

Guernsey Children and the Second World War

by

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BSN, University of British Columbia, 1986

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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From June 1940 until May 1945, Guernsey children either lived under German occupation or were evacuated to England for the duration of the war. This thesis presents a small case study that uses oral testimony and resilience theory to describe Guernsey children's experiences during World War Two. Its intent is to contribute towards the larger picture of British children's experiences during this period. This thesis also aims to understand how the majority of those who were children on Guernsey during this time judged that, despite the obvious challenges related to wartime, their experiences had a net positive effect on their lives. Findings suggest that, consistent with resilience theory, children found the support they needed both internally using optimism, empathy, comparison, and the attitude of 'getting on with it' and externally from family, teachers, and the local people with whom they lived during evacuation or occupation.

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Dedication

For Reta, Cecil, Eth, Ray and John LeNoury.

Chapter 1: Historiography

Background

On 19 June 1940, five days after German troops had marched into Paris, a special afternoon issue of *The Guernsey Evening Press* appeared in the Channel Islands, which were as yet unoccupied. An announcement in the paper ordered parents to report to their children's schools at seven o'clock that same evening to declare whether or not they would permit their school aged children to be evacuated to England the next day. Parents had only hours to decide what to do and little information upon which to make a decision. Initially it seemed that anyone could leave, but within twenty-four hours it was clear that only children, mothers and men of military age could go. In an effort to calm the situation, the local government tried to dissuade the general public from leaving by distributing anti-evacuation notices. People were divided over whether it was better to send their children with their school or flee as a family; though judging by the number of children evacuated, most agreed that children were safer beyond the reach of the Germans. Scenes of fear and panic erupted; Guernsey people had believed their island was too small and insignificant to interest the Germans and no one knew how long the war would last nor who would win. Meanwhile, evacuation measures carried on through the chaos and within a few days approximately half of the island's population, including eighty percent of its school-aged children, was transported to the relative safety of England. On 1 July 1940 the Germans arrived and five years of occupation began.

Objectives

This thesis uses oral testimony to describe Guernsey children's experiences during World War Two. Guernsey children either lived under occupation or were evacuated to England so the stresses of both situations will be explored, as will the ways in which children coped with these challenging times. The thesis will also describe the ways in which wartime experiences had an impact on these individuals. After the story has been told in the children's words, a comparison will be made between Guernsey and English evacuees to explore the similarities and differences between the two groups.

To achieve these goals, twenty-four individuals were interviewed. Each participant was younger than seventeen years of age and living on Guernsey on 20 June 1940. The interviews were recorded and will be archived in the University of Victoria McPherson Library to enable future scholarly work on topics related to children's experiences of war.

This small case study is intended to contribute towards the larger picture of British children's evacuation experiences during World War Two. It also adds the children's perspective to the historiography of the German occupation of the island, and it aims to build on the dissertation of historian Corral Ann Smith. She carried out the first case study of Guernsey children and found that, despite their troubles, the majority concluded that their wartime experiences had had a net positive effect on their lives. This thesis uses Resilience theory to organize the interviewees's narratives and to reveal the ways in which children found support. It does not dispute the fact that evacuation was traumatic and that some individuals and some family relationships were damaged.

Guernsey children were either evacuated to England or lived under German occupation from June 1940 to May 1945. This chapter will outline the historiography of both experiences.

Evacuation Historiography

In examining the evacuations of British children during World War II, the majority of scholars have focused on those processes in England and Scotland. Only one historian, Corral Ann Smith, has investigated both the evacuation and occupation experiences of Guernsey schoolchildren. Most official evacuation schemes were organized by school groups: children were accompanied by their teachers to billet in the country for an unknown length of time.¹ Often, when evacuees arrived in reception areas, there were too few voluntary billets to receive them, and reception centres were swamped as new groups arrived before previous groups had been settled. Once the plan of voluntary hosting revealed itself to be inadequate, any families with homes large enough to accommodate children were required to billet.²

¹ The subject of English evacuations during World War Two is a complex one. Within England there were four waves of evacuation organized by the government. The first began on 1 September 1939 and moved approximately 1,500,000 children, women and disabled individuals from Britain's largest cities to the English countryside. The second wave began in May 1940, when England feared an invasion. Approximately 213,000 children were moved away from towns on the south and east coast of England to areas deemed to be safe. Concurrently, an evacuation scheme organized the evacuation of children to the overseas dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the colony of Southern Rhodesia. The fourth evacuation began in July 1944 in response to German use of V rockets. The government assisted children, mothers and pregnant women to leave London for the English countryside. Besides the official schemes, many privately organized evacuations occurred within England, resulting in the movement of about 2,000,000 people within the country and about 17,000 to overseas destinations. Sources: Martin Parsons, *I'll Take That One* (Peterborough: Beckett Karlson Ltd., 1998), 56-60, 158-171) and Julie Summers, *When the Children Came Home* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 9-34.

² Carlton Jackson, *Who Will Take our Children?* (London: Methuen, 1985), 18-19. Note: Though 'host' refers to the people who cared for evacuees and 'billet' describes the building in which hosting occurred, this thesis often uses the term 'billet' to describe the families who took in evacuees. This was the term used by all of my interviewees and also reflects the fact that taking in evacuees was rarely voluntary.

The Guernsey experience differed in some ways from the official British and Scottish evacuations. British children were away from home for varying lengths of time, from several weeks to as long as a few years, while all Guernsey evacuees were unable to return home for five years. Many British parents were able to communicate through weekly letters and some even visited their children. Scottish evacuation groups actually included the children's mothers. Guernsey parents were unable to visit their children and their communication was limited to the exchange of Red Cross messages, which were censored letters of no more than twenty-five words. Families were permitted to send one letter per month and each message took approximately four months to reach its recipient. These differences meant that Guernsey children experienced a longer and more severe separation from their families than did the majority of their British counterparts. The British children whose experiences more closely aligned with their Guernsey counterparts were evacuated from England to the dominions in the summer of 1940. They lived with billets who had volunteered to care for them, unpaid, for the duration of the war. The official scheme arranged the evacuation of 2,664 children while an estimated 17,000 other individuals evacuated overseas through privately-made arrangements.³ These evacuees were separated from their families for five years, like their Guernsey equivalents, but their experience differed in that they were able to write to and receive letters from their parents.⁴

The earliest historiography focused on England, where evacuation was thought to have exposed social inequities and thus stimulated the social change necessary to create a welfare state. The earliest historical work that put forth this theory was Richard Titmuss's

³ Parsons, *I'll Take That One*, 158-170,

⁴ Jean Lorimer, *Pilgrim Children*, (London: Fredrick Muller, 1942), 4-8, 103.

Problems of Social Policy, published in 1950. Titmuss cited the tenfold increase in the provision of school lunches that, at the beginning of the war, had been available only to the demonstrably needy and undernourished.⁵ Other historians agreed with Titmuss's general claim that welfare changes were the result of a new attitude towards social justice, but they disagreed about where the change originated. Social historian Angus Calder pointed to Gallup Poll questions as evidence of a middle-class attitudinal shift.⁶ Arthur Marwick agreed with Calder, but claimed that only "an articulate few" were troubled by social inequities, while the majority continued to be prejudiced against the working class.⁷ Carlton Jackson claimed the attitudinal shifts had occurred among the upper class. Travis Crosby held that it was from the working class; his evidence was the increased support the Labour Party received in the 1945 election.⁸

In the 1980s, as the British welfare state itself came under threat, a direct challenge to Titmuss's interpretation developed. John Macnicol used governmental memoranda as evidence that policymakers did not believe welfare would help lower class families. He also demonstrated that there had been considerable continuity between pre-war, war-time and post-war social policies.⁹ Harry Hendrick argued that economic and political calculations played a larger role in the creation of the welfare state than any developing "universalist spirit,"¹⁰ and Sonya Rose provided British war-time letters to newspapers as evidence of a discourse condemning the urban poor as a menace to

⁵ Richard Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1950), 508-509.

⁶ Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1969), 166, 546.

⁷ Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: A comparative study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974), 156-158, 219.

⁸ Travis Crosby, *The Impact of Civilian Evacuation in the Second World War* (Worcester: Billing and Sons Ltd., 1986), 145-156.

⁹ John Macnicol, "The Evacuation of Schoolchildren." In *War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War*, edited by Harold L. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 22-24.

¹⁰ Harry Hendrick, *Child Welfare: England 1872-1989* (London: Routledge, 1994), 199.

society.¹¹ Jose Harris noted that all Western European nations made comparable developments in welfare and healthcare programs during the 1940s.¹² The work of these revisionist historians conclusively dismissed Titmuss's claim that social policy change in the early post-war years was the result of an ideological consensus. Revisionist historians also implicitly criticized the assumption that the experience of children's evacuation had helped to bring about this alleged consensus. Recent work by historian Martin Parsons argues that evacuation increased public awareness of urban and rural poverty and consequently accelerated the birth of social welfare services. Parsons also threw doubt on the notion that evacuees were working class children and that their billets were provided mainly by the rural middle class; some evacuees were middle class and most billets were the rural poor and underprivileged. Many wealthier households dodged housing evacuees altogether.¹³

John Welshman and John Stewart compared evacuation experiences in Scotland with those in England. The only significant difference between the two groups was that Scottish children were evacuated in family groups rather than by school groups. Welshman and Stewart supported the revisionist conclusion regarding the lack of a causal relationship between evacuation and the growth of the welfare state, but they claimed a link between Scottish evacuation and a subsequent reassessment of health services for schoolchildren in Scotland.¹⁴

By the early 2000s, the literature was focused on psycho-history. Investigations explored the ways in which evacuation affected the mentalities of the evacuees. These

¹¹ Sonya Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 58-59.

¹² Jose Harris, "War and Social History" *Contemporary European History* (Vol. 1, March, 1992), 17-35.

¹³ Martin Parsons, *I'll Take That One* (Peterborough: Beckett Karlson Ltd., 1998), 114, 208.

¹⁴ Welshman, John. "Evacuation, Hygiene, and Social Policy: The Our Towns Report of 1943." *The Historical Journal* (Vol. 42, No.3 September, 1999), 793-800.

studies used Attachment theory, the work of psychologist John Bowlby, who in 1939 predicted that child evacuees would suffer emotional trauma as a result of being separated from their mothers. Bowlby predicted that these children would develop “insecure attachment styles” that would manifest as severe and persistent relationship difficulties.¹⁵ Four different studies carried out by psycho-historians confirmed a correlation between evacuation and insecure attachment in children, particularly when the evacuee had been poorly cared for by billets or received fewer than two visits per year from his/her parents.¹⁶ Historian Martin Parsons also wrote of the trauma of separation, insecurity, and abuse suffered by some evacuees. This work nuanced the comparatively simplistic, positive story of a united England pulling together for the war effort.¹⁷ Popular history written by evacuees supported these findings. Ruth Inglis and B.S. Johnson compiled memoirs of former child-evacuees, and both concluded that evacuation had undoubtedly saved lives but caused immeasurable emotional suffering.¹⁸ However, the claims of the psycho-historians have been challenged. From a social work perspective, Rebecca Bolen argued that it is premature to assume the validity of Attachment theory and also noted the difficulties in quantifying attachment.¹⁹ A second challenger, Laura Lee Downs, argued that the importance of maternal bonding and proximity was a British cultural notion not shared by the French. Downs claimed the

¹⁵ Leena Mehreen Akhtar, “Intangible Casualties: The Evacuation of British Children During World War II” *Journal of Psychohistory* (Vol. 37, March, 2010), 227.

¹⁶ James Rusby and Fiona Tasker, “Childhood Temporary Separation: Long-Term Effects of the British Evacuation of Children during World War 2 on Older Adults’ Attachment Styles.” *Attachment & Human Development* (Vol. 10, No. 2, June, 2008), 208-209. Evidence for these results was provided by questionnaires completed by volunteer participants who had been child evacuees in England during World War Two.

¹⁷ Martin Parsons, *I’ll Take That One* (Peterborough: Beckett Karlson Ltd., 1998).

¹⁸ Ruth Inglis, *The Children’s War: Evacuation 1939-1945* (London: Collins, 1989)147-163. And B.S. Johnson, *The Evacuees* (London: The Trinity Press, 1968), 9-20.

¹⁹ Rebecca Bolen, “Validity of Attachment Theory.” In *Trauma, Violence and Abuse* (Vol. 1, April, 2000), 127-149.

French believed that separation fostered self-sufficiency and psychological health in working-class children; French inner-city children were sent to publically funded summer camps run by teachers, the *Colonies de Vacances*. According to Downs, the cultural belief behind the creation of these camps and the more dramatic war-time events that followed French school-children's evacuation minimized the nation's collective memory of evacuation. She argued that, in comparison, the British expected separation to be upsetting and permanently detrimental to those involved and as a result they remembered evacuation from this negative standpoint.²⁰ Guernsey attitudes toward child rearing seem more to have been more similar to British than to French notions. Despite their Norman French roots, Guernsey children were raised within their families. Upper middle class children were schooled on the island and rural working class families gathered at the beach as a common activity, or more rarely, went on vacation together during holidays.²¹

A more recent popular history, *Children of War* by novelist Susan Goodman, was published to coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. Goodman supported Parsons's claim that wartime experiences spurred social reform and agreed that evacuation was traumatic for children. Goodman also included stories suggesting that many evacuees had happy memories of the war years and positive life-long outcomes as a result of their experiences.²²

In 2010, an article by psycho-historian Leena Akhtar demonstrated the persistence of the negative view that the British held of evacuation. She pointed out that the 1938 Anderson Committee members who were responsible for the planning of voluntary

²⁰ Laura Lee Downs, "Milieu Social or Milieu Familial? Theories and Practices of Childrearing Among the Popular Classes in the 20th-Century France and Britain: The Case of Evacuation (1939-45)." *Family and Community History* (Vol. 8, No. I, May 2005), 58-62.

²¹ Ethel Brouard, interview by Kim Madsen, Part I C, 5:00.

²² Susan Goodman, *Children of War* (London: John Murray, 2005), 319-328.

evacuation were from upper-class backgrounds and had attended boarding schools as children. Akhtar insisted that while this practice was normal for the progeny of the upper class, it was damaging to working class inner-city children. Furthermore, she claimed that evacuation made these children more vulnerable to neglect or forms of physical and sexual abuse.²³

The debate over the impact of evacuation continued in historian Julie Summers's work, *When the Children Came Home*. Summers comprehensively described the English evacuation schemes, including the children evacuated to hostels in the English countryside, those sent overseas to billets in the Dominions, and those who evacuated from British Colonies in the Far East as the Japanese conquered their cities. She acknowledged that some children suffered in unhappy situations but challenged the idea that most children found evacuation to be a negative experience. Summers's conclusion was that the majority of evacuees remembered the kindness others had shown them and felt enriched by the experience.²⁴

Since the 1950s, a number of Guernsey evacuee memoirs have been published. One of the first was Michael Marshall's *A Small Army*, in which he tells how he and a group of creative and determined boys in his boarding school formed their own private army.²⁵ Another memoir was Lois Ainger's *My Case Unpacked*, published in 1995. Like Marshall, Ainger was an unaccompanied evacuee and both books are factual and upbeat. Unlike Marshall, Ainger discussed the long-term effects of evacuation, which she judged to have caused a "devastating break" between family members. Her conclusion was that

²³ Leena Mehreen Akhtar, "Intangible Casualties: The Evacuation of British Children during World War II." *Journal of Psychohistory* (Vol. 37 March, 2010), 227.

²⁴ Julie Summers, *When the Children Came Home* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 306.

²⁵ Michael Marshall, *The Small Army* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1957).

the war brought “muddles and uncertainties and some distress, but overriding all, benefits of the good will and kindness.”²⁶

In 2008, Corral Ann Smith wrote a psycho-history dissertation on the effects of evacuation and occupation on Guernsey families. She interviewed forty adults who had been children on Guernsey during World War Two and concluded that evacuation had temporarily damaged parent-child relationships, permanently interfered with sibling relationships and created a wedge between the children who had lived through occupation and those who had been evacuees.²⁷ Some of her interviewees felt that the process had debilitated them, while the majority described their experiences in terms of freedom, independence, opportunities and resilience.²⁸

In conclusion, British evacuation historiography began with the claim that evacuation exposed the poverty of the working class to the country’s middle and upper classes, which in turn led to a new egalitarian attitude supporting the creation of a welfare state. Revisionist historians in the 1980s offered alternative political and economic explanations for the creation of a redistributionist system. In the late Twentieth Century, cultural historians highlighted the differences between some evacuee groups, explored the billeting side of the equation, noted the cultural impact of evacuation, and asked about the degree to which evacuation became part of national collective memory. Psycho-historians then began to analyze evacuation using Attachment theory and noted that there was a correlation between evacuation and persistently insecure attachment styles. The latest works on English evacuees claim that evacuation was a catalyst for social change,

²⁶ Lois Ainger, *My Case Unpacked* (Guernsey: Guernsey Press, 1995), 246.

²⁷ Corral Ann Smith, *The Impact of the Evacuation and Occupation Experience*, 245-338.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 340.

acknowledge that children's experiences were mixed, but they also suggest that the majority of evacuees believed they had gained from living through this period in history.

Occupation Historiography

Approximately 1,500 school-aged children remained on Guernsey, enduring German occupation until the end of the war in 1945, so reviewing the historiography of the German occupation will contextualize our story.²⁹ In general, issues of collaboration and resistance have dominated the historiography. The experiences of children on Guernsey have only been described in several memoirs and in Corral Ann Smith's dissertation.

The first history of the occupation was Alan and Mary Wood's *Islands in Danger*. From the 1950s until the 1980s, it provided the generally accepted narrative of Guernsey's occupation. The book responded to the two contrasting narratives that had emerged during the war: one held that the islanders suffered a never-ending torrent of troubles, including near-starvation and deportation to internment camps; the other that islanders had fraternized, collaborated and profiteered. The Woods argued that informants were a "tiny few", most of whom left the island soon after Liberation and that the British took no postwar legal action against collaborators because it would have been "bad for British prestige to admit that, in the only British territory to be occupied, everybody had not behaved perfectly."³⁰ In the early postwar era, popular mythology held

²⁹ Charles Cruickshank, *The German Occupation of the Channel Islands* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 1-7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 236.

that British citizens had been uniquely brave in their opposition to fascism, although even by the 1960s, Calder was challenging this idea.³¹

The Woods also investigated fraternization and claimed that stories about such comportment had been exaggerated, since only a “small minority of girls” had been friendly to the Germans. They believed that leniency should be shown toward these girls because young Germans had been some of “the finest manhood of their race,” all young male islanders had evacuated, and some couples had found true love. Also, because the occupation lasted for five years, some girls had been too young to know, understand or remember how the war had begun.³²

Resistance is the second issue over which historians have disagreed. Examples of resistance were scattered throughout *Islands in Danger*, such as the many imaginative ways in which islanders had managed to keep a radio against German orders. Children were likely aware of the danger of having a hidden radio and it is possible that some youth participated in sabotage, such as painting ‘V’ signs around the island.³³

Not long after *Islands in Danger* was published, a booklet for tourists by Victor Coysh summarized occupation as a “dark chapter” during which the scale of collaboration was trivial: a small number of women had liaisons with Germans by their

³¹ Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1969),

³² *Ibid.*, 70. In their appendix, ‘Statistics for Illegitimate Births during the Occupation,’ the Woods note that the annual number of illegitimate births did not increase significantly until the last two years of the Occupation. This figure supports their idea that the youngest, sexually active girls may not have seen Germans in the same, negative light as their older counterparts. A second group of fraternizers were married women, and it was their behavior that caused the most offense.

³³ Hazel Knowles-Smith, *The Changing Face of the Channel Islands Occupation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 176. Two other works confirm these findings: Frank Falla’s *The Silent War* and Charles Cruickshank’s *The German Occupation*.

own choice, while wily islanders protested with daily, small acts of resistance, tricking Germans with ease.³⁴

In the 1980s, a Guernsey school principal who lived through occupation and became a local historian during his retirement, Peter Girard, wrote about occupied children's schooling. He documented the difficulties that faced educators and children during this time: few qualified teachers had stayed on the island, there were insufficient school supplies and school buildings were commandeered by the Germans so that classes had to be held in makeshift facilities. He also noted how shortages at home affected the children's schooling.

Food was scarce. Girard described the sparse lunches students brought to school, including the fried potato peelings that served as one boy's meal. In response, schools reduced their hours to three days per week and, with the help of local volunteers, provided children with soup lunches.³⁵ Smith's work supported the claim that these children were underfed. She noted that children who lived through the occupation suffered delayed puberty, and that at the end of the war they weighed less and were two and a half inches shorter than Guernsey children of the same age who had been evacuated.³⁶

Other shortages made life difficult. Lack of soap led to an increase in the number of children with skin infections. Clothing and footwear were patched, mended and handed-down. Ropes and hoses were substituted for bicycle tires. These relatively inefficient machines and poor footwear meant that children living at a distance from

³⁴Victor Coysh, *Swastika over Guernsey: An Outline of the German Occupation and the Liberation of the Island* (Guernsey: Guernsey Press Ltd., 1955), 27-30.

³⁵Peter Girard, *A Miscellany of Guernsey History and Its People* (Guernsey: Guernsey Press, 1986), 284-291.

³⁶Smith, *The Impact of Evacuation and Occupation*, 104, 122

school had a more difficult time getting to class. Fuel also became scarce and the school buildings were not heated unless morning temperatures were below fifty degrees Fahrenheit.³⁷

School curricula changed during the occupation as a result of the shortages mentioned above. In response, a special School Leaving Certificate was created and universities in Britain recognized this after the war. In addition to standard curricula, German authorities ordered that German language courses be mandatory for children ten and older because, according to them, German would be the most important language in the world by the end of the war. These language classes were not used as a means to spread German propaganda, although German rule was felt at school in other ways. For example, a German civilian—later revealed as a Gestapo agent—requested that he be allowed to attend German lessons at Girard’s school, and German officers made official school visits in order to hand out prizes on awards days.³⁸

Girard concluded that “on the whole, children were well treated by German forces.”³⁹ Smith agreed, and cited the example of some German soldiers purposefully dropping potatoes from the back of their supply trucks for children running behind the vehicles. Among the narratives collected by Smith, empathy towards the Germans was a common theme, perhaps a result of such kind acts.

Smith concluded that children in occupied Guernsey felt disadvantaged compared to evacuees. Returning evacuees were larger physically and were thought to have received a better education than children who had stayed on the island. She concluded

³⁷ Girard, *A Miscellany of Guernsey History*, 285-295. Fifty degrees Fahrenheit converts to ten degrees Celsius.

³⁸ Girard, *A Miscellany*, 281-290. And Smith, *The Impact of Evacuation and Occupation*, 133-134.

³⁹ Girard, *A Miscellany*, 296.

that a minority of her participants believed that the experience had caused them life-long damage.⁴⁰

Another phase of the historiography began in the 1980s, when islanders were sharply criticized for collaboration and for supposedly mounting only limited resistance. One such work, *The Model Occupation* by British journalist Madeline Bunting, argued that islanders were passive collaborators who, by working for the Germans, had helped the latter achieve their aim of sustaining the garrison and of generating propaganda material that portrayed good relations with the locals. Her accusation was confusing, however, in light of the situation in which the islanders found themselves, even by her own account: there were few jobs, welfare was not available to those who were physically able to work (should they choose not to do so), and food was increasingly scarce. She even conceded that people had to work for the Germans in order to survive, just as occurred in the other occupied countries of Western Europe.⁴¹

Bunting also investigated fraternization and somewhat surprisingly, justified the practice: Germans were chivalrous; they brought the practice of sun tanning and its sensual display of near nudity to the island; liaisons relieved the boredom and drudgery of occupation and a German boyfriend could act as a “powerful insurance policy” in times of trouble.⁴² She also made a strong case against the possibility and utility of resistance in the Channel Islands. Guernsey had “a higher number of armed troops per square mile even than Germany” and there was “nowhere to run to, and no means of

⁴⁰ Smith, *The Impact*, 132, 340.

⁴¹ Madeline Bunting, *The Model Occupation: The Channel Islands under German Rule* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), 316- 334.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 59-60.

escape.”⁴³ Readers were therefore shocked by her conclusion that islanders’s behavior evinced “acceptable pragmatism” and “cowardly subservience.”⁴⁴ While Bunting’s claims seem designed to sensationalize the occupation, her work was successful in reviving interest in the topic.

One of the scholars challenged by Bunting’s work was Hazel Knowles-Smith, who wrote her PhD dissertation, *The Changing Face of the Channel Islands Occupation*, in response to Bunting’s arguments. She concluded that islanders behaved honorably, albeit “with a few blemishes.”⁴⁵ On the issue of fraternization, Knowles-Smith argued that the practice had occurred to a lesser degree than Bunting or others had previously claimed.

Another historian, Asa Briggs, returned to the tone of the earliest historical works. His book, *The Channel Islands Occupation and Liberation*, argued that levels of collaboration, fraternization and resistance on the islands had occurred in similar proportion to such phenomena in other occupied countries. Moreover, Briggs criticized colleagues who, “in seeking headlines succeed ... in simplifying and sensationalizing” Guernsey history.⁴⁶

Several memoirs have been written from the perspective of people who lived through the occupation as children. They describe the hardships of everyday life and

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 333.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 335.

⁴⁵ Hazel Knowles Smith, *The Changing Face of the Channel Islands Occupation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), xxi.

⁴⁶ Asa Briggs, *The Channel Islands Occupation and Liberation* (London: Institute of Contemporary History, 1995), 45, 15.

depict children's interactions with Germans. They also provide invaluable details about schooling, work, games and the support that youngsters received from their families.⁴⁷

Three works of popular fiction have also influenced the collective memory of the Guernsey occupation. According to the Guernsey adults interviewed for this thesis, two of these books—*The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, and *the Book of Ebenezer Le Page* by Gerald Edwards—did a good job in conveying the hardships of the wartime period and presenting the reality that Germans and islanders shared a common humanity; neither group was all good or all bad, and this realization was a natural result of living side-by-side for five years. My interviewees criticized the third work of fiction, *The Soldier's Wife* by Margaret Leroy. They felt Leroy had inaccurately portrayed the gravity of fraternization by a married woman; an affair was certain to have become common knowledge and the protagonist would have been ostracized. Interviewees also pointed out that the central figure of the story would not have fed a slave worker in her kitchen. Not only would she have risked severe punishment from the Germans, had she been caught, but few people had extra food to share. Notably, all three novels focused on the experience of adults rather than children.

In conclusion, it is clear that occupation historiography has been dominated by questions of resistance and collaboration, while comparatively little has been written about Guernsey children's experiences. From the few sources that mention children, it appears that they suffered hardships during the occupation and felt disadvantaged compared to peers who were evacuated. Yet as adults describing the experience, the

⁴⁷ Molley Bihet, *A Child's War* (Sparkford: J.H. Haynes & Co. Ltd., 1985 and Martin LePage, *A Boy Messenger's War* (Birmingham: Kingate Press, 1995) and Lyn Renour Edwards, *Enemy or Friend?* (Wiltshire: Cromwell Press Group, 2009).

majority said they were “pleased that they had had the opportunity to live through this period of history.”⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Smith, *The Impact of Evacuation and Occupation*, 340.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This project used the collective oral history method to gather data. This method involves gathering descriptions of the same event from multiple points of view. It has long been practiced in literate societies as a means of providing personal accounts of past events that supplement official histories.⁴⁹ Guernsey children's wartime experience has been little documented in academic sources. Oral history can supply this point of view by collating the themes and experiences of a number of individuals who were children during this period of history. The methodological steps involved in this project are described below.

Oral history is a "collaborative venture"; it is the result of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee.⁵⁰ Data is generated from the questions, dialogue and personal relationship between the two participants.⁵¹ Historian Paul Thompson stresses that an interviewer must respect the narrator's point of view and treat his/her position with sympathy and understanding.⁵² Valerie Yow, another oral historian, agrees that these qualities are necessary for an oral historian and adds that one should be aware of the balance of power between researcher and narrator. Researchers have great power, she claims, because they arrive with the reputation of a scholar; they come to an interview with an agenda; and they have the ability to broadcast the narrator's

⁴⁹ Michael Angrosino, *Exploring Oral History, A Window on the Past* (Illinois: Waveland Press, 2008), 17. And Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1.

⁵⁰ Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History, A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2nd Edition. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2005), 157.

⁵¹ Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different?" in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson eds. *The Oral History Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 63.

⁵² Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past. Oral History* 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 198.

contribution to a much broader audience. While these qualities might be intimidating, she notes that the interview process itself can empower interviewees because they have the opportunity to tell their stories to an interested audience whose very presence validates their importance and whose nonjudgmental listening accepts their narratives as important truth.⁵³

It is possible to gather useful data about children's wartime experiences, even many decades after the event. According to James McGaugh, events that elicit an emotional response cause the body to release stress hormones, epinephrine and cortisol, which improve the brain's ability to store memories. These vivid recollections are called flashbulb memories because they are clear, detailed and long-lasting. McGaugh claims that this type of memory is firmly etched in the brain and less likely than other memories to become altered over time.⁵⁴ Historian David Rubin adds that a person's memory for factual details about an emotional event is often rich and accurate, while memory for the actual intensity and variety of emotions for those same events is poorly retrieved.⁵⁵ However, while intense emotions increase the likelihood that memory will be stored, events that are particularly negative for an individual can be the exception to the rule.⁵⁶ Rodney Walton discovered such memory blocks when he interviewed American soldiers who fought in World War Two. He concluded that when a soldier could no longer cope with his stressful situation, his "mind just closed down."⁵⁷ A researcher should remember this point when narratives of trauma seem incomplete.

