down the breakwater are part of Force 135.  
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

4  
Photograph of the reading of the Royal Proclamation on 12th May 1945. The senior British officers of Force 135 gather with local dignitaries on the steps of Elizabeth College before crowds of islanders to read out the official announcement of the liberation of the island from German occupation.  
GMAG 2006.193.20

5  
Photograph of Petty Officer J.D. Langlois being greeted by a Guernsey woman on Liberation Day. Langlois was a Guernsey man who was part of Force 135.  
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

6  
Photograph of British officers amid jubilant crowds. After the raising of the Union Jack flag outside the Royal Court on 12th May 1945 the British officers present were mobbed by cheering crowds.  
Photographic Archive - Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery