

Press Release

On British Soil - Victims of Nazi Persecution in the Channel Islands

19 October 2017 - 9 February 2018

*Supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Lottery Fund
Co-curated with Dr. Gilly Carr (Cambridge University)*

“Everything that people thought they knew about the German occupation of the Channel Islands is - at best - partial and - at worst - inaccurate,” explains co-curator Dr. Gilly Carr on the motivation for a new exhibition at The Wiener Library.

During the German occupation of the Channel Islands 1940-1945, many thousands of people were persecuted, including slave labourers, political prisoners and Jews. Their story has been largely omitted from a British narrative of ‘standing alone’ against Nazism and celebrations of British victory over Germany.

On British Soil - Victims of Nazi Persecution in the Channel Islands tells the stories of these persecuted, drawing upon The Wiener Library’s rich archival collections, files recently released by The National Archives,

and never seen before items from the personal collections of victims of Nazi persecution.

Co-curator **Dr. Gilly Carr** of Cambridge University commented, *“I have fought for many years to bring these victim groups to a wider audience.”*

From the experiences of a young Jewish woman living quietly on a farm on Jersey and later deported to Auschwitz, to those of a Spanish forced labourer on Alderney, and the story of a man from Guernsey whose death in a Nazi prison remained unknown to his family for over 70 years, this exhibition highlights the lives of the persecuted and the post-war struggle to obtain recognition for their suffering.

Exhibition highlights

A Jew in Hiding

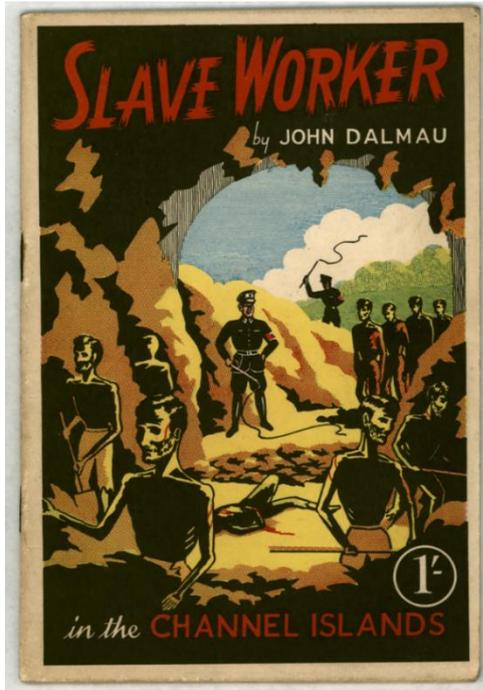
Hedwig Bercu (1919-2009) arrived in Jersey from Vienna in 1938. Even though she had registered with the authorities as a Jew in 1940, Bercu obtained work as an interpreter for the Germans around spring 1942. She began a relationship with a German officer whom she met through work, Lieutenant Kurt Rümmele.

In 1943, Bercu went into hiding with a local woman, Dorothea Weber. Rümmele supplied the women with food, and Bercu remained hidden with Weber until liberation.

After the war Bercu converted to Protestantism, and moved to Germany where she married Rümmele. In 1960 she learned that her parents had been murdered in Auschwitz.

Hedwig Bercu © Jersey Archives





Slave Worker in the Channel Islands

John Dalmau, a Republican soldier of the Spanish Civil War who had joined the French army, was taken captive by the Germans in 1940. Dalmau was one of many Spanish slave labourers on the Islands.

He was forced to work on the construction of the Atlantic Wall in northern France, and then sent to work in Jersey and later Alderney, where he witnessed horrific brutality and the starvation of some of the labourers. In 1943, Dalmau was involved in the sabotage of a German vessel.

After the war Dalmau settled on Guernsey and had a family.

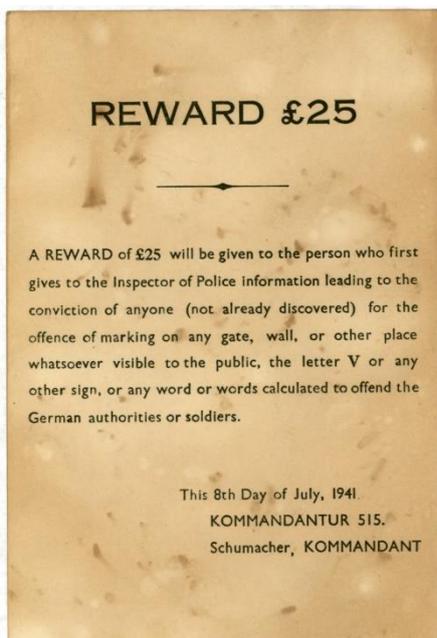
© John Dalmau, *Slave Worker in the Channel Islands* (1956), Wiener Library Collections

A Woman Murdered in Auschwitz

Marianne Grunfeld was born in Katowice, Poland, in 1912 to a German Jewish family. She moved to London in the mid-1930s and studied horticulture. In early 1939, Grunfeld took a job on a farm on Jersey. She did not register as a Jew, and may have been denounced to the authorities.