⁵³ Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 157-158.

⁵⁴ James McGaugh, *Memory and Emotion: The Making of Lasting Memories*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, 118.

⁵⁵ David C. Rubin, *Remembering Our Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 219-238.

⁵⁶ Rubin, *Remembering Our Past*, 219.

⁵⁷ Rodney Earl Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss: Evaluating the Oral Accounts of World War II Veterans." In *The Oral History Review* 37 (December, 2010): 28.

A preliminary step in the oral history process is background research. Chapter One outlines this topic's historiography and reveals how little of Guernsey children's experience has been documented. Nevertheless, the existing literature conveys the context of the period and it helped me to shape relevant questions.⁵⁸

After background reading, the next step is planning interview questions. Effective questions reflect the fact that memory is structured by spatial change rather than by time-based, chronological change and that the earliest experiences in a new situation create the most lasting impressions.⁵⁹ To take advantage of this aspect of memory, my questions prompted participants to recall times when they moved or changed schools. It must also be noted that the questions were drawn up as topic guides, ie., as a means to open the floor to the narrator rather than to confine the interviewee. Additionally, prior to the commencement of any interviews the questions were refined by talking about them with potential participants in the study, who helped me understand which aspects of the event were important to them and to learn what participants might like to learn from the project.⁶⁰ In this way, interviewees guided the early direction of the project, though the questions remained open-ended and were neutrally worded. See appendix A for the list of interview questions.

Recruiting participants was the next step. A brief recruitment script was developed that described the project's goals and outlined how volunteers would participate.⁶¹ My aunt, Ethel Brouard, and my father, Raymond Le Noury, acted as recruiters and participants. Both were Guernsey born and had been evacuees. Except for

⁵⁸ Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, 180.

⁵⁹ Rodney Earl Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss: Evaluating the Oral Accounts of World War II Veterans" In *The Oral History Review*, 37 (2010): 28.

⁶⁰ Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 70.

⁶¹ See Appendix B.

two individuals, all participants lived on Guernsey in 2011, and in September and October of that year Brouard arranged twelve interviews and introduced me to those interviewees during my short visit to Guernsey. I also interviewed ten other people who had heard about the project through other people. Two other participants lived in Victoria and were interviewed there. From this pool, fifteen had been evacuees and of that group, nine were female, six were male. The remaining nine interviewees had lived under occupation and four of the nine were female, five were male.⁶²

Interviewees all chose to hold the interviews at their homes or at a friend's house. This was ideal because, according to Thompson, individuals discussing family issues will be more relaxed at home rather than in a public setting.⁶³ Also, though one-to-one interviews were my preference, mainly because they promote a greater degree of frankness and allow the participant to divert the path of conversation as he/she chooses, only five interviewees wished to be interviewed in such a manner. The rest were group interviews: six were couples, three were parties of three, one was a group of four and one a group of five. Brouard was present at twelve of the seventeen interviews. Brouard's presence appeared to relax the interviewees and her occasional prompts encouraged participants to talk. The group interviews were challenging at first, but I learned that if I explained my desire to hear from and record each participant's stories, then the interviews proceeded smoothly. In all cases, when more than one participant was present at the interview, the stories one told stimulated the other participants's memories and sometimes one individual would provide corrections or additions to the other's stories.⁶⁴

⁶² See Appendix E for a record of the interviews dates, participants, location and duration.

⁶³ Perks, *Oral History Practical Advice*. And Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, 122.

⁶⁴ One goal of this project was to collect narratives that other researchers may use in the future. Accordingly, these interviews will be archived in the University of Victoria Library's Special Collections,

Interviews were recorded and, to encourage a participant to speak, I started by briefly introducing the project and discussing how the volunteer's memories would help me to better understand how Guernsey children experienced the war. The participant was handed the sheet of general questions I had prepared and they were asked to use these questions as a starting point rather than a checklist. The initial questions elicited basic background information to help relax the narrator, while broad open-ended questions followed, allowing the narrator to take the interview in the direction of his/her choice.⁶⁵ I tried to word my prompts in such a way that they did not lead interviewees towards a particular point of view.⁶⁶ I also avoided asking comparative questions; if the participant had not previously considered such a comparison, the question might have stopped the flow of narrative. In general, additional questions were used sparingly, only posed at times when the narrator needed prompting to resume a story. As the interviews approached their conclusions, and before turning off the recorder, I asked whether or not there was anything else the narrators wished to add to his/her commentary. If the interviewees appeared to have much more to say, another interview was scheduled so that the interviews were never fatiguing for the narrators. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked the participants whether they had any written documents or photographs that might help with the project.⁶⁷

During my three weeks in the field, I kept a log and field notes to make the most of my time. The daily log book helped keep me focused on data that remained to be

along with a description of the methodology, my working field notes and an autobiographical sketch of myself to set the project findings in context.

⁶⁵ Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 76. And Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, 207.

⁶⁶ Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, 201.

⁶⁷ Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 114.

collected.⁶⁸ Field notes taken on the same day as the interviews provided pertinent descriptions to accompany the audio recording. For example, field notes described the interviewee's body language, keeping track of whether it emphasized or contradicted what was being said.⁶⁹

Analysis began at the level of an individual interview, initially to assess reliability. It has been shown that accurate memories contain comparatively more units of information about context, action and emotion and that narrators relating true memories tend to display confidence, ease of recall, consistency and clarity. Less indicative of a true memory are the narrator's expression and the story's plausibility and typicality, which could instead be effective storytelling techniques.⁷⁰ To allow for the possibility that some interview data might be unreliable, I interviewed as many eligible individuals as possible during my stay in Guernsey. Each interview was then evaluated to determine internal consistency and cross-checked with both other oral and written sources. Beyond the historiography already completed, I searched the Guernsey library and bookstores for memoirs and the local archives for relevant newspaper articles and documents.

Once the collection phase was complete, the next step was to decide how to interrogate the data, and a review of the historiography revealed a line of inquiry. According to the study done by Smith, the majority of Guernsey children stated that they were pleased to have lived during World War Two, despite the hardships evacuation or occupation brought them. What might account for this surprising conclusion?

⁶⁸ Russel Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2006), 183.

⁶⁹ Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Field notes*, 108-117.

⁷⁰ Jianjian Qin, Christin Ogle, and Gail S. Goodman, "Adults' Memories of Childhood: True and False Reports." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied* 14 (December 2008): 374-376.

At first, it seemed that author's bias was responsible for the seemingly inconsistent positive evaluation; Smith appeared to have given precedence and detailed attention to trauma and the damage done to relationships within Guernsey families. Smith's attention to these aspects of the narratives was appropriate, however, considering that she used Attachment theory to analyze the data. (Attachment theory, as noted, posits that the trauma caused by separating children from their mothers results in the children subsequently becoming less able to form healthy relationships.) Perhaps it was the use of Attachment theory that precluded a broader exploration of the other gains children made in order to offset their losses? A different analytical approach, Resilience theory, might be better suited to exploring how the majority of Guernsey children could conclude that they were happy to have spent their childhood when and where they did.

Resilience theory falls within the broader category of Salutogenesis, a term coined by medical sociologist, Aaron Antonovsky. Salutogenesis theory focuses on factors that support human emotional and physical health;⁷¹ resilience theory explores how an individual bounces back after a difficult experience.⁷² Resilience reveals itself as a pattern over time, characterized by good eventual adaptation, or 'competence', despite exposure to risk factors that cause some people to develop problems or 'deficits'.⁷³

Critical to this enquiry, a person can show resilience in one area of life while

⁷¹ Aaron Antonovsky, *Health, Stress and Coping*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1981), 30-37.

⁷² Roberta Greene, "Resilience Theory," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 8:4 (2004), 77.

⁷³ Roberta Greene, "Holocaust Survivors: Resilience Revisited," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 20 (2010): 413. And Luther, Suniya, Cicchetti, Dante, Becker, Bronwyn, "The Construct of Resilience: A Critical Evaluation and Guidelines for Future Work," *Child Development* 71, Issue 3 (December 2000), 548.

demonstrating problems in another.⁷⁴ Countering risk factors is the work of internal and external protective factors, which are those “conditions, events and situations that cushion, disrupt or thwart negative circumstances”.⁷⁵ Internal protective assets include faith and temperament. Faith, defined as the belief in something larger than oneself, can help the individual attach meaning to a traumatic event. Temperament includes a range of personal resources such as gregariousness and self-reliance. Optimism, the attitude that the outcomes of situations will generally be positive, is also a temperament asset, as are intelligence, humor and creativity.⁷⁶

This study was based on open-ended questions designed to prompt participants to describe their experiences. It did not include questions aimed at discovering specific aspects of faith or personality because the researcher’s goal was to create a process led by the participant, allowing the interviewee to emphasize whichever aspects of his/her experiences that he/she deemed important. Interestingly, while each narrative illustrated an individual’s temperament, faith was more difficult to infer.

Resilience theory’s external protective factors are divided into two categories. First, familial resources refer to the nuclear family’s style of child-rearing. The style of parenting held as ideal reflects our current beliefs: parents treat their children with warmth, are involved in their children’s lives, support their children’s autonomy and provide clear rules and expectations.⁷⁷ The second external protective factor category is

⁷⁴ Nora Willie, Ulrike Ravens-Sieberer, “How to Assess Resilience: Reflections on a Measurement Model,” *Health Assets in a Global Context: Theory, Methods, Action* ed. A. Morgan (New York: Springer, 2010), 126.

⁷⁵ Harriet Cohen, Katie Meek, Mary Lieberman, “Memory and Resilience,” *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 20 (2010), 531.

⁷⁶ Luther, Suniya, Cicchetti, Dante, Becker, Bronwyn, “The Construct of Resilience: A Critical Evaluation and Guidelines for Future Work,” *Child Development* 71, Issue 3 (December 2000), 543-562.

⁷⁷ Willie, Ravens-Sieberer, “How to Assess Resilience: Reflections on a Measurement Model,” 132.

comprised of social resources which are the available outside the nuclear family. These figures can include teachers, friends and other supportive people in children's lives.⁷⁸

Social work researchers have used Resilience theory in a handful of studies. One example is a 2009 qualitative study that examined resilience within the oral histories of elderly American women living in rural areas. The study examined stressors associated with major historical events that the women had experienced in their youth and the ways in which these women recovered emotionally following misfortune. It concluded that these women accepted the stressors that they could not change and used the community supports available to them in order to overcome losses.⁷⁹ Resilience theory has also been used to better understand the long-term effects of the Holocaust on survivors. For example, a 2002 study by social worker Roberta Greene aimed at understanding how Holocaust survivors developed a positive engagement with life, even after their World War Two traumas.⁸⁰ Greene's work was intended to challenge the idea that survivors are helpless victims, while still acknowledging the suffering that these individuals experienced. Greene has since carried out two other studies that build upon the first and found that "survivors rebuilt their lives by forming families, establishing careers, and engaging in community service."⁸¹ Another study of Holocaust survivors examined forty narratives that were collected sixty years after the end of the war. This study concluded that memory itself was vital in promoting resilience because it allowed individuals to "remember as witness to the events of the Holocaust and to leave a legacy to be

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁷⁹ Lorraine Dorfman, Elizabeth Mendez, Joelle Osterhaus, "Stress and Resilience in the Oral Histories of Rural Older Women," *Journal of Women & Aging* 21 (2009), 303-316.

⁸⁰ Greene, "Holocaust Survivors: A Study in Resilience," 3-18.

⁸¹ Greene, "Holocaust Survivors: Resilience Revisited," 411-422.

remembered by others.”⁸² Resilience has also been examined in terms of gender, again using data from interviews with Holocaust survivors. The study found that males and females had more similarities than differences in their understandings of the Holocaust and in their problem-solving skills.⁸³ Resilience theory has not been used to explore the effects of evacuation or occupation on children.

This thesis will explore which internal and external resilience factors enabled the majority of Guernsey children to rebound after their World War Two experiences. To accomplish this task, Chapter Three will describe the culture of pre-war Guernsey in terms of resilience assets, chapter four will outline Guernsey children’s war-time stressors and resilience assets, and chapter five will describe their early postwar experiences, exploring the same criteria. The conclusion will convey the interviewees’s assessments of how the war affected their lives. It will also contrast the Guernsey evacuation experience with that of British evacuees in order to answer some of the questions raised by Guernsey testimony.

⁸² Cohen, “Memory and Resilience,” 539.

⁸³ Carmen Morano, “Resilience and Coping with Trauma: Does Gender Make a Difference?” *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 20 (2010), 553-568.

Chapter 3: Guernsey Children's Lives before World War Two

Participants spent little time in their interviews talking about their lives before the war, which makes it difficult to state with certainty which resilience assets they had in place before 1940. The brevity of the descriptions about their early lives may result from of a number of factors: first, questions about life before the war were my initial queries and came during a phase of the interview when subjects were most aware of the recorder and not yet relaxed. Second, most interviewees had been younger than eight years of age in 1940; thus, they may not have understood the way that Guernsey society was organized well enough to describe it seventy years later. Third, the group's preference was to talk about their wartime experiences. Fortunately, however, enough information was gleaned to sketch island life from a child's point of view. This description will be organized by reference to internal and external assets, as suggested by Resilience theory.

As will be recalled, internal resilience factors include faith and temperament. Only two interviewees spoke about church and neither did so to declare their religious faith.

Brouard remembered attending services at the Pentecostal Church:

It was a very intense religion. If you wanted to be saved, you had to go up to the Mercy Seat in the front and say that you wanted to be saved. It was the only possible way of going to heaven. And people would put their hands up and say how they'd been saved. I was young, no more than nine at the time, and I never knew whether I should have gone up. It was a frightening religion; in fact, it put me off religion for a long time.⁸⁴

P. Henry was the only other participant to mention religion, saying that instead of going to church, her family always went to the beach on Sundays, where they swam,

⁸⁴ Ethel Brouard, interview by Kim Madsen, 3 October 2011, Eth IC, 10:40.

caught shrimp, cooked and ate their meal.⁸⁵ These narratives reveal that church attendance was not universal and, since no one mentioned believing in a higher power, it is likely that those children who attended church did so as a result of their family's practice. These children were at an age when church served as a family social activity rather than an expression of children's faith.

