



## LIFE CHANGES

**JUNE 6 1944 – MAY 9 1945**

*The invasion of France on D Day (Deliverance Day) by Britain and the Allied Forces cut the Islands off completely. Until now some supplies, carefully supervised by the Germans had been obtainable from France.*

Of course there were a lot of changes in the Island after D-Day, and one of the things was that the island, both Germans and locals, were completely cut off from the rest of the world. As a result the Germans could no longer go back to France and bring over any equipment or materials for themselves or the 5,000 odd slave workers they had in the island.

FRED GALLIENNE

We could see planes passing all the time going to bomb France, and see the Germans shooting at them, little puffs of smoke, but they were out of range.

GORDON HOTTON

As we were only two fields from the cliff edge we would go as far as we were allowed to go, and we could see ships, but they would disappear behind a smoke screen that they would put up.

LEN LE RAY

The Germans didn't bother me, the raids didn't bother me at the time. We used to watch them from the attic windows, and we always used to laugh because it didn't seem that the Germans could hit anything at all. The Spitfires used to go so low they couldn't get the guns down low enough to hit them. They did hit one or two unfortunately, but it was a sort of joke to us. One plane went down behind the Castle, I don't know if that was an American or one of ours, but it was an amusement to us, I used to go up and watch, and cheer.

JEAN BUDDEN





## LIFE CHANGES

After 6 June 1944 we were sent to the Haye du Puits to school for a time, for safety's sake, as planes were going over all the time and it was thought they might bomb St Peter Port.  
DON SMITH

I went to bed on June 5<sup>th</sup>, just after midnight, I suppose, when it was all dark, I heard this throbbing, and I used to wake up wide when I heard aircraft, and my father came into the bedroom and said, 'Blimey son, there's a big raid going on somewhere', and it went on and on. And the searchlights which we could often see from our house started off and they switched them off because there was a low cloud ceiling but the thundering roar of these aircraft going over, then it would stop, then it would start again. Then came dawn and we got up, and there was still the odd noise. As children we were enjoined when we heard aircraft coming over to take shelter in houses, not particularly from the aircraft but because when the anti aircraft guns started up shrapnel fell everywhere. You had to go and keep out of the way. I said I was not going to school, and then the neighbours came and said the Invasion had started. We used to be scared when we heard the flugelalarm, that's the bell the Germans used to ring just before they started firing.

I remember we were sitting one day when we heard the 'flugelalarm', this was just after the invasion when there were beat-ups by British aircraft. I was sitting on the wall with my friend and we heard the flugelalarm, and we couldn't hear anything else. Then five feet above us, up the valley came a Spitfire followed by eleven others and they were so close you could see the stitching on the pilot's helmet. I don't know how the lowest one climbed over the hillock and they were off down to the Murette guns, which they shot up. There is a wall there, and a little valley by the greenhouses, and they shot over. It all happened just like, that, we didn't have time to run and hide.  
MALCOLM WOODLAND





## LIFE CHANGES

There was a German soldier who I believe must have been about the equivalent of a Regimental Sergeant Major, and who always used to stop to chat to me as I went along, and he spoke pretty good English, and he said I looked like his son. You've got to remember the Germans were a long way from home, and they had families too, and they hadn't seen their children probably for several years, and I reminded him of his son, because in those days I had blue eyes and nice fair hair, and a lot more of it as well! But one day I was going past Le Manoir at the Forest, and there were some tall pine trees in those days and the Germans had built a lookout post which stretched just above the pine trees so they had a good clear view of the south coast. This was after D-Day.

Not long after D Day I was going past and he stopped me. "Oh, come and have a look", he said. So he took me to the bottom of this lookout post and he started walking up, and he said "Follow me", and I hesitated, because I knew what had happened, we all knew that D-Day had taken place and the fact that the Allies were getting a foothold in Normandy. So I wasn't too sure, I thought was he going to throw me off the top. Strange what goes through a child's mind.

