



Isolation & Restrictions

During the occupation Guernsey was virtually cut off from the outside world. The restrictions imposed by the occupying forces affected nearly every aspect of daily life.

Everyone over the age of 14 had to carry an identity card. No one was allowed out at night after the curfew hour and access to areas near military installations was banned. All mail and news was censored. Cameras were confiscated. Permits had to be obtained from the German authorities for many normal daily activities, including travel in the Islands. Food, petrol and fuel were rationed.

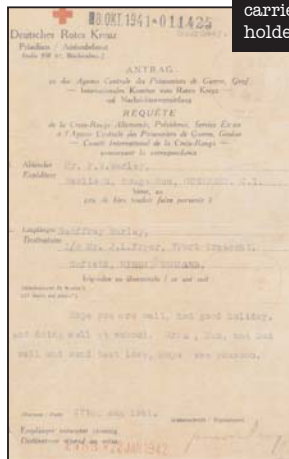
The German authorities banned all direct communication with Britain. People separated from relatives and friends on the mainland could keep in touch only by means of infrequent messages sent via the Red Cross and limited to 25 words. For many this lack of contact was the hardest thing to bear.

Isolation was completed with the banning of wireless sets. BBC broadcasts had been the only way of finding out how the war was going, but in 1940 all wireless sets were confiscated after Islanders helped two Allied agents to escape. The sets were later returned but were taken away finally in 1942. Many people made their own crystal sets which had to be carefully hidden from the Germans.

Businesses often closed down when trade and communications with suppliers and customers in England were cut. Farms, schools and medical services kept going under the scrutiny of German authorities.



▲ An Identity Card. It carried a photograph of the holder and personal details.



◀ A Red Cross message sent from Guernsey to family in England.

A wireless set census form of 1941. The results were used later by the Germans when all wireless sets were

confiscated.



Escapism from the realities of occupation was provided by amateur theatre. Plays, musicals and revues took place every week. Censorship by the German authorities was often skillfully avoided and England's current popular music was painstakingly transcribed from BBC broadcasts.

All beaches and possible landing places were mined and wired, and access to them was prohibited.