Which aspects of temperament did the narratives reveal? Interviewees frequently alluded to the assets of gregariousness and self-reliance when they described their play. Participants remembered relative freedom from adult supervision. For example, Reddall and Brouard both walked to and from school from the age of four, accompanied only by a friend of the same age.⁸⁶ Most interviewees recalled that, there were very few cars in Guernsey before the war and children played in the roads.⁸⁷ Children roamed their parishes and played on the beach without supervision, and in two cases, girls of eight baby-sat their toddler siblings.⁸⁸

Children's extended families provided positive external protective factors. LeNoury, Reddall and Brouard stated that their social lives revolved around their extended families. R. LeNoury recalled: "On Sunday mornings I'd go with dad and we'd meet other uncles at their houses or they'd come to our house."⁸⁹ In fine weather, Brouard remembered, extended families met at the beach or on the common, where:

The men would kick a ball about and the women would sit and chat. They dressed very formally in those days too, often with their hats and smart dresses. The men wore knotted white hankies on their heads as it was so hot.

⁸⁵ Patricia Henry, interview by Kim Madsen, 28 September 2011, 14:30.

⁸⁶ Brouard, Madsen, Eth II 1:20. And Ruth Reddall's Memoirs, The Early Years, 1.

⁸⁷ Mary Mabire, interview by Kim Madsen, 27 September 2011, Mabire Pt I, 3:00.

⁸⁸ Brouard, Madsen, Eth II 1:20. And Reddall, Memoirs, 3.

⁸⁹ Ray LeNoury, interview by Kim Madsen, 3 August 2011, LeNoury Pt 2, 1:00. And Reddall, interview by Kim Madsen, 19 September 2011, 1:36:00.

As a special treat, if they were feeling a bit rich, we went to the local Candie Gardens variety show in town.⁹⁰

More usually, people entertained their extended families at home. Reddall remembered evenings when aunts and uncles came over for dinner and afterwards, spent the evening in the front room listening to an uncle play “his little black squeeze box [accordion],” while others played cards.⁹¹

Before the war, holidays meant going to annual local agricultural fairs rather than going away on a trip.⁹² Of all the interviewees, only Brouard remembered traveling on holidays. She went by boat to London with her parents and grandparents on a trip that combined business with pleasure. “As income allowed, adults [in my family] went to London once a year to visit their wholesaler in Covent Garden Market to see what was happening with their produce.” She also remembered that her family had gone on a day trip, “a Woking Trip”, to a seaside holiday town in England.⁹³

Another external protective factor for Guernsey children was the nuclear family. Family structure was patriarchal. For example, Gaudion described his father as “the captain on the bridge”⁹⁴ and R. Mabire asserted that, typically, women were submissive to their husbands.⁹⁵ Parenting style was described as being strict, though several interviewees noted that their parents had grown up under far stricter, Salvation Army church rules.⁹⁶ Many families were bilingual,⁹⁷ with parents and grandparents often

⁹⁰ Brouard, Part IB, start.

⁹¹ Reddall, *Memoirs*, 8.

⁹² Eddie Robins, interview by Kim Madsen, 26 September 2011, Part I, 4:00.

And Margery Tostevin, interview by Kim Madsen, 24 September 2011, Part I, 2:00.

⁹³ Brouard, Part IC, 5:20.

⁹⁴ Ken Gaudion, interview by Kim Madsen, 28 September 2011, Part I, 8:56.

⁹⁵ Ray Mabire, interview by Kim Madsen, 27 September 2011, Part I, 35:00.

⁹⁶ Gaudion, Madsen, Part I 14:30. And Brouard, Madsen, Part II, 1:00:00.

speaking patois to each other and English to the children. In Reddall's and Gaudion's home, however, patois was the only language and they learned English when they started school. Reddall related how this language barrier initially made school life difficult for her brother: "One day, when Ken had started school, he wriggled about on his wooden seat and got a splinter in his bottom! He was sent home because he couldn't explain, in English to the teacher, what had happened."⁹⁸

Some interviewees's parents had participated in World War One; the fathers in the Reddall and Gaudion households had been snipers, and G. Durman's mother had served as a nurse.⁹⁹ Such experiences typically increased fear of German occupation. Gaudion remembered that his father had been "really quite upset [by the thought of occupation] because he didn't know what the Germans were going to do to us all."¹⁰⁰

The majority of participants's parents had been 'growers', that is, self-employed in the horticulture or agriculture business. It was usual to work long hours each day and take only Thursday afternoons and Sundays off.¹⁰¹ Many women were skilled in the family business and as a result, worked alongside their husbands and hired other women to look after their children and clean house.¹⁰² As children grew older, they helped in their families's businesses. Though most interviewees were too young to have contributed their efforts, Reddall had been old enough to help. She remembered clipping flowers in the greenhouse, going door to door to sell fish her Uncle Ern had caught and

⁹⁷ The first language had been patois until the generation of the participants' grandparents, when it became relatively common for Guernsey men to marry English women.

⁹⁸ Reddall, Madsen, 46:30.

⁹⁹ Gaudion, Madsen, Part II 14:30. And Gerald Durman, interview by Kim Madsen, 23 September 2011, Part I, 1:06:00.

¹⁰⁰ Gaudion, Madsen, Part I, 24:00.

¹⁰¹ Brouard, Part IA, 2:00. And LeNoury, Part II, 6:00. And Reddall, 1:36:00.

¹⁰² Brouard, Part IC 17:40. And Patricia Henry, Madsen, 3:00.

bunching wild primroses, along with her father's hothouse flowers, to send for sale in London.¹⁰³

Sunday school and state school were two institutions that served as external protective factors. The first was a place where children met weekly for lessons. Annual Sunday school outings were held on 'the common', public fields that bordered the beaches. Brouard fondly remembered these outings, especially participating in three-legged and egg-and-spoon races for candy prizes. The Anniversary Recital was another highlight in the church year. Brouard described the event:

*A big platform was put at the front of the church. The children would all be up there and you'd have to say a recitation or sing a song. You'd be very dressed up; I can remember, the year before evacuation, I had a pretty dress and a straw hat with a ribbon of yellow rosebuds. In the evening, you'd have another new outfit to wear with another elaborate hat. This was an important day in our childhood.*¹⁰⁴

Young children attended Sunday school because their parents told them to do so.

Although attendance was thus obligatory rather than an expression of faith, the children gained the protective support of the church community.

The school system, the second external protective factor, will be described in some detail because the schools played a large role in children's lives before and during the war. In each parish there was at least one kindergarten and one state school that served children ages four to fourteen and encouraged development of the skills necessary for a life of manual work. A higher level of education was offered at intermediate schools, where children aged six to sixteen were prepared for a life in commerce or industry. To attend these intermediate schools one either paid fees or won one of the

¹⁰³ Reddall, *Memoirs*, 7, 8.

¹⁰⁴ Brouard, Part IC 15:00.

many scholarship positions available. There were also elementary and intermediate schools on the island maintained by the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. The highest level of education was offered at two schools: the Ladies College, for girls aged eleven to eighteen, and Elizabeth College for boys of the same age. These schools prepared students for university and attendance was limited by the necessity of either paying fees or winning one of a handful of scholarship places.¹⁰⁵ Interviewees who described their prewar schooling, did so with affection. Brouard described her primary school as a “happy place” and Lett described her kindergarten, Les Etur School, as:

*...a small school with just two teachers, Miss Gardner Head Teacher, and Miss Duchemin. It was a lovely little school with an open fire. In the winter we would place out Guernsey cans of cocoa before the fire, [to warm them,] ready to drink at playtime. I loved this school.*¹⁰⁶

Guernsey children in the 1930s lived in an agrarian, bilingual culture on a small island. The community was organized into ten parishes in which patriarchal families lived within extended family networks.

¹⁰⁵LeNoury, Part I, 5:00. And Smith, *The Impact of the Evacuation and Occupation*, 83-85.

Note: in England, the term ‘public school’ refers to schools that are private or independently funded. ‘State’ schools are publically funded.

¹⁰⁶Olive Lett, *Memoirs*, 1.

Chapter 4: Wartime Experiences – Evacuation/Occupation

As noted, Guernsey children either evacuated to England or lived under occupation on Guernsey during World War Two. In 1940, there were approximately 7,000 children under the age of fourteen living on the island. In late June, an estimated 5,200 school children evacuated, about half with their schools, the rest with their parents.¹⁰⁷ In early July, a handful of children fled with their families in fishing boats. The remaining 1,500 school aged children, plus an uncounted number of infants and youths, lived through the occupation.¹⁰⁸

Most interviewees's parents never discussed how they determined whether to keep their children or send them away, yet participants were keenly aware that the decision caused their parents great stress. Brouard said:

*I think all the parents were very, very puzzled as to what to do. There was a lot of talk about the Germans being very cruel to the people they were occupying, but parents were given no real time to make up their minds – it was only one day.*¹⁰⁹

R. Mabire remembered that at his house:

*There was panic. There were many phones calls between my uncle's house and ours. "If Ray goes, then [cousin] John can go." This kind of business. They had to make up our minds immediately – there was no time.*¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ *The Star*, 6 June 1942, "The Island's Health Last Year", 2.

¹⁰⁸ Barry Turner, *Outpost of Occupation* (London: Aurum), 161-162. A fourth group of children should also be noted, but because no one from this group was interviewed, this study will not include their experiences. In September 1942, 825 English-born men women and their children were deported from Guernsey to three internment camps in Germany. The deportation was ordered by the Fuhrer in retaliation for British internment of German citizens working in Iran against the Allied cause. Children were sent to Biberach, where they remained with their parents for the remainder of the war. Compared to other internment camps, Biberach was relatively comfortable. While there were shortages of fuel for heat, there was plentiful food, though of poor quality. Also, the camp had a school, a small orchestra, a dramatic society, and outdoor facilities for football and volleyball. Country walks in the company of a small escort were allowed three times a week. See Cruickshank, *The German Occupation*, 206-230.

¹⁰⁹ Brouard, Part II 3:00.

¹¹⁰ Ray Mabire, Madsen, Part I, 18:50.

Some parents registered their children for evacuation and then changed their minds the very day that their children were scheduled to leave. Of the interviewees, there was only one who remembered an adult telling him how the decision to stay or leave was made. This was LeNoury's Uncle Sid, who initially planned to send his wife and child to England:

For some reason, he (Uncle Sid) went down to the harbour and saw me in a corner, crying. Sid told me later, "You're why I evacuated. I went back home and said, "One goes- we all go.""¹¹¹

Other families, such as S. Duquemin's, left as a unit, with a plan for the father to return once the family was settled in England. These fathers remained in England, however, because not only had ships ceased sailing to Guernsey, but the island was occupied by the Germans on 1 July 1940. Another common arrangement was that children evacuated with their mothers.¹¹² Unfortunately for some, their mothers intended to evacuate but missed the last boat.¹¹³ For several chaotic days ships arrived and left at all hours without regard for schedules and, within this brief period, approximately half of the island's population had evacuated.

This chapter will outline children's wartime experiences, first describing the stressors and assets of the evacuees and in the second half will describe the stressors and assets of the children who remained on the island through the occupation.

The week after the massive evacuation from Guernsey, five year-old M. Mabire's parents reversed their previous intention and decided to leave for England. Mabire's voyage will be described first, before that of the other evacuees, so that the shared

¹¹¹ LeNoury, Part II, 4:40.

¹¹² Interviewees who evacuated with their mothers included D. Henry, M. LePage and R. Mabire.

¹¹³ Interviewees whose mothers missed the last boat were Brouard, LeNoury and Robins.

experiences of the children who evacuated with their schools are described consecutively.

She was the only interviewee who evacuated in a different manner than the other participants. She remembered:

They brought my Uncle Clifford's boat 'round to Rouse Bay. We left on July 1st at midnight and it was a beautiful, beautiful night...I know we had to creep down the pier because if we'd walked down we would have been on the sky line. If any Germans were 'round, they'd have seen us...As a kid, I thought it was huge fun. We went on the boat, there was a cabin. It was just one big room with a wooden bench around, small portholes – not enough to give much daylight- and a hatchway with a ladder. There was no comfort in it at all. My Mum knew the boat and she brought a brown velvety cushion. (That cushion travelled with us all the war and all the way back to Guernsey afterwards! I think she was attached to that cushion, it was her home.) It got very hot going over. The men were all on top, it was only an elderly gentleman, a Mr. Weymouth, was down with us. There weren't any proper toilet facilities. It was alright for the men up on top but I think there was a bucket and a little room. Vaguely I can remember somebody saying, "Go in the bucket." We arrived in Dartmouth in the morning, it was a beautiful calm sea, we couldn't have wished for better...I was allowed up to look at the coastline: "Come and have a look at England." They didn't know where we were and hoped it was England! We could see a lot of stuff, sort of debris, in front of us and some fishermen came out and said not to go any further 'cause we were going into a minefield. The navy came out and took us into Dartmouth and we tied up against the boat...I remember the sailors gave us cups of tea and fruitcake and, as a child, this wasn't what I wanted! Some of the men were taken off...to say what had happened (in Guernsey). We didn't have any identity cards...they had to contact somebody in England to verify who we were. We went into a sort of hostel for three days until my Dad's sister, Gwen who was in the WAF, was contacted. We lived in Leighton-Buzzard for three months, then moved to Huddersfield.¹¹⁴

Children who evacuated with their schools also remembered their voyages to England. Reddall travelled with her school on the Dutch cattle boat, the *Batavia*:

We were all herded down into the huge, empty hold. It was very dirty. We all had to sleep with our heads to the outside, feet to the middle. You see, it took all night to cross the Channel, and in the morning, the sailors brought a huge tin bath full of tea down to us. We dipped our mugs in, to get a drink.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Mary Mabire, interview by Kim Madsen, 27 September 2011, Part I, 5:00.

¹¹⁵ Reddall, 1:00.

LeNoury travelled with his school on a mail boat, the *Viking*. He remembered a machine gun on a tripod on the front of the boat and that “we all had to wear these cork life jackets... square thing which fastened under you neck. You couldn’t lie down very easily. It was not very pleasant.”¹¹⁶ Robins was on the same boat as Reddall and he remembered:

*The boat had a red cross and a gun on the front. We didn’t realize at the time, but he (the ship) had come from Holland and been strafed on the way and there were some injured children aboard. I saw one or two of them. We were put down below and made for Weymouth. Weymouth was being bombed when we were going in. I remember looking out the port hole and seeing the planes over the top.*¹¹⁷

Upon arrival in Weymouth, what struck eleven year old Reddall was that, “there were hundreds and thousands of all nationalities [there]. They’d all escaped, run away from France to avoid the Germans.”¹¹⁸ To the children, the crossing to England seemed the beginning of an adventure.