Anyway he had seemed friendly in the past and seemed reassuring enough, so off I go. We got to the top and there were two German soldiers there and immediately they saw him they clicked their heels. He said "Look out there!", and I looked out and I could see there was a fleet out there. Well I knew what it was, they all looked black specks but I knew exactly what it was.. So I said, "Oh yes, yes, can I go down?", so I went down. I thought if I say I know what it was he would say "well, how do you know what's going on?" because we weren't allowed to have radio sets, or wirelesses as they were in those days.

Probably I was about the only Guernsey person who actually saw some of the Invasion fleet. So that was something quite interesting.

FRED GALLIENNE



## MORE SHORTAGES

We lived in a terraced house with living rooms at the front, a kitchen at the back and a long passageway that went around from the front door. You could get into the kitchen from either side and father, who was quite a short man, a proper little Guernsey man, was out there making a cup of tea or doing something at the cooker. He looked around and there were two tall German soldiers there and of course as you know, they were always fully armed all the time, bayonets and daggers and guns in their holsters and everything.

There was a couple of carrots on the kitchen table and they were making to my father they were hungry and wanted some food and could they have those carrots. That's all there was in the house for us to eat and my father, he was so angry I can remember him to this day! What he did next, he just let rip on them, and well, I don't know if they could understand all the English, but I think they could tell. He said "No, you can't have those, that's all I've got to feed my family on today, if you're hungry that's your fault you came here!"

And he got them, he had to reach up to get hold of them by the scruff of the neck and he physically pushed them all the way the length of the house down the two steps onto the footpath. He said "Now get out, and go, look what you are doing to my family".

I know that is true because I saw it happen. But you see they were frightened because they weren't supposed to do that, they weren't allowed to interfere with the civilian population.

RUTH WALSH

I remember my father digging parsnips and a German coming with a fixed bayonet and demanding to have what he was digging up, because they were hungry.

LEN LE RAY





## MORE SHORTAGES

My father grew what he could; we did have quite a bit of land, and he certainly grew a lot of onions, which he gathered. The problem was, towards the end of the war, you had to gather them very quick, and gather them before time, otherwise the Germans gathered them as well. And one day my father gathered all these onions, and we stored them in the attic, but I'm afraid the next day the Germans knew we'd gathered them, and they made a spot inspection, and my mother and us waited at the bottom of the stairs, and we saw the Germans coming down the stairs with their pockets bulging, and I'm afraid we knew that our onions, or most of them, had gone. But there was nothing we could do; my mother would have been there with two young children, and you just had to put up with it. In fairness to the Germans, they were also getting hungry.

MARGARET LE CRAS

My father kept rabbits and the hutch was often broken into. Come the end we lost the dog as well. I remember going to Le Planel where the Germans were billeted at Mr Brehaut's house and my uncle said he had heard the dog barking. So they were so desperate for food they were eating anything.

LEN LE RAY

At this time the Germans were really hungry, they were really starving and unfortunately Auntie's three cats and her dog all vanished. I remember one day my cousin and I got up in the morning and we called the cats as we used to do and they didn't come. When we went outside we saw this trail of blood so we knew what had happened because we had heard a bother. I remember the two of us hand in hand going down the road and following the blood and it went off to one of the fields where the billet was so we were frightened to walk any further and we came back home. That I remember very well.

ANN QUERIPEL





## MORE SHORTAGES

There was no work for the slave workers, they were allowed to roam free, the Germans I don't believe really fed them, there was no need to feed them, they were no longer of any use. I always remember this poor man, he was walking down the lane where we lived and he still had the clothes that he had arrived in which were encrusted with cement and he had no shoes or boots on his feet. He had managed to find an old sack and he had wrapped this sack around his feet, and that was all he had as footwear. He was going down the lane and all of a sudden he took his pen knife out of his pocket and he cut something off a hedge, I don't know what it was and he started to slice it and eat it because if there had been a field of carrots alongside he would not have been allowed to go in and help himself to the carrots. He probably would have been in even more trouble. But what we don't know is how many of these slave workers actually died through malnutrition after D-Day.

