

THE BRITISH CHANNEL ISLANDS UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION – JUNE 1940 TO MAY 1945

PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This single-frame postal history exhibit examines the effects on postal services to and from the British Channel Islands following the German invasion and occupation in 1940, through to the liberation of the islands in 1945, from both the British and the German standpoints.



With the Channel Islands being so close German-occupied France in 1940, the British government decided that the Channel Islands were of no strategic importance and would thus be de-militarized and not defended. German troops landed on Guernsey on 30th June 1940, and on Jersey the next day. One of the most immediate effects of the occupation was that post to and from the British mainland and abroad was suspended, and although internal mail continued, the stock of British stamps began to run out: the exhibit includes the remedies taken in this respect. Jersey and Guernsey then both designed and produced their own

stamps. A number of the Jersey designs contained 'hidden' anti-German propaganda.

Examples of German military post (Feldpost) and other international post are shown, and the role played by the Red Cross is also covered.

The Germans incarcerated some of the 'non-Channel-Islander' British personnel who were on the islands at the time, and an example of this internment camp mail is shown, as are examples of the official free postcards distributed to the islanders following liberation, which enabled them to get in touch again with the outside world.

PLAN OF THE EXHIBIT

- 1 Purpose and Scope
- 2 Mail suspended following invasion
- 3: Attempted German overprinting of GB stamps
- 4: The 'Bisect' solution
- 5: Guernsey's 'Arms' stamps
- 6-7: Jersey's 'Arms' stamps
- 8-9: Jersey's 'Views' issue
- 10 – 11: Internment/Red Cross mail
- 12: Censored Mail
- 13-15: German Feldpost
- 16: Liberation