Once the children arrived in Weymouth, they were inspected for lice and then put on a train to Lancashire, where they were dispersed by school group among the many small towns in the area. One third of the interviewees had evacuated with Castel elementary school and they stayed in Bury in council houses, twelve children and one teacher to each house.¹¹⁹ LeNoury remembered having to share a single bed, sleeping head to toe with another boy, Lawson, whose feet smelled.¹²⁰ Lett remembered that

¹¹⁶ LeNoury, Part II, 12:00.

¹¹⁷ Robins, Part I, 1:00.

¹¹⁸ Reddall, 1:00.

¹¹⁹ Brouard, Part II, 5:00.

¹²⁰ LeNoury, Part II, 15:00.

everyone's shoes were kept together, in a cupboard under the stairs and that they "used to try to put odd shoes on" to make amusing pairs.¹²¹ Brouard's memory was that:

*Mother had packed all my best clothes – she'd had no time – so I had no play clothes. People in Bury were very kind and produced a big box of clothes. You ferreted around to see if anything fitted you. For the two weeks we stayed there. We played in the fields most of the time.*¹²²

After two weeks in Bury, these children and their teachers were divided into smaller groups, dispersed among the many village schools in the area surrounding Manchester and children were hosted by billets for the first time. In fact, with the exception of Elizabeth College, all children who evacuated with their schools lived with billets. The process of matching children with billets was similar to that experienced by English evacuees. Reddall remembered being picked: "We were all in a school room, there were lots of people there, and adults came and took us in twos and threes. I think they just took people they fancied."¹²³ Lett remembered not being chosen: "We were left over and Mrs. Platt, the local billeting officer and a large jolly farmer's wife, took us to her farm."¹²⁴ Brouard summed up the experience as one "which a lot of people remember with pretty great horror."¹²⁵ Dismay over the insensitive process of assigning children to billets is a common point among the memoirs of both English and Guernsey evacuees.

Few evacuees lived in the same residence for the duration of the war. Usually, their accommodation changed as they graduated from primary or secondary schools. Those who graduated during the war years often moved to find employment in England. Some children were shifted because their billets were not treating them well or because

¹²¹ Olive Lett, interview by Kim Madsen, 30 September 2011, Part I, 2:00.

¹²² Brouard, Part II, 4:00.

¹²³ Reddall, 3:00.

¹²⁴ Lett, Part II, 3:30.

¹²⁵ Brouard, Part II, 6:40.

their billet's situation had changed and they were no longer able to host an evacuee. Another reason children moved was that family members living in England claimed them. In some cases this relative was the child's mother, in others he/she was a member of the extended family.¹²⁶ Living with family usually meant that the child attended the local school in whichever community the adult family members had found work. The stressors these children experienced reflected their living and schooling arrangements. Children living with their parents experienced the stresses of adjusting to different communities and schools. Children without their parents had to adjust to the loss of parental support and to living in boarding or billeting situations.

Narratives vividly revealed the internal asset of self-reliance that children developed through the war years. For example, two seven and nine year olds, Durman and Brouard, looked after younger siblings. "I was, all the time, lookin' after my younger brother who was five," said Durman. "I was seven and, I'm told, I was very protective of him."¹²⁷ The experience of chores also fostered self-reliance. Typically, chores included cleaning, queuing for food each Saturday morning, polishing shoes or bringing in the coal.¹²⁸ One six year old was given a particularly challenging weekly chore, helping his billet's cowman, Bill Southern, herd cows off a train at Lostock Gralam station and bring them to the billet's farm three miles away.

The cattle would come out of their car, and they'd be a bit frisky. As far as I was concerned, they were the size of elephants! Now Bill was old, at least I thought of him as a very old man at that time – he was maybe forty – and he'd say, "Your legs are younger than mine, young 'un, so off you go." He'd walk behind to make sure they came and my job was to go and stand in the gates so they didn't go into people's gardens. I had a stick and I'd be like a blue-assed

¹²⁶ See Appendix C for details. In this study two participants had evacuated with both parents, four with their mothers, two lived with extended family and seven were unaccompanied by any adult family members.

¹²⁷ Durman, Part I, 43:40.

¹²⁸ LeNoury, Part II, 16:00; Brouard, Part II 13:00 ; Lett 25:00; Robins, 24:00; Tostevin, 8:30, Henry,1:20.

*fly, trying to keep these things in line. Occasionally they'd get in [a garden] and then that household would be upset. I think the first time or so, I sat on the curb and cried. Bill was not impressed with that. "Move thee arse, youn'un," was his comment. We had to cross the main road and truck drivers used to get mad and make rude noises. I learned to swear back.*¹²⁹

Most children travelled by themselves across England and this was another way in which children developed self-reliance. LeNoury remembered that he always carried a knife to protect himself, though he never felt the need to use it, and D. Henry remembered that he was often asked to be responsible for another young Guernsey boy when traveling to London.¹³⁰

Narratives also revealed the children's optimism. Margery Tostevin remembered that she thought evacuation was a holiday, an adventure.¹³¹ P. Henry agreed that, even with the school chores, "it was all good fun."¹³² R. Mabire expressed the consensus among interviewees that "as children, life [during the war] was good," and Lett remarked that during the war she did not dwell on her separation from Guernsey; she was "living a new life."¹³³

Interviewees' gregariousness was revealed by their memories of the fun they had with other children. D. Henry remembered one school day in particular:

*Our classroom was a tiered room with the teacher down the bottom, at the front. A chap halfway up the tier had a glass eye and his glass eye came out and it went bonk, bonk, down to the front with everybody screaming with laughter.*¹³⁴

¹²⁹ LeNoury, Part II 20:00.

¹³⁰ David Henry, interview by Kim Madsen, 22 September 2011, 18:00. And LeNoury Part II, 9:00.

¹³¹ Margery Tostevin, Part I, 3:00.

¹³² P. Henry, 1:20.

¹³³ R., Mabire, Part I, 25:00. and Lett, Part I, 8:00.

¹³⁴ D. Henry, 11:00.

Reddall described having to sleep on mattresses at their reception area as being fun, “like a sleep-over.”¹³⁵ Younger children remembered playing dress-up with clothes from the donations box and having pillow fights at sleepovers.¹³⁶ R. Mabire recalled that when he lived in Bradford, he relished participating in the Boys’ Brigade, a “Christian group that used military methods.”¹³⁷

Another aspect of temperament, intelligence, was alluded to by six interviewees when they related whether or not they had won a scholarship to attend the Intermediate or College Guernsey schools in exile.

The internal asset of faith was less in evidence. Of the fourteen participants who had been evacuated, only six mentioned attending church. Two of the four stated that they went to church with their billets. “If your billets went to church, so did you. You did whatever was expected where you lived.”¹³⁸ Two of the girls went to church because it was part of their school’s schedule, and the remaining two attended church with their families.¹³⁹ None of the interviewees mentioned that faith had helped them during the war. This reluctance to assert their faith may reflect Calder’s claim that by the 1940s, the “feavour” of the Protestant churches in the early part of the century had evaporated. Interestingly, the evacuees’s church attendance corresponds with the findings of the Mass Observation surveys; approximately seventy-five percent of the British population believed in God, but only forty percent regularly attended church.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Reddall, 7:00.

¹³⁶ Lett, Part I, 39:50.

¹³⁷ <http://www.boys-brigade.org.uk>, The Story of the Boys’ Brigade 1883-1983. and R, Mabire. Part I, 28:00. Mabire enjoyed the Brigade so much that he has been active within it for seventy years. In 2009, he received the Order of the British Empire for his life-long work in the Boys’ Brigade organization.

¹³⁸ LeNoury, Part II, 15:00. and P. Henry, 13:30.

¹³⁹ Reddall, 28:00. and R. Duquemin, letter to author, 12 February 2011.

¹⁴⁰ Calder, *People’s War*, 478.

External protective factors for the evacuees could include billets, although this varied from case to case. According to the interviewees, English women were required to help the war effort; they either had to work in a factory or to billet evacuees. Brouard surmised: “that was why there were sometimes poor homes; they had to do one or the other and perhaps they didn’t want to.”¹⁴¹ The majority of children had positive experiences with their billets; most gave examples of the treats their billets gave them, which included gifts of clothing and candy, going to the movies and taking a monthly car trip and picnic.¹⁴² Billets also made efforts to keep evacuee siblings together whenever possible. Five of the seven evacuees billeted with their siblings until the older child moved to attend a more senior school. Also, during school holidays billets often invited their evacuee’s brother or sister to visit.

Most commonly, billets were described as ‘kind’, but there were four exceptions. Margery Tostevin, R. Mabire, Lett and Robins had less positive experiences. Tostevin described her first billet in this way:

I was put into a billet [that had] two boys and two dogs. I was used to farming, but there was so much mess in the kitchen – the two little boys used to run around without any nappies and there was dog mess everywhere. This particular day, she (the Mother) made me eat some porridge. I don’t know why, but I’d never eaten porridge and I didn’t want my porridge for breakfast... When I came back [from school] there was my porridge for lunch. She said, “You can’t waste. It’s war time. Eat it.” Of course the milk had gone sour, hey. But I was hungry, so I ate it, went back to school and was very, very sick.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Reddall, 23:00.

¹⁴² Brouard, Part II, 24:00. And Lett, Part I, 57:40. And Ray Duquemin, interview by Kim Madsen, 21 September 2011, 12:00.

¹⁴³ Margery Tostevin, Part I, 7:45.

R. Mabire evacuated with his school but was soon claimed by his mother who had come to England on a different ship. Mabire lived with his mother, sisters and cousin John in Bradford, a Lancashire factory town:

They were lovely people [in Bradford] but we were very unfortunate in our billet. The lady was an awful person, I mean, even her husband and son couldn't get on with her. She only did it for the money, I believe. The five of us lived in the basement. We weren't allowed to use electric lights – we had a paraffin lamp - and the top of the window was level with the ground, so we had very little daylight. One bedroom, that's all we were allowed. And we were there for twenty-two months.¹⁴⁴

Unaccompanied evacuees lived with, on average, three different billets during the war. Of the ten children who evacuated with their schools, four were moved because their billets's situations changed and they were no longer able to host their evacuees. Four children relocated to live with their kin, two with their extended family, one with his mother and the last to live in a billet with his sister. Three moves were made because the children were ready to attend a more senior school and two transfers occurred when a teacher noticed signs of neglect or cruelty. Tostevin's teacher, for example, monitored her placements and had her moved from her first two neglectful billets. In Mabire's case mentioned above, his family moved as soon as a Bradford resident offered the family alternative housing. From this sample of twenty-two billets, five were cruel or neglectful and seventeen provided kindness and care.

Two evacuees did, however, remain in billets where they were unhappy. Lett had lived in several happy billet situations, moving as a result of changes in her billets's situations. Her last billet, Dr. and Mrs. Baker, were "nice as neighbours" but when nine-year-old Lett moved in, she was treated as a servant and expected to look after an infant

¹⁴⁴ R. Mabire, Part I, 21:00.

the couple had adopted. This placement lasted for the last two years of the war as a result of two factors. First, Lett had failed the Guernsey intermediate schools's scholarship exam, which meant that she attended the local English middle school instead of moving to attend the Guernsey Girls' Intermediate school. Second, Lett's Guernsey primary school teachers had dispersed because their evacuees had moved to more senior schools. In effect, Lett had no Guernsey adult to turn to for help.

Robins, who attended the Guernsey Boys' Intermediate school in Oldham, was the other child who remained in an unhappy billet situation. By chance, Robins's aunt and uncle lived in Oldham with their three children and he was billeted with them. Robins described his uncle as "a bully in the Royal Artillery," and he noted that "things didn't go well." In fact, Robins later remembered "getting hidings" from his uncle.¹⁴⁵ This case will be discussed in more detail when we later broach the issue of extended families and their involvement in the lives of the evacuees.

A second potential external protective factor for the evacuees was their school. Evacuation had occurred by school groups for two reasons. First, when Guernsey authorities planned evacuation, they worried that there were too few ships available to meet the demand. Second, they believed that school children should be one of the first groups to be evacuated.¹⁴⁶ Also, the Heads of Guernsey schools and the States, the Guernsey governing body, aimed to keep Guernsey children together for the duration of the war, and they declared that "parents could send their children to the mainland in the

¹⁴⁵ Robbins, Part I, 10:00.

¹⁴⁶ Alan and Mary Wood, *Islands in Danger*, (London: Evans Brothers, 1955), 30.

care of the school”.¹⁴⁷ They were mostly successful in securing this objective; throughout the war, the intermediate and senior schools drew Guernsey children from the primary schools that had evacuated. So, for instance, when LeNoury’s billet offered to pay for him to attend an English public school, the Guernsey school authorities refused permission. Instead it was arranged that he attend the Boys’ Intermediate school.¹⁴⁸

Schools provided structure to the children’s lives as the Guernsey Ladies’ College schedule demonstrated. Brouard remembered:

*We were at school a lot because many of the girls were billeted in houses where it would not have been easy to do any homework. So, in the evening we went back to the school to do prep. Saturday mornings we were at school as well. It wasn’t schooling on Saturdays, it was some structure of recreation or we had had to write out the Red Cross letters. We had to be at school all the time.*¹⁴⁹

Teachers worked hard to help their students cope with the wartime situation. Beyond their role as educators, particular teachers such as Miss Phylis Ninnim, known to some children as ‘Aunty Phil’, and Miss Winifred Jones, known as ‘Winnie’, became “surrogate mothers” to some of the children.¹⁵⁰ Teachers followed students’s progress and organized a change in school if they felt a child needed more intellectual challenge.¹⁵¹ Teachers also monitored the children’s billeting situations and intervened if there were signs of neglect or cruelty, as mentioned above. School hours were extended and even outside those hours, teachers provided some supervision. For example, children who did not have extended family in England sometimes stayed with a teacher during the

¹⁴⁷ J. E. Buckfield, *History of Ladies’ College 1872-1963* (Guernsey: Guernsey Press), 62, 69. The Head Mistress of the Ladies’ College later wrote that her school had successfully “preserve[d] its independence” during the war.

¹⁴⁸ LeNoury, Part II, 24:00.

¹⁴⁹ Brouard, PartII, 34:00.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 8:00.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 17:00.

school holidays. Lett remembered that Miss Cawley, a local teacher at their primary school, hosted Miss Ninnim and several Guernsey children during holidays: “We [children] used to have pillow fights – and they were ever so good – they never used to grumble about all of our racket.”¹⁵² Years later, most interviewees spoke of their teachers with affection, recognizing how these women had devoted years of their lives to their charges.