FRED GALLIENNE

Our last Christmas dinner was a medium-sized cauliflower between 6 of us (friends joined us for all 'holidays'), a large rather 'woody' swede, and a small piece of belly pork which gave each of us a piece the round of a teacup. We cooked it all in the copper of a nearby abandoned nursing home, whose one-time matron was a family friend, as we had no fuel for a fire by this time and there was no gas or electricity.

KAYE LE CHEMINANT

February 1945 The entire ration for one week was

1 ½ oz macaroni,  
1oz oatmeal flour,  
5lbs potatoes,  
5 lbs root vegetables,  
2 pts separated milk.

GEP Diary





## MORE SHORTAGES

5 March 1945

The three breadless weeks are past. Some people have been in desperate straits but the majority have not been as badly off as they had anticipated. Last weeks food rations were 5 lb potatoes and 2 oz flour. That was all! No gas, no electricity, no wood for fires, either for cooking or warming. There has been no coal for a year. But today we have each a 2 lb loaf of the most perfect white bread ever seen ...

11 March 1945

We are not out of the wood yet, as there will be no root or potato ration after this week. There was a notice in the paper yesterday to say that no water may now be used for washing clothes, flushing, or even apparently washing one's person. Only drinking and cooking. We are already independent of waterworks here, so will be OK till the rain water gives out. After that we shall have to pump from the well.

Guernsey Diary 1940-45 Higgs





## ILLNESS, AND LACK OF MEDICINES

We started to suffer from skin diseases. I can remember having scabies at some point, which I must have been about six years old. Then just before and just after Christmas 1944 I started with impetigo and eczema.

It's infected and then it just spreads through the whole of the body and eczema as well and if eczema gets infected it's just a vicious circle. One of the worst things was no food, no cleansing materials and no medical supplies or very little medical supplies so nothing to treat it!

The way they did treat it wasn't very nice and the only thing they could do. Before I was put into the Hospital I used to go every morning to the – what we would now call the 'Outpatients Clinic' at the Town Hospital. (It's quite funny to think of it now as a Police Station because I spent months in there). The sister with a pair of, well they looked like scissors to me, but they must have been surgical things, would just cut the heads off and let the poison come out. It wasn't really very nice because I was only seven years old at the time and then of course it spread to my hair. I had very long curly hair and I had to have half of my head shaved and I was really worried about this because my mother and her friends were saying

"Oh, hair shaved off at that age, I don't think it will grow again, what will happen?"

So I thought I'm going to be half bald when I grew up, which of course was a load of nonsense because it did grow again, but of course people weren't quite so wise about things as they are now. Somebody got hold of something and rumours just spread like wildfire. It was a very traumatic time to be living in.

RUTH WALSH

Phone cut off since 6 June 1944. The doctor's were on phone again after a week, but only for town people, so we have to walk if we are ill.

Guernsey Diary. Higgs





## ILLNESS AND LACK OF MEDICINES

My grandmother was 90 and not quite able to grasp the reason for why the shops contained almost nothing, but she was a quiet accepting little lady and accepted that this had to be our way of life. She ate the same amount as we did and at her age should have been having nourishing food as she was active and walked out each day for exercise. When she became ill through lack of nourishment and had to stay in bed, my mother gave her each day half of my pint of milk which I was allowed as a child. Then the doctor came to hear of what she was doing and said that this must not be – I was growing and had my life before me – Gran had had her life.

This must have been a terrible decision for my parents to make – to sacrifice one member of the family for another. Gran died peacefully in her sleep in her 90<sup>th</sup> year, just 3 months before the war ended. Her 4 sisters in England lived well into their 90s and I am sure Gran would have done so too if she had not been so ill-nourished.