Marianne Grunfeld was deported to St Malo on 21 April 1942, along with two Austrian-born Jews, Therese Steiner and Auguste Spitz. Ultimately, the three were transported to Auschwitz via Drancy internment camp, arriving on 23 July 1942. Of their transport of 824 people, just 14 people survived the war.

Marianne Grunfeld © Guernsey Archives



A contemporary handbill from Jersey produced by occupying authorities offering a £25 reward for any information about anti-German activities.

© Wiener Library Collections.



Fate Unknown for 70 years

Joseph Gillingham was a member of the Guernsey Underground News Service. For this, he received a ten-month sentence and was deported to a German prison. His fate and whereabouts remained unknown to his family for over 70 years.

Recent research has revealed that Gillingham was buried in a cemetery in Halle, Germany, after dying in the town's police prison in March 1945. In March 2016, his only daughter Jean was finally able to visit her father's grave.

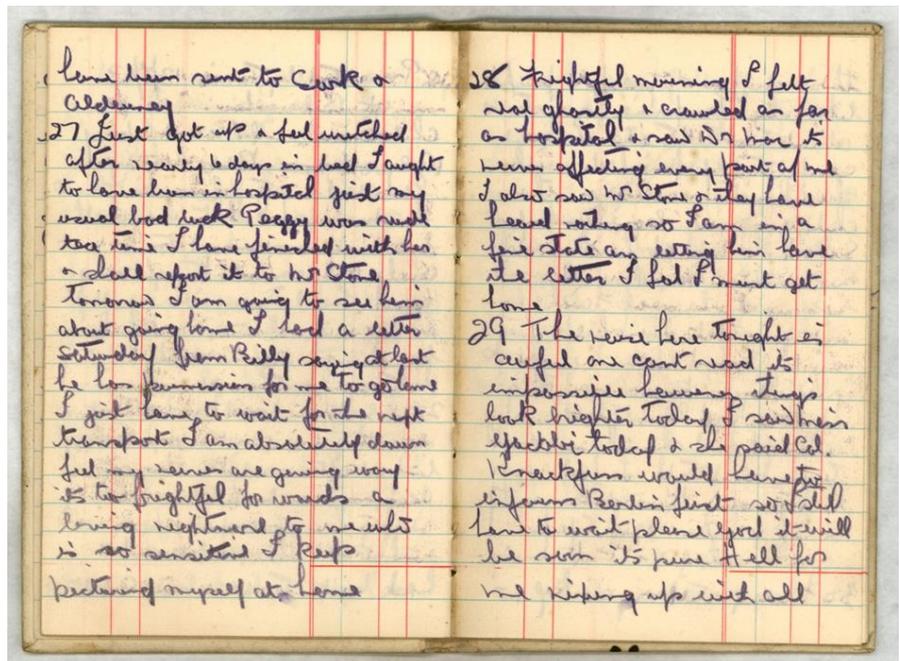
Joseph Gillingham © Guernsey Archives.

A Deported British Jew

Esther Pauline Lloyd moved to Jersey in 1939, where she married Billy Williams. Lloyd registered with the authorities as a Jew in 1940 in accordance with the first Order against the Jews.

Lloyd was deported to France and Germany in 1943. She launched an extraordinary campaign against her own deportation and, remarkably, was repatriated to Jersey in April 1944. The Wiener Library has in its archive Lloyd's diary from her time in incarceration.

© Esther Pauline Lloyd's diary, Wiener Library Collections



Notes to Editors

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The Wiener Library
29 Russell Square, London, WC1B 5DP
Registered charity number 313015

*Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund
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Free entry

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 10am-5pm,
Tuesdays: 10 am - 7:30pm
www.wienerlibrary.co.uk
+44 (0)20 7636 7247

Nearest tubes: Russell Square (Piccadilly line) - 5-minute walk; Goodge Street (Northern line) - 10-minute walk; King's Cross (Metropolitan, Northern, Circle, Victoria and Hammersmith & City lines) - 15-minute walk

Follow updates on the exhibition via our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and follow the Library @wienerlibrary

About The Wiener Library

The Wiener Library, founded in 1933, is Britain's national archive on the Holocaust and genocide.

The Library provides a resource to oppose antisemitism and other forms of prejudice and intolerance. Our mission is to be a living memorial to the evils of the past by ensuring that our wealth of materials is put at the service of the future.

About Dr. Gilly Carr

Dr. Gilly Carr is a University Senior Lecturer in Archaeology with responsibility for Archaeology at the Institute for Continuing Education, Cambridge University

Since 2006 Gilly has been working in the field of Conflict Archaeology, Heritage Studies and POW Archaeology. This research has been funded by, variously, the British Academy, the McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research, and the Société Jersiaise.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund



LOTTERY FUNDED

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

For further information

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