Yet not all teachers were known for their care and kindness. D. Henry remembered his Latin teacher at Elizabeth College as “a right stickler” who expected all eyes upon him at all times: “Henry, concentrate on me, not the window,” he would say. Henry also recalled, “I had a few clips around the ears, which didn’t do any harm, and a few rulers across the hand, but that was nothing.”¹⁵³ Lett also remembered a strict teacher, Miss Duchemin: “Looking back, as a child I didn’t like her much, but she was very good to us. She had her own place and we used to go there sometimes for Sunday tea.”¹⁵⁴ Even strict teachers were sometimes remembered with appreciation.

Extended family living in England was another potential source of support for Guernsey children. Many relations sought to determine whether their nieces and nephews were safe and happy. This happened in LeNoury and Brouard’s case:

*We were at the Platts’s (our billet), and suddenly they (Uncle Eugene and Ira) turned up to see if we were okay. They’d come a long way – they must have had a whole day’s journey. They were very, very good. It was marvelous.*¹⁵⁵

During school holidays, evacuees usually stayed with their relatives who lived in England. Brouard remembered:

¹⁵²Lett, Part I, 40:00.

¹⁵³D. Henry, 11:00.

¹⁵⁴Lett, Part I, 10:00.

¹⁵⁵Brouard in Sheila Duquemin, interview by Kim Madsen, 21 September 2011, 34:00.

*If you had relations, you were expected to ask them for the fare and go. So I spent a lot of time with Uncle Sid's and Uncle Eugene's families. I preferred to go to Uncle Eugene's because I could work there, in the nursery. I earned nine pence an hour and would come back to school with four or five pounds, a huge sum in those days.*¹⁵⁶

Half of the interviewees who evacuated to England lived with family: two lived with both parents, four with their mothers and two with extended families. From this group of eight, only two children continued to attend a Guernsey school: Robins, because his relations lived in the same town where the Intermediate school was relocated, and D. Henry, who boarded at Elizabeth College and lived with his mother on school holidays. Consequently, living with family usually meant that the child lost the support of Guernsey schoolteachers and friends.

Though school connections were often severed when children lived with their kin, exiled families maintained other Guernsey links. For example, in the town of Doncaster, S. Duquemin remembered: “there used to be times when all evacuees got together in the town hall for parties...and the Channel Island Society used to send around a newsletter with snippets of information about other islanders.”¹⁵⁷ In Bradford, another town near Manchester, R. Mabire remembered that Channel Islanders met on Saturday afternoons in the local Methodist Hall. It was at one of these gatherings that a friendship developed and resulted in the Mabires's move away from their unpleasant billet.¹⁵⁸

Interviewees who evacuated with one or both of their parents felt they had been luckier than those evacuees without parents. S. Duquemin stated: “I don't think it matters,

¹⁵⁶ Brouard, Part II, 38:00.

¹⁵⁷ S. Duquemin, Madsen, 36:00.

¹⁵⁸ R. Mabire, Part I, 21:00.

when you're young, where you are - if you're with your parents."¹⁵⁹ Those children who evacuated with their mothers believed that through evacuation experiences they developed a special bond. For example, M. LePage said, "I was so close to my Mum."¹⁶⁰ R. Mabire described his mother with compassion and admiration; she was "a very frail person" who nevertheless managed to look after her four children and nephew during the war.¹⁶¹

There was a potential risk in sharing quarters with extended family, as exemplified by the case of Robins, who lived unhappily with an aunt and uncle who did not even allow him to wear the supply of emergency clothes that had been provided by the state authorities:

*When we left [Guernsey] we didn't have a lot of clothing. I was issued with 'double E' [evacuee] clothing but I didn't wear them, did I – my oldest cousin had them...I went to school and all the other boys were dressed up and I wasn't... I was taught never to tell tales out of school, so I didn't say too much except that the clothes were at home.*¹⁶²

Robins's teacher, Miss Jones, came home with him the day she realized that he did not have his 'double E' garments. She realized that the apparel had been given to his cousin and forcefully directed Robins's aunt to return the clothing. The next day, Miss Jones told Robins that she and the Head Master were thinking of moving him, but Robins protested saying, "I don't know what Mum would say because Aunt Nell is her sister." Miss Jones asked him to tell her if there were further problems, but he "didn't bother."¹⁶³ Robins remained in his billet for four and a half

¹⁵⁹ S. Duquemin, Part I, 30:00.

¹⁶⁰ Marion LePage, interview by Kim Madsen, 23 September 2011, Part I, 1:00:00.

¹⁶¹ R. Mabire, Part I, 21:00.

¹⁶² Robbins, Part I, 10:00.

¹⁶³ Robbins, Part II, 15:00.

years because of a desire not to upset his mother and to keep family problems private. The irony is that had this billet not been provided by Robins's extended family, he likely would have spoken up and been promptly moved to a happier situation.

R. Duquemin was the second evacuee who was billeted with extended family. About a year after he evacuated to England with his primary school, he moved to Doncaster to live with his aunt, uncle and their son Eddie. Many of the families in his Doncaster neighbourhood were fellow Guernsey exiles, so this move meant that he gained potential support from his relatives and a group of other Guernsey families. Duquemin, however, was one of two interviewees who began their interviews by stating that they did not remember much about their evacuee years. He remembered where he had lived and who he had lived with during the war, but unlike the other thirteen evacuees in this study, he did not describe the care given him by his aunt and uncle nor did he share any anecdotes about school. Does this indicate that Duquemin had suppressed unhappy memories? Possibly, and if he had been unhappy he was no longer under the care of his Guernsey schoolteachers, though as was seen in Robins's case, the taboo of discussing family problems may also have trapped Duquemin within his extended family. Upon careful review of Duquemin's interview, however, it is clear that the process jogged his memory, since he recalled four separate happy incidents, such as being given a ring made by an Italian prisoner of war and joining other children in delivering tomatoes to the neighbours. Also, in response to a follow-up letter, Duquemin

said that after the war he had maintained close contact with his aunt and uncle and that his cousin had been a life-long friend.¹⁶⁴

Red Cross messages were the only means of communication between evacuees and their family members living on Guernsey. The consensus among interviewees was that composing the twenty-five words notes was a chore and the messages they received in return provided little support. “It was like writing to Santa,” said one, and another noted: “What could you say in twenty-five words? You couldn’t say anything.”¹⁶⁵ Unlike present-day’s unlimited and instant communication by texting, individuals were only permitted to send one Red Cross note per month; each took about four months to arrive and each was censored. Also, unlike the internet slang in use today, there were no abbreviations used, only contractions of words. Lett remembered writing her letters under the supervision of a teacher, Miss Duchemin:

*I used to hate it, though it should have been a pleasure because you were writing to your parents, but it was like going for a lesson. It was very sad, really. You wouldn’t write ‘dear’ because that was wasting a word, and Miss Duchemin used to say, “write brown as a berry” in the summer when I was tanned. I used to write it, but I didn’t know what it meant. At that time the letters were not important; I had another life and didn’t remember my parents.*¹⁶⁶

In one instance, however, a Red Cross message brought tremendous news. Robins remembered that his Head Master, Mr. Fulford, received the letter, though he was unsure why the message went to the teacher rather than to himself:

*I was sitting in assembly and ‘Old Fluff’ said, “Robbins, stand up.” Oh, I thought, what have I done wrong? And that’s when he announced that I had a brother.*¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ R. Duquemin, letter to author, 12 February 2011.

¹⁶⁵ Reddall, 45:00. and LeNoury, Part II, 32:00.

¹⁶⁶ Lett, Part I, 1:00.

¹⁶⁷ Robins, Part I, 35:00.

Schools in exile sent updates that were published in the Guernsey newspaper. Individuals also published the messages they received in order to share their news. For example, R. Duquemin's aunt sent a Red Cross message to his parents, updating them on their children's progress, and Duquemin's parents had their message published in the paper.¹⁶⁸ None of the interviewees had saved their messages; their collections were comprised of the letters they had written to their parents. However, some suggested that today they treat the Red Cross messages differently—as precious keepsakes of the years they had spent apart from family.

How might Resilience theory explain the ways in which a shy child finds support and is ultimately resilient? M. LePage described herself as a lonely child and someone who did not remember much about her evacuee years. She did not find support from friends or the relatives with whom she and her mother shared a house. Her main external support was the relationship that she had with her mother:

*We were allocated two rooms in a house in Wakefield. My Aunt and her three children had the rest of the house. My mother was sent to work as a seamstress in the local hospital. I was what you call a latch-key child, with no Mum to come home to. I can still see myself, nobody else about, just walking up and down the road, waiting for her to come home.*¹⁶⁹

LePage did not elaborate upon why she and her mother, living in the same house as her relatives, were so independent of each other. Her silence on the relationships between her extended family members may spring from the same hesitancy that we encountered with Robins, ie., the notion that family troubles should not be shared with outsiders.

¹⁶⁸ Written on 3 November 1941, it was published in the local Guernsey newspaper on 21 February 1942. To: "Mr. J.T. Duquemin – Christmas greetings. Longing to see you all. Possibility Ruth [his sister] going Intermediate, Raymond staying same place. Eddy left, preferred trade, carpentering. Don't worry, none needed. Leila." (The messages shown to the researcher had all been saved by the interviewees' parents.)

¹⁶⁹ M. LePage, Madsen, 1:00:00.

Was billeting a child within his or her extended family a good idea? Three interviewees from our sample lived with relatives. We know that Robins was unhappy but did not complain because he thought it would cause a family rift. The two other children offered no comments on the way that their relatives behaved towards them. This reluctance provides a striking contrast to the spontaneous judgments that all other interviewees made regarding their billets; billets were either unkind and their poor behaviour was described, or they were benevolent and their generosity and care was carefully detailed. Perhaps LePage and Duquemin believed that it had been natural for their relatives to care for a niece or nephew and that comments were thus unnecessary? This is unlikely; LePage remembered spending holidays with a different aunt and uncle and she said that she had “very happy times with them.”¹⁷⁰ Moreover, at the time of their interviews, both LePage and Duquemin were grandparents, who were aware not only of the time and effort required to care for a child but also of the difficulties adult Guernsey exiles had faced living in England, where they were without their usual network of support, often had to look for new kinds of work and were bereft of most of their possessions. It seems fair, then, to assume that LePage did not have a good relationship with the relatives who provided her with a billet. Duquemin’s narrative, however, reveals another clue: at no time did he judge any of the adults in his childhood life except to say that his father had been a ‘quiet’ man. His communication style and his written suggestion that he had a life-long connection with his relatives, leads me to believe that he has not suppressed unhappy memories.

Even if we discount Duquemin, two of the three evacuees who lived with their relatives do not seem to have been content. It is worth examining the situation from the

¹⁷⁰ Marion LePage, email message to author, 6 February 2012.

point of view of extended kin. Were family billets provided state support to care for their nieces or nephews, as were regular billets? Given Brouard's testimony that her relatives were expected to house family members during holidays and to pay the children's train fare for those visits, payment seems unlikely. Perhaps adults felt that they could not refuse to house a niece or nephew, even though the additional responsibilities and costs probably strained capacities that were already stretched.

In summary, it seems clear that evacuees faced a wide range of situations in which they had differing degrees of support from their billets, school, parents and extended family. Those who evacuated with both parents felt least challenged by the upheaval war brought to their lives. Those without one or both parents felt cut off from the people they had left behind in Guernsey and compensated by drawing on other external protective factors. Surprisingly, billeting with extended family was not necessarily a happy placement; Guernsey culture suggested keeping family problems a secret and this factor prevented children from complaining. Also, living with extended family usually meant that the child moved and lost the support of the Guernsey school.

A second surprising finding was that schools maintained an entrance exam for the senior schools. Those exams contradicted the schools's stated aim of keeping Guernsey children together because if a child failed the test, he/she was not invited to join the school. Within schools, some teachers became surrogate mothers for the unaccompanied evacuees. Besides seeking external support, all evacuees gave examples of how they strengthened their internal assets by doing chores, traveling independently, making new friends and having fun. Lett put the evacuees' attitude this way: "As children, you forgot about Guernsey and got on with your life."

Wartime Experiences: Occupation

Nine participants in this study lived under occupation and their narratives reveal that Guernsey children were exposed to two main stressors. The first was the large number of German soldiers who began occupying the island on 1 July 1940. The second stressor was the shortage of food, fuel, clothes and other goods. This section will describe these stressors and examine how Guernsey children coped with the situation.

There is no doubt that the islanders feared the arrival of the Germans. “We were very concerned,” said Gaudion, “My father was really quite upset. He had worked hard for his property and he didn’t know what the Germans were going to do to us all.”¹⁷¹ D. LePage’s parents “...had been fed, probably correctly, the stories of atrocities in the occupied countries. They didn’t know, obviously, about concentration camps, but they knew about the way the Jews had been treated. And the Germans meant the SS (to us), rather than the ordinary soldier.”¹⁷² DeGaris’s mother had a fear of the Germans, which was evident on 28 June 1940 when she gave her children a warning before leaving them at the farm while she took a meal to DeGaris’s father: if the children saw any German planes, they were to “dive underneath the hay stack, because the Germans will drop bombs anywhere.”¹⁷³ As it happened, Germans bombed the harbour that evening and DeGaris’ mother witnessed the raid. DeGaris recalled what he had been told of the event:

She drove through the flaming traffic...My father and a few of them got underneath the jetty and stayed there... An uncle of ours was in the gents’ toilet, but heaven, the nosey so-and-so decides to go out and have a look. Of course he caught the full blast, so we lost him...On our road, we lost a father and two sons, the uncle and another man. We lost five in our road.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Gaudion, 24:00.

¹⁷² Derek LePage, interview by Kim Madsen, 23 September 2011, Part I, 22:00.

¹⁷³ John DeGaris, interview by Kim Madsen, 20 September 2011, Part I, 1:00.

¹⁷⁴ DeGaris, Part I, 2:00.

On the same day, P. Henry's uncle, Herbert Cambridge, was visiting her grandmother's house. Henry was told that Herbert had "wanted to see the planes, raced down [to St. Peter Port] and got killed. Machine gunned."¹⁷⁵ M. Mabire's uncle, Clifford Falla, was also at St. Peter Port. During the bombing, he hid beneath one of the trucks filled with tomatoes. She remembered: "He came back and said, "I thought they'd got me but it was only the juice from the tomatoes!"¹⁷⁶ She also recalled hearing the bombs from her house above the harbour: "Mum, Gran and I were outside our house when they bombed and we went 'round behind the house [as the planes flew overhead]."¹⁷⁶ Five-year-old S. Durman was at St. Peter Port with her mother and grandmother. She had a vivid memory of walking along the road that fronted the harbour:

As the siren was going and it all started, we ran to shelter in the basement of one of the offices. I remember my Gran, there were a couple of little children around on their own, she just grabbed them [and pulled them into the shelter].¹⁷⁷

Fifteen-year-old Gaudion was delivering tomatoes to the port's quay that day. He believed that the way in which the Germans bombed and strafed the harbour was "designed to intimidate the locals. They took two passes – they could have unloaded their bombs in two minutes, couldn't they? (...)They were *an hour* on the job."¹⁷⁸ An English child, J. Romeril, had moved to Guernsey in September 1939 when his father, a Methodist minister, was sent to preach on the island. During the raid, Romeril was at their home two kilometers north of St. Peter Port and he remembered: "We were down on the steps leading down to the cellar, each with a gas mask on. Looking back, that was the

¹⁷⁵ P. Henry, 20:00.