KAYE LE CHEMINANT

My mother's life was ruined permanently. Having to find the wherewithal to bring up three children, one of which was born on the 30th November 1939 through the occupation, scarred her. Now, looking back, I realize what a terrible time she had, trying to put food on the table, clothing on our backs, how to cook, we had no means of cooking, no sugar, no salt, nothing. They tried and make salt, you know, get brine, we used to go and fetch a ration of brine, and that's my perception of the occupation, looking back and seeing my parents struggling, and they had a farm, they had milk, they had vegetables.

RAYMOND TOSTEVIN

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## Christmas – 1944 – German Occupied Guernsey, Channel Islands

After 5 years of ‘occupation’ and, particularly since the D-Day Allied Invasion of France, our supplies of everything were cut off for the civilian population and for the German Forces. Our remaining ‘lifeline’ of a port on the nearby French coast, from whence a few supplies could be obtained, was now in Allied control and, on our little 9 miles x 4 miles island we, thousands of civilians and thousands of German troops, struggled to survive long enough to be liberated. Food in very short supply, mainly home-grown vegetables. Electricity and gas had to be severely rationed by turning off supplies from more-or-less sunset to sunrise – so that we were without heat or light all winter, and most of the little cooking there was, on an open fire, for which we children gathered as much tree-wood as we could find.

However the will for survival is strong, and my parents knew that the end of the War would be next year. While hoping and praying that we would all live to see that time, they were determined that Christmas would be celebrated in the traditional manner (with the exception of the food, of course!).

The little 3ft high Christmas tree, made of feathers (I still use it) had been bought for my first Christmas in 1932. It was set up on a table in the bay window at the front of the house (where I still live), and my job was to get the little boxes of baubles from the attic and decorate the tree. As the baubles were made of glass in those days, inevitably 1 or 2 did not last every Christmas but there were enough to look festive and the silver tinsel, now very crumpled and would not ‘hang’, nor was there much ‘shine’ to it, but the silver star at the top, that Mother had made years before of thick cardboard and silver paper, shone beautifully, and that last Christmas of the war was a sunny day so that our little tree and its ornaments looked its war-time best.

During the morning we noticed some soldiers on the footpath, looking over the top of the hedge at our house and one was pointing to the Christmas tree – soon there was quite a group of soldiers. For a short time we ‘enemies’ were united as Christians and my father said: “They must wish they were at home with their families and their trees”. Our room was decorated with the various paper chains that had lasted 5 years, the main worry was the very

thick multi-coloured one that went across the ceiling from one side to the other – 14ft. It was ‘giving’ in several places and each year my father removed it very carefully, putting as little strain on it as possible. There was little thread left to mend clothes, let alone use for repairing paper-chains! As Dad removed the decorations in January 1945, the big chain parted in the middle. It had done its duty, keeping spirits high during the dark war-time Christmas-times, and now it could fade away, but is always remembered.

For that last Christmas of the Occupation we even had light for a few hours. A nurse friend of our family had an old-fashioned pre-World War 1 carbide lamp for her cycle (she was allowed out after curfew to nurse an old gentleman). We had the carbide lamp on the mantelpiece and provided a soft light over our little group of my grandmother, parents, 3 old friends and myself. It was just that the smell of carbide is quite atrocious and Dad said it was like having a skunk with us. Nevertheless none of the party complained and we talked about that day for many Christmases to come. As Mother said at the time: “The main thing is, we are all together”.

*(Written Account)*

KAYE LE CHEMINANT

January 26 1945

Appeal to editor of the ‘Star’ for warm clothing for the children, and for bicycles and hose pipes for tyres. Need for special School Cert. paper in geography because of the changes in world affairs which have taken place since 1940, and of which we have no knowledge.