¹⁷⁶ M. Mabire, Part I, 1:00.

¹⁷⁷ S. Duquemin, 27:00.

¹⁷⁸ Gaudion, 24:00.

only time [during the occupation that] I was afraid.”¹⁷⁹ Even before they landed, Guernsey children perceived Germans as a threat.

German forces landed on 1 July 1940 and the occupation began. DeGaris remembered being fearful: “The original Germans were what I call the SS. They’d shoot anything that moved... And my parents expected the Germans would take Britain.”¹⁸⁰

Marion Tostevin was ten when the occupation began and remembered coming face to face with the occupiers at a school award ceremony:

I came top of the [German] class – I don’t know why, but I do like languages, I still do. One morning the head German of the island came to give the prizes and he had his armed guard with him. You know, two men with a rifle, and they stood in front of the class. Of course, he wanted to meet the winner, and oh dear, I was shaking! And, do you know, he asked me a simple question which I knew but couldn’t think what it was, I was so frightened. He said, “Wie alt sind Sie” which is ‘how old are you’. I couldn’t think what it was. I was thirteen then and the girl behind me whispered, “How old are you” and then I answered in German.¹⁸¹

Hurford was eleven at the beginning of occupation and she also remembered being nervous of the soldiers:

We had a German teacher, Mrs. Tait. It was an interesting language, I enjoyed it. But they [the Germans] used to come every now and then, to see how we were getting on. I used to hide so they wouldn’t ask me any questions in German!¹⁸²

None of the interviewees support historian Peter King’s claim that learning the German language “created a bond between the children and the German soldiers,” and that it created an opportunity for the Germans to influence children.¹⁸³ Interviewees who took

¹⁷⁹ John Romeril, interview by Kim Madsen, 29 March 2012, Part I 22:00

¹⁸⁰ DeGaris, Part I, 4:00 and 42:00.

¹⁸¹ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 4:30.

¹⁸² Doreen Hurford, 30 September 2011, Part I, 7:30.

¹⁸³ Peter King, *The Channel Islands War: 1940-1945*, (London: Roberthale, 1991), 28.

compulsory German lessons mentioned only that learning German gave them the ability to beg food from the troops and to understand simple German sentences.¹⁸⁴

As time passed, children perceived that there were different groups among the Germans. Hurford compared the Organization Todt (OT)¹⁸⁵ officers to the regular German soldiers: “They were rough, but the ordinary soldier was alright.” Children observed the cruel way in which OT officials treated their labourers. On her way to school, Hurford remembered seeing some of the workers: “We’d see a queue of slaves with billy cans, paint tins you know, and there were the Germans with their whips...It was awful to watch. Terrible.”¹⁸⁶ Marion Tostevin also saw slave workers. “We lived opposite a soup kitchen [for OT workers]. “Every evening they were queuing for their watery soup with their cans. Many of them just had sacking on their feet.”¹⁸⁷ Gaudion also remembered seeing slave workers in the same soup kitchen:

*The foreigners would be sitting on the floor, and the phlegm, you’ve never seen the likes! It indicates their physical condition. You don’t bring up phlegm if you’re fit and well, do you? Ah, the poor fellas. It was dreadful.*¹⁸⁸

Children also saw how the Germans treated the prisoners of war. DeGaris remembered:

*We knew there was cruelty towards the POWs. We actually saw that kind of thing on work sites. If they didn’t work there was a big stick around, but I can’t say that we saw anyone beaten to death. They were beaten to move along.*¹⁸⁹

Another difference the children noticed was that, as the war progressed, the type of soldier stationed on Guernsey changed. DeGaris observed: “the ones we had after ’42,

¹⁸⁴ Hurford, Part I, 11:17. Marion Tostevin, Part I, 4:30. Gaudion, Part I, 36:00.

¹⁸⁵ The OT was a labour organization of the Third Reich that used volunteer or slave labour from occupied Europe. On the Channel Islands, the OT built fortifications.

¹⁸⁶ Hurford, Part I, 3:00.

¹⁸⁷ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 15:30.

¹⁸⁸ Gaudion, Part I, 21:30.

¹⁸⁹ DeGaris, Part I, 47:50.

'43, a lot of them were farmers of the older generation. They didn't want to fight. They didn't want a war."¹⁹⁰

Even though regular German soldiers appeared less frightening than the OT officials who bullied slave workers, children believed that all Germans were different from the British in the degree to which they adhered to rules. Gaudion described the Germans as being "very strict on their men" and related a story to illustrate his point:

One of our relatives, Uncle Tom of the Tirrel, his son Raymond Falla did some marvelous work for the island [during the war], going over to fetch seeds and food stuffs [from France]. One day the phone rang – now I can't prove this – rang on his desk. It was the Feldkommandant, "Falla, you will report to a certain hotel in town as a representative of the local state." "Oh? What's happening?" (asked Falla.) "We're shooting one of our men, he's raped one of your women."¹⁹¹

This standard of decorum contrasts favourably with the later behavior of the Allies in occupied Germany. In 1945, for example, 284 American soldiers were convicted of raping German women, but none of the rapists was executed.¹⁹² Scholars agree that wartime German military courts handed down harsher punishments than was standard during previous wars; the *Wehrmacht* believed that order and morale could be maintained only by removing any soldier who obstructed German occupation policies. Troops who refused to fight to the bitter end faced especially harsh

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4:00.

¹⁹¹ Gaudion, Part I, 37:00.

¹⁹² Robert Lilley, *Take by Force* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 117, 160. Lilley notes that American military courts punished the rapists of British and French women more severely. In those cases, life sentences were given to 56% of the offenders and 18% were executed. A second trend is noted by historian Jeffrey Burds: German soldiers who raped women in occupied territory were severely punished on the Western Front, where the *Wehrmacht* was concerned about its reputation among the locals. However, rapists on the Eastern Front were punished mildly, if at all, because of the homicidal nature of German racial policy against those civilian populations. Jeffrey Burds, "Sexual Violence in Europe in World War II, 1939-1945" in *Politics & Society*, Vol. 37 (March, 2009), 37, 42.

treatment.¹⁹³ The trend toward brutal punishments intensified with each year of the war, surging after 1943, when the tide began to turn against Germany.¹⁹⁴

In 1944, when hunger became such a problem that food theft was regarded as sabotage, DeGaris witnessed an incident confirming his belief that German soldiers were fanatical rule followers. He later remembered:

*One morning, we were walking along the coast on our way to school. There was a German officer milking a cow. An ordinary private came along and told him to stop milking, which he did and then ran. The private shot him dead, right in front of us, for not stopping. So their discipline was very, very strict. It surprised us very much! I couldn't see that happening in the British Army, a private shooting an officer. I think they were fanatical in their discipline. If you look at the way they treated the Jews and that, somewhere along the line there's something bred into them or drummed into their heads that you follow the rules.*¹⁹⁵

DeGaris believed that Germans demonstrated this trait again in 1945, when Red Cross food parcels were delivered to Guernsey for civilian consumption only:

*They didn't take the food parcels from us. They were very well disciplined. I don't think we could have done the same – we'd have nicked out something beforehand. They were very much rule followers.*¹⁹⁶

Given the pattern of brutal punishments doled out by German military courts, it seems likely that German soldiers followed orders because they feared harsh military discipline, not because they were somehow innately programmed to obey authority.

Living alongside the enemy for five years meant that there were opportunities for interaction between German soldiers and Guernsey children. The interviewees who had

¹⁹³ David Raub Snyder, *Sex Crimes under the Wehrmacht* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007): 231-234. And ¹⁹³ Messerschmidt, Manfred, "German Military Law in the Second World War" in *The German Military in the Age of Total War*, Wilhelm Deist ed., New Hampshire: Berg, 1985, pp 323-335.

¹⁹⁴ Stephan G. Fritz, *Frontsoldaten: The German Soldier in World War II* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1995, 90. Messerschmidt, Manfred, "German Military Law ", 333.

¹⁹⁵ DeGaris, Part I, 48:30.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 53:00.

been young children during the occupation remembered that the “soldiers did not behave badly”, and many “made a fuss of children.”¹⁹⁷ M. Mabire was playing outside her house on the day the Germans landed. She recalled: “I can remember the soldiers passing in lorries. Of course, in those days it was safe to play in the road and I remember them throwing me sweets until Mum found out and brought me back in!”¹⁹⁸ D. LePage had a similar memory: “The Germans used to march up and down the road outside our house and, very often, they’d slip us a piece of chocolate.”¹⁹⁹ LePage had another, more personal interaction with a German soldier:

I had to walk home from school through a property called St. George which the Germans had commandeered. We were walking past this building, a group of us, and a German soldier came out and started calling at us. The brave ones, of course, ran away immediately and left me and a couple of other people standing there. He pointed at me and made me go off inside. The others scooted off as fast as they could! It turned out that this was a tailor and he was making a suit for his son. He’d picked me out – I was the same size as his son. He made me try on the suit, he fitted it and then he gave me half a loaf of bread and sent me off on my way home. I went home quickly to tell my Mother, thinking she’d be really please ‘cause I’d brought this bread home, but she gave me a good scolding ‘cause I’d bitten off a big piece!’²⁰⁰

DeGaris also experienced generosity when he came across soldiers on his way to school:

On our way to school we had to walk through [the grounds of a big house] where the Germans had a base with tanks. We had to go through the guard. They just waved you through. And if you walked back at lunch time, their soup was being made and then all the kids were given a bowl of soup too. When they had plenty, they shared.²⁰¹

DeGaris believed that German soldiers treated Guernsey children gently:

A couple of times when we went for leaflets [dropped by the Allies] and wouldn’t stop [when the Germans called], they’d fire their guns to frighten

¹⁹⁷ D. LePage, Part I, 4:20. DeGaris, Part I, 46:00.

¹⁹⁸ M. Mabire, Part I, 3:00.

¹⁹⁹ D. LePage, Part I, 8:00.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 6:00.

²⁰¹ DeGaris, Part I, 45:40.

*you - but they were miles overhead. When they caught you, they took the leaflets off you and said, "Don't do it again."*²⁰²

Among this sample of nine participants, only DeGaris and Romeril got to know any Germans. DeGaris knew a young interpreter who had attended Oxford before the war and was billeted close to the De Garis's farm. The young man spoke "perfect English" and "didn't want to fight."²⁰³ Also, a second German man used to come to the farm regularly: "He was a farmer and he used to help us. He'd work all day for a glass of milk."²⁰⁴ Romeril's family became "good friends" with two German Lutheran pastors. One Christmas Eve their friend, Herr Fry, brought the family a transparent Christmas card showing a nativity scene:

*It was placed on a table and a candle lit behind it. We had no power so the only light in the room was from that candle and the fire. Herr Fry then played Silent Night on his flute and we sang Christmas carols in English and German.*²⁰⁵

Though the other interviewees did not form such relationships, the consensus was that the Germans were disciplined and "didn't bother us if we didn't bother them."²⁰⁶

All interviewees commented on fraternization. No one blamed girls who had dated soldiers, but recalled that their parents had not been as forgiving, particularly to married women who fraternized.²⁰⁷ Gaudion observed fraternization first hand and found it uncomfortable. He recalled a summer day at the public swimming pool:

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 46:00.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, Part I, 44:00.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 18:00.

²⁰⁵ Romeril, Part I, 53:00.

²⁰⁶ Hurford, Part I, 4:00.

²⁰⁷ S. Durman, 1:22:00. D. LePage, 1:26:00. Romeril, Part II, 1:24:00.

*The Jerries were there with girlfriends. They had the oil on... Ah, the whole atmosphere – Ken said to himself, “Once. No more.” And I never went there again.*²⁰⁸

D. LePage was aware of fraternization involving a woman courted by his uncle:

*There was a scandal in our family. Well, not actually in our family but my mother’s brother’s girlfriend. He was in the services and she took up with a German soldier. When the war was over and my uncle came back, he went back with her! The German had been sent to the Russian Front; he was no longer in existence. My uncle Stan married her and they raised the little child. But my Auntie Gert was always so, what shall I say, touchy about anything said to Terry...She always had this [defensiveness, assuming] that people were being unkind to him because of who he was, but he was being treated like any other child.*²⁰⁹

Marion Tostevin expressed a less forgiving view of fraternization, perhaps because the female involved was a married woman:

*My mother had a first cousin, Norman, and he was in the Navy during the war. When he left Guernsey his wife was pregnant and had this little boy, but a few years into the occupation she was every night sleeping with some German. We knew because the German lived opposite us and she used to come, every night, on her bike. We’d watch her. When Norman got back, he was so upset to think he’d been fighting for his country and she’d been doing that, that he tried to do away with himself.*²¹⁰

Yet Tostevin also revealed her belief that friendship between an islander and a German could be acceptable. In fact, she was the only interviewee who maintained a life-long friendship with an ex-soldier. Her husband:

Eric lived on a farm (during the occupation) and the Germans built a bunker in one of their fields. One German [Arnim Reinhardt] spoke perfect English and used to go to the farm for potatoes and that sort of thing. He got very friendly with Eric’s family. My husband and him always kept in touch, even when Arnim was a POW...I met him for the first time in 1964...He was lovely,

²⁰⁸ Gaudion, Part II, 32:00.

²⁰⁹ D. LePage, Part I, 1:23:00.

²¹⁰ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 22:40.

*he really was... We've visited back and forth and they've been over to us many, many times.*²¹¹

Guernsey children used their internal assets of intelligence and creativity to cope with the strains caused by the German occupation. D. LePage remembered one subtle strategy:

*If you were walking along the pavement and a German soldier came towards you, they get in the road, not you. You stayed on the pavement. It was that sort of thing, not resistance, but it was an indication you weren't happy with them.*²¹²

LePage also remembered a more creative means he used to frustrate German operations on a guns and range finder site near his house:

*The guns and range finder were up on the top of a hill and just down, slightly below, they'd built toilet facilities which were, of course, open toilets. In order to avoid the troops going down and finding the toilet was occupied, they had a little system at the top, just a post with a little wood knob at the top of it; one end painted red, one end painted green. So if the toilet was occupied, they'd slide it up to red, if not, to green. My contribution to the war was, whenever I went past, I tipped it up to red [laughter]. So that I always said, if they were working on the range finder or the guns, they were so uncomfortable they weren't accurate!*²¹³

Children occasionally risked illegal activities. For example, DeGaris remembered picking up leaflets dropped in the night by the British. Listening to BBC broadcasts was illegal and in some homes adults were reluctant to keep a crystal set in case their youngster unwittingly revealed the set's presence. Many older children made used and hid crystal sets. Gaudion used a diagram in an Arthur Mee Encyclopedia as a guide and recalled: "Any fool, given a plan, can make one, but it's an 'H' of a job to sort any problems if it's

²¹¹ Tostevin, Part I, 30:00.