From P. Girard’s Intermediate School account





## SAVED BY THE RED CROSS

I will say what saved our bacon as it were, and I'm sure saved a lot of lives was the Red Cross. The 'Vega' arriving just after Christmas 1944 because we were really on our beam ends  
RUTH WALSH

One of the better ships we saw was the 'Vega', news spread quite quickly that the Vega was going past, and we chased up the field, and it was quite a sight.  
GORDON HOTTON

The thing I liked best about the Red Cross parcels was the Klim [*milk powder*], I ate it with my finger, I've been told off many a time.  
JEAN FALLA

Christmas 1944 was very bad, we were expecting the 'Vega' but she did not come until afterwards. What was in the parcels? There was powdered egg, Klim, which was powdered milk, some had chocolate, big flat breakfast biscuits, butter, tea and coffee, Spam.  
DAPHNE BRETON



## RED CROSS PARCELS

As you probably do know, towards the end of 1944, food was very short, and people were definitely suffering and going hungry. There was news of the 'Vega' that was coming, or rather we knew it was going to be a ship to bring the Red Cross parcels. Everyone was hoping it would come before Christmas, but I believe it was shortly after that we had our Red Cross parcels. There were distribution centres set up.

I really don't know how they organised it, but I do know that we at the Bas Courtils had to walk to the Chêne, by the Chêne traffic lights, one of those houses there, and that's where we went to collect our Red Cross parcels. My mother would have pushed my brother in his pram, and me, we'd have walked and collected ours, and collected them for Mr Priaulx who lived with us at Ealing, or rather we lived with him. It caused great excitement, and there was food there that we hadn't seen, or I hadn't seen before. My parents, of course, would have remembered what real coffee and tea, and things like that were like, but I wouldn't have. I had been brought up with the occupation food, so there was great enjoyment, and without a doubt, the Red Cross saved the island, and saved the local people, which the islanders have always remembered, and always to this day support the Red Cross in their activities.

MARGARET LE CRAS



## RED CROSS PARCELS

Now when came towards the end of the occupation when everybody was literally starving and the, we finally got the Red Cross boat in with the food parcels, Oh we were so thrilled, so thrilled. And I remember going to Cobo Post Office where we had to collect them from. And one day I had, it was in a white cardboard, and I noticed it was from New Zealand and we had that one home, and we were so delighted when we opened it, I think I was more delighted because when I opened this particular tin there was chocolate, something we hadn't seen and I hadn't known all the occupation, in fact I don't think I'd ever had any. I tasted it, and it was so good. And there were various items in the parcel, there was coffee I remember, but I can't remember a lot of things now but I remember the chocolate. From that time on I went down to the Post Office every time when it was time for our parcels and I always made sure I asked for a New Zealand parcel because I wanted the chocolate. Oh it was really thrilling, I looked forward to that so much.

ANN QUERPEL

But one thing I always remember was the day that the SS Vega came in with our food parcels and it also brought in some flour. I was at Les Vauxbelets during the Occupation and all the boys who lived in town had their bread and food parcels delivered early. They all came to school with sandwiches, nice white bread with butter on and jam and all the things they had had from the food parcels. And there I was, I don't know what I had for my lunch, probably a carrot to nibble on, and there they were all munching their sandwiches and I just couldn't wait to get home to see if mine had arrived. Sure enough when I got home my mother said, 'Would you like a slice of bread?' We opened up the food parcel and there was a tin of jam which she had already opened up, and I hadn't enjoyed anything like that for 4 years.

FRED GALLIENNE



## SAVED BY THE RED CROSS

I was up here and I met a Jersey man. One thing I've never seen since, and I've asked several people about it, was that tin of Nestle. It was very thick condensed milk, sweetened, and it was flavoured with coffee. The idea was you'd take a spoonful of this mixture, put it in a cup and add boiling water. But like this Jersey man I didn't bother with the water, I just took a spoonful and put it straight in my mouth, and he did the same thing. I enjoyed it much more like that than making a cup of coffee out of it.

Also there were these biscuits in the food parcels, you would put it on your plate, get a large plate, add some water, and suddenly it expanded about four times the size and made a much bigger biscuit. So I would spread some, either some sugar over it, and eat it, and I really enjoyed that as well. Or I might even put some jam occasionally. It was nice to see this expanding ...

FRED GALLIENNE

We lived in a growing area, so there were always potatoes, although they did run out from time to time. But fuel was the thing, its all right having a Red Cross parcel but no good if you've got no fuel to heat the tin of soup, or whatever it was. Particularly the New Zealand boxes had mutton and pea stew, a 15oz can, a big can. Yes, this was fine, provided you could get it hot enough, but towards the end you couldn't. I remember one horrible thing about the NZ parcel, and I hope never to see it again, was the corned mutton. Corned beef, great stuff, corned mutton, don't even think about it.. You had corned mutton instead of corned beef. I think the sheep was pre-war.

MALCOLM WOODLAND



## RED CROSS PARCELS

*For three to four weeks in early 1945 there was no bread. The Red Cross authorities who were sending food and other items on the SS 'Vega' had not appreciated the severity of the situation and had sent clothes rather than flour.*

### Extracts from School Log Books

Hautes Capelles 19.2.45

For the first time not one child stayed at school for dinner, the bread ration (3 lb each per week) having been totally discontinued since last Tuesday. The parents have decided to send them for one session daily, only. The children are thoroughly British with regard to the situation, and though many are really very hungry no complaints are heard, nor are tempers suffering.

Hautes Capelles 26 – 28.2.45

Children showing more signs of hunger. Many come to school without breakfast. A gift of half a pound of cod liver oil and malt has today been given to every school child to take home, it has brought great joy.

Hautes Capelles 8.3.45

Joy on every child's face this morning! After three weeks without bread the civil population has received a 2 lb loaf of white bread per head today. Children's opinion – like cake, like sponge cake! Great cause for thanks, which were specially included in morning prayer.

Vale. 20.3.45

A small amount of cod liver oil was received and given to those children who have been away for a long time and were advised by the doctor to take cod liver oil and to those children in the school who had lost a pound and a half in weight or over during the month without bread.



## WAITING FOR IT TO END – HITLER KAPUT!

We knew the liberation was coming. On the Sunday before, after the service the organist played all sorts of patriotic tunes, 'Rule Britannia', 'There always be an England' and so on.  
DAPHNE BRETON

I was teaching at Galaad on VE day, and Mrs. Bisson and I started to teach the children the British National Anthem, and we then heard that Guernsey had not yet surrendered.  
IRENE GOSSET. *Teacher.*

May 7 1945

Whole island gloomy this evening as everything points to the Germans resisting to the last. Mines are being laid and soldiers say that they have been told to resist even if the whole of Europe capitulates.

May 8 1945

Wonderful surprise this morning when Mrs. Green received news from her mother that German officers had visited the Bailiff and had informed him that the war was over in Guernsey as elsewhere and that flags could be put up all over the island after 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

A number of children accompanied by Mr Dowding, went to hear a proclamation by the Bailiff. Before going home a service of thanksgiving was held by Rev. Ord.  
P Girard Intermediate School Log Book





## HITLER KAPUT!

On May 8<sup>th</sup> we went to school as usual but by lunchtime the teacher told us we could all go home early because it was liberation. We were going to be liberated the next day, and that the war was over. But as a child it worried me, I was confused because we never went home early. But we started walking, and then we really got frightened because the bells started ringing, and we'd never heard the church bells being rung before. During the Occupation they weren't rung, and we could hear St Peter's Church and St Saviours, and we could hear the bells ringing. When we passed St Saviours Church, five or six of us all walked in, and there was quite a few people, but I don't remember their names. Quite a few people were in church praying, obviously thanking God for the war being over.

We walked up to the front altar, turned round and came up by the side chapel and walked out again. Nobody told us anything, nobody asked us what we were doing; people were just praying. We walked in and we walked out, and made our way, and when we got to the bottom of Les Piques I met my father, and that was unusual because he never met us from school. But he was talking to the neighbours, and really that was how the news had got around. A few people would have had, may have had radios, or would have had knowledge of it, but on the whole in the country the people wouldn't. So if you got the news, you went to tell your neighbours, and that was exactly what he was doing. He was telling other people to make sure that they knew the news. I remember him talking for quite a long time, and I was getting fed up; I wanted to go home. But we walked back home.

MARGARET LE CRAS



## HITLER KAPUT!

To me Liberation Day is not the cream, May 8<sup>th</sup> is the cream. If I start off with the weekend before, which is a Sunday, the war was obviously known about coming to an end and the grownups would get together in huddles, or someone knew someone who had a radio, so the grownups were discussing that the war was going to end this week. Well, didn't believe that, the war had been going on for ever. I remember this lady said to me "Are you going to wave your Union Jack?"

"I haven't got a Union Jack" I said, "Oh!", so she went away and got this little Union Jack that people used to fly on their cars. That was the Sunday. Monday I went to school as normal but there seemed to be a lot of atmosphere that some thing was going to happen. Tuesday was a half day, because we were so weak from (lack of ) food apparently, by then. I passed the AA gun battery opposite the tram sheds, which I had passed every day for months going to school and as I went past I noticed for the first time that the pompoms were down and there were no Germans there. My friend came up and said "Wars over!"

"Shut up".

"It has, stopped last night!"

Anyway it was a long time before we went into lessons and they said,

"Oh yes, the war's over, you're going to go home soon, but you mustn't fly your flags yet its not officially over until 3 o'clock this afternoon. The ceasefire has started, but don't annoy any Germans as it is still war here."

The school was called into the hall, and I think we sang patriotic songs, I can remember 'Jerusalem' being sung. Anyway we finished about 10.30 to 11, and on the way home I passed this gun battery again and there wasn't a German in sight, so I went up and had a look, stuck my Union Jack on my bike and rode the rest of the way home with it on my bike, "Not before 3 o'clock", never mind that! But I went home the back way, across the Grand Fort Bridge, and you never saw any (Germans) there. Then we went down to my uncle, who had a radio, and listened to Winston Churchill's speech, and that was the end.

MALCOLM WOODLAND



## LIBERATED!

I was in the Town Hospital on Liberation Day and had a wonderful view. I saw the British fleet outside the harbour. The nurses woke me up at about six in the morning and I knew there was something going on because there had been quite a lot of excitement the day before amongst the nurses. They were so kind to us children, well everybody was kind to the children because I think they felt so sorry for us being in the position we were. I knew there was something and everybody had been saying 'Liberation' was coming and coming and coming and it never did come. I don't suppose they wanted to raise my hopes because I will say here I was dreadfully homesick. I cried every day because I wanted to go home and be with my mother.

My mother couldn't visit because she herself was too weak and too unwell, she was all but bedridden and I was just so very, very sad and so homesick and I kept saying "Why can't I go home?" and they said "When all your sores are better and when your skins better you can go home and as soon as the liberation comes you will be able to go home" I don't suppose they wanted to raise my hopes thinking I was going to go home when I wasn't. Any how the nurses woke me up at 6 o'clock in the morning and said "come up", there isn't now but there used to be a little lookout at the top of the hospital, they've made an apex roof now but there did used to be a lookout area. I went up on the roof with the nurses they said "That's the British Navy out there, they're here, you're going to be all right... Have your breakfast and you can go home and you will be all right from now on".

It was all the Christmasses and all the birthdays and everything you can think of, all rolled into that one moment. I had just had my birthday in fact I was allowed to go home on the day of my birthday which was the last day of April and as you know we were liberated on May 9<sup>th</sup> but I was only allowed out for the day, I had to go back to the hospital in the evening. But I was walking around on my own, there was nobody to come and fetch me or take me home or anything. It was only from Hirzel St, well, Hospital Lane to Pedvin Street but you would have thought with enemy soldiers around... but nothing happened to the children, I will say, the Germans just, well they love children don't they?

RUTH WALSH



## LIBERATED!

The next morning, we got ready, and my brother was younger and in the pram, and we walked from the Bas Courtils into town to see the boats and to see the liberating forces. We walked all the way past the Villiaize and came out at the Chene, and walked along the Forest Road. But when we came along the Forest Road, more or less where Forest Road Garage is now, we met a troop of army people and soldiers, and I was really frightened because I knew instinctively they were different. We'd been used to the German uniforms, but I'd never seen a British soldier before, and I was frightened. And not only that, I was even more frightened when they actually stopped and spoke to my parents, because a lot of these soldiers were Guernsey people, and they were really on their way up to the airport, and they wanted to know the news. They were asking my father, "Is so and so all right?", or "Is Auntie May all right?", or whoever.

I was worried because I'd never seen my parents stop to talk to troops before. They'd never really had long conversations with the German soldiers, and to see British soldiers in their khaki uniforms, well, something I'd never seen before. So they spoke to them, and then they carried on, and we carried on walking into town. When we got by the Town Church, we watched the troops coming up, and they were marching and they were throwing chewing gum. They probably threw other things, but it was chewing gum that my father caught. I remember distinctly putting it in my mouth and swallowing it, and being told that that was not what you did with chewing gum; you had to chew it. I never liked it then, and I still don't like it now! But I do remember, and in fact I could even show you the spot where we stood, my father put me on his shoulders so that I could have a better view.

MARGARET LE CRAS

So many people wanted to go to the Liberation that Wally Tostevin tied a box cart behind the tractor and trailer, but he would not go down the Ville au Roi, so we had to walk down the Ruettes Brayes.

GORDON HOTTON



## LIBERATED!

When we were finally liberated there was so much joy and excitement, I remember our schoolteacher lining us up all along the road at Cobo , and then the magic time came, all the Tommies walked up the road from Cobo beach inland, where we were, and we were shouting and cheering and waving our arms and they were waving at us. Then all of a sudden they all put their hands in their pockets and they were throwing sweets to us everywhere so there was one mad dash to see who could get a sweet, I think I ended up with one. But it was so exciting, so exciting. I remember that very well, it was a really thrilling day for all of us.

They came on lorries, but we were lined up there at Cobo and I remember them coming up from Cobo beach up towards where we were by the Mission, that's where we were all lined up, because I was five years old then.

ANN QUERIPEL

I was eight on Liberation Day. I remember we had a couple of cycles and my mother and father had one of my brother and I as passengers and we cycled into town, and we had different vantage points. One was somewhere around the Royal Hotel, I remember having part of the time there, and then part up by the slipway near the Town Church. And boats coming in, and seeing troops coming off, and just people wild with excitement, I suppose ecstatic with excitement. There was the cheering, people coming off, troops coming off and throwing sweets around, and providing cigarettes. People had flags, I don't know where they all came from, but there seemed to be lots of flags draped on houses.

ALAN BISSON



## LIBERATION!

I was 11. I always remember the big U.S. boat that came into the harbour and that laid at low tide on the bottom and opened out. The vehicles came out, and I can always remember the crew playing sort of baseball on the harbour bed. I can remember one or two black people, and I'd never seen black people before, it was quite amazing. But the actual liberation, when the evacuees came back was quite an experience for us, waiting for my brother Roy to come back.

HIRZEL DOREY

We went to school in the morning, and we were told at school and sent home. Its amazing how all the Union Jacks suddenly got produced, and as we were coming past, there was a small group of us used to ride out our way from the Occupation School [*the Intermediate*]. As we rode back we passed places occupied by the Germans and we were making rude signs to them and shouting 'Hitler Kaput' and things like that.....

ARTHUR KLEIN