²¹² D. LePage, Part I, 8:00.

²¹³ Ibid., 10:00.

giving you trouble.”²¹⁴ Crystal sets could be quite small; Falla’s set was tiny enough to be stored in a screw box. Another example of creativity involved the way in which some youth challenged curfew rules:

*We were coming home on our bikes from finishing a game of snooker and I was the only one with a watch. Bas Gaudion said, “Ken, put that watch fifteen minutes back.” We’d left at nine o’clock and that was curfew. Half-way home, there’s the patrol. The sergeant says, “Halt!” But then Bas says, “Show them your watch Ken”, [so I did]. “Oh... Raus [get out],” the sergeant says. And off we went. Boy did we pedal - as if old Nick himself was after us!*²¹⁵

Despite curfew and the shortages of food and sporting equipment, Guernsey gregariousness persisted. DeGaris stated, “We did have some fun as youngsters. We played ‘Germans’ – we had bunkers; we had tunnels. A football was rags rolled up. You couldn’t get anything so you made it.”²¹⁶ D. LePage remembered playing football and cricket as well, and his group enjoyed the game of ‘kick-the-tin’, a variation on hide and seek.²¹⁷ S. Durman remembered, “there were no new toys, it was all exchange. If you went to a party, you had to take you own little bit of food and your own milk in a bottle.”²¹⁸ Interviewees who had been teenagers during this period remembered that their gatherings became “overnight parties because of the curfew.”²¹⁹ Most interviewees remembered playing card games. “We played a [card] game called Euchre...most nights. Not for money, of course, it was amongst the family, but [still, we played] very seriously.”²²⁰ Also, on summer days children met their friends and swam in the ocean, after first skirting the minefields on the beaches.

²¹⁴ Gaudion, Part II, 4:00.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:14:00.

²¹⁶ DeGaris, Part I, 58:00.

²¹⁷ D. LePage, Part I, 1:14:00.

²¹⁸ S. Duquemin, 31:00.

²¹⁹ Hurford, Part I, 17:00.

²²⁰ Gaudion, Part I, 1:11:00.

The role of faith in the interviewees's war years is unclear. No participants mentioned faith as a means to cope with the occupation. Nevertheless, the social network provided by the church played a vital role:

*Church was the rallying place. Churches created a sense of community. You were, in a very real sense, part of an intergenerational family. Everyone was related in one way or another, to a church community.*²²¹

Two other interviewees mentioned the church. Hurford remembered that no group, other than the Germans, was allowed to wear a uniform²²² and Gaudion remembered how this rule led to a change in his social circle:

*The Salvation Army was closed, it was too uniform, so there it was. We were members of the Methodist Chapel and the Salvation Army amalgamated with them so that there was quite a big crowd of girls and boys. We used to go swimming virtually every day, rain or shine.*²²³

The nuclear family continued to be a protective external resource for children who lived on occupied Guernsey. All interviewees who had lived under occupation resided with both parents, though two participants were missing siblings who had been evacuated. In our sample, four of the nine interviewees's parents had intended to evacuate as a family but missed the last ship, while the rest stayed because their parents chose to remain. Children were not involved in making the decision about whether or not to stay. Also, none of the children's middle-aged fathers had been conscripted, so the patriarchal family structure continued.

The extended family also continued to provide support for children. Every interviewee who lived through the occupation mentioned having regular contact with his/her relatives. For example, social evenings to play Euchre continued despite the

²²¹ Romeril, Part II, 53:00.

²²² Huford, Part I, 18:50.

²²³ Gaudion, Part I, 1:11:00.

curfew and when individuals caught fish or rabbits, the food was shared amongst the extended family. News from relatives and schools in England was received through Red Cross messages and, as noted above, some messages were published in the local newspaper.²²⁴ BBC broadcasts and British leaflet drops were other sources of support since they delivered news and boosted morale.

Schools helped children to carry on living with some degree of normalcy, despite the occupation. The Education Authority of Guernsey organized schools as soon as officials realized that over 1,000 school-aged children had not evacuated.²²⁵ One school was established in each of the island's ten parishes, but because most school buildings were commandeered by the Germans, each school subdivided into smaller groups and classes were held "all over the place".²²⁶ As a result, by the end of the war, most children had attended school in at least three different locations.²²⁷ Volunteer teachers were required because most qualified teachers had evacuated with the schools. DeGaris remembered that "a lot of our teachers weren't qualified but they were very, very good."²²⁸ Marion Tostevin described the volunteers less flatteringly as "our make-shift teachers."²²⁹ Mrs. Tait who taught German, was unpopular with the children. "She was a real Nazi. She supported the Germans and we were supposed to Heil Hitler in her classroom," recalled Romeril.²³⁰ Some volunteer teachers were directed toward courses that fit their occupational skills. For example, an accountant taught bookkeeping.²³¹

²²⁴ *Press*, 12 September 1941 and *Press*, 28 May 1942.

²²⁵ *Press*, 8 Jan 1945, "Education, Now and Later," p 3. and Smith, *Impact of the Evacuation*, 133.

²²⁶ DeGaris, Part I, 11:00. and *Press*, 5 July 1940, "Schools to Open," 1.

²²⁷ D. LePage, Part I, 12:00.

²²⁸ DeGaris, Part I, 24:00.

²²⁹ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 6:30.

²³⁰ Romeril, Part I, 28:00.

²³¹ Romeril, Part I, 1:04.

Beyond the disruptions of changing locations and volunteer staff, some children's education was affected by their spotty attendance. DeGaris explained:

*If the Germans were on maneuvers, they'd say that you couldn't go through this road but had to go 'round the back. We'd just say we couldn't [get to school] and then we'd go and play. We were wayward.*²³²

Interviewees concluded that "school was fun" during the occupation.²³³

Shortages of food, clothing, fuel and other goods were stressors that increased throughout the occupation. All interviewees agreed that hunger was the most significant of these problems. "You were completely dependent upon what you could provide for yourself. There was nothing to buy and nothing in the pantry."²³⁴ Food shortages changed S. Durman's wartime mode of recreation. She remembered:

*I went to dancing classes and put on shows at Candie Garden Theater and the Germans used to come there and watch. We were called the 'Tit-Bits'. And then, because food got so short, my mother took me away and I went to piano lessons because [dance] was taking up too much energy.*²³⁵

Bread was rationed throughout the occupation. In many households the loaf was sliced, each piece counted and, in Durman's house, marked with small flags to denote who could eat that slice.²³⁶ Food shortages sometimes resulted in unpleasant meals. For example,

LePage said:

*To this day I can recall chocolate parsnip pudding. We had nothing to make pudding with and we had plenty of parsnips, so Mum put a little cocoa in and it was chocolate parsnip pudding. I did not enjoy it!*²³⁷

Children's hunger led them into potentially dangerous situations. S. Durman recalled:

²³² DeGaris, Part I, 10:30.

²³³ Romeril, Part I, 1:04.

²³⁴ Romeril, Part II, 24:00.

²³⁵ S. Durman, Part I, 32:00.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 33:30.

²³⁷ D. LePage, Part I, 19:00.

Of course I wasn't supposed to talk to any German at all, but when I used to come from school there was this German billeted in a house nearby, and he used to call me in, and give me bread and honey. I went home and told my Mum. Well, my Dad, he went to this place and he said, "Don't you ever give my daughter bread and honey again. Don't talk to her anymore." I suppose from Dad's point of view, you had to be careful not to collaborate. But still, I was missing my bread and honey – that tasted good! [laughter]²³⁸

And Hurford remembered a risk she took in order to get bread:

[We also said,] "Haben Sie Brot?" One time, this German says, "Yes" and we arranged to come on Tuesday afternoon to a particular cottage. My friend and I went and we went upstairs in the attic with him to get some bread. You wouldn't do that now – you'd be afraid you'd get assaulted! Well, we had some bread, German bread it was, horrible and very sour brown bread, almost like pumice stone. But it was bread.²³⁹

Food shortages brought food theft. Every interviewee mentioned how he or she protected their crops and animals from foreign workers in the early years and later from the Germans.²⁴⁰ Two interviewees remembered seeing occupation troops eat food that had been put out for the cat or for the pigs.²⁴¹ Rabbits had to be brought in at night and larger animals housed in locked barns, but these strategies were not always effective. D. LePage's remembered how his grandparents's goat was stolen:

The goat was in an old barn. The thief had got up on the roof, taken the tiles off, gotten into the loft, taken the floorboards off and got down into the barn...He was then able to open the door from the inside and took the goat away.

Cats were more difficult to constrain indoors and were therefore more at risk for being stolen. DeGaris remembered that their ducks were stolen and LePage recalled, "We also

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, Part I, 31:00.

²³⁹ Hurford, Part I, 11:00.

²⁴⁰ G. Durman, Part I, 1:19:00. and DeGaris, Part I, 18:00.

²⁴¹ DeGaris, Part I, 1:08:00. and G. Durman, Part I, 1:19:00.

lost our pregnant cat, right at the end of the war, which I'm sure went into German stewpots because they were even hungrier than we were."²⁴²

Children helped to supplement the family food supply in a variety of ways. From the beaches children collected tiny shellfish, winkles, as well as seaweed.²⁴³ From the land, children collected chestnuts and, after farmers had harvested their fields of wheat,

D. LePage recalled:

*It was almost a fight to be able to be allowed on to the field... to glean all the heads that had fallen off. I can remember going with my parents, doing that and taking these heads of wheat home, rubbing the corn out, blowing all the chaff off and then putting the corn through the mincer and getting the flour coming out the other end.*²⁴⁴

Gaudion remembered using ferrets to hunt for rabbits, fishing for mackerel and, once, illegally shooting a Lapwing:

*I had an air rifle. I put it in a longish sack, stuffed straw around it and I had a sack of straw, didn't I, on my back and off I went. [The lapwings were in a field nearby] I crept down [behind] the greenhouse, just looked over the wall, put the gun over and chose one that was back to me because you never fire at one looking at you. (The air rifle is so low powered that the pellet would bounce off.) Over the bird went, but I certainly didn't go and pick it up. No, I left it there for three quarters of an hour, for if someone had seen me there I'd have been in trouble for shooting. I put the gun in the shed and then walked down to the common. I made out, "Hello, there's a dead bird there. Let's have a look at it." I walked up to the blessed thing and said, "Well, we can't leave it there." [laughter] You'd never enjoy a mid-day meal as much as we enjoyed that lapwing. Those beans with lapwing were fabulous!*²⁴⁵

Children learned that it was alright to take what fuel, clothes or food one needed from the deserted houses on the island. Hurford recalled that:

²⁴² D. LePage, Part I, 3:00.

²⁴³ Mothers drew upon traditional recipes and used carrageen seaweed as a gelatin replacement.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 37:40.

²⁴⁵ Gaudion, Part I, 47:00.

Through the church and that, you'd often hear of somebody who'd left some stuff. It was by word of mouth. If somebody has gone away, well they had a house full of stuff – clothes for all sorts of ages. So you'd go along to that house. It had to be used. It was a good way to get clothes for children. They weren't going to be able to wear those clothes five years later! When they came back, some of them had nothing left in their houses.²⁴⁶

Romeril agreed that this attitude was common:

You could move into someone else's house, lock stock and barrel, and live there. They'd evacuated and so, a house is a house. It wasn't a question of possession. It was a whole different attitude. For us kids, it was kind of fun.²⁴⁷

Children also learned how to beg supplies from the Germans. Hurford remembered:

We used to go 'round saying, "Haben Sie cigarettes fur papa?" and my dad didn't smoke but it was something to offer someone else.²⁴⁸

Bartering was another method to get supplies from the Germans. D. LePage had a friend whose family kept goats. That friend and LePage used to:

...go up into the German encampment and barter this milk for bread. We realized that the more milk we had, the more bread we'd get. If you put a little drop of water in the milk, you got more milk... The trouble is, we got far too greedy and there was soon more water than milk and they stopped bartering with us.²⁴⁹

Children were also aware that sometimes food had to be concealed. In O.

LeNoury's household, she remembered that her parents hid portions of illegal salted pork in the false bottom of her baby sister's pram.²⁵⁰ Another interviewee mentioned that her family hid illegal food under a section of floorboards.²⁵¹ De Garis remembered:

²⁴⁶ Hurford, Part I, 1:00:00.

²⁴⁷ Romeril Part I 23:30 and 45:00

²⁴⁸ Hurford, Part I, 11:00.

²⁴⁹ D. LePage, Part I, 4:00.

²⁵⁰ Olive LeNoury in John DeGaris, Part I, 1:14:00.

²⁵¹ Brouard in DeGaris, Part I, 1:15:00.

*It was the Guernsey people that were the worst [at reporting those who illegally kept food]. You couldn't keep anything otherwise someone would be bound to have seen it or heard about it. Someone would tell on you. It was jealousy, a lot of the time. I suppose in one way you can quite see that the average Guernsey person wasn't getting enough food.*²⁵²

The children's involvement in the trade of illegal food did not affect their long-term normative attitudes towards law and order. Memories were presented as examples of how the islanders tricked the enemy and of the risks that families took in order to survive.

Many adults helped alleviate the shortages that children faced. Parents gave their children the lion's share of their family's food. Gaudion remembered that at his Uncle Fred's house his younger cousin, David, was an only child and that "anything that was at all nutritious went to the nipper."²⁵³ Adequate clothing was another challenge. Marion Tostevin remembered that she wore her mother's altered dresses. Neighbours were also generous towards children. Tostevin recalled that:

*One of my friends in our road, Dalma, was evacuated. She had lovely clothes. Well, I always had hers because, like her mother said, "She won't wear that when she comes back."*²⁵⁴

An informal food bartering also system sprang up, particularly between town and country. Townspeople brought fish to trade for vegetables and milk.²⁵⁵ As well, a local group called the Star Fund took donations and raised money for families struggling to feed and clothe their children, and local adult volunteers set up soup kitchens for children's school lunches.²⁵⁶ Even the Germans supported Guernsey children. Gaudion

²⁵² DeGaris, Part I, 6:00.

²⁵³ Gaudion, Part I, 51:00.

²⁵⁴ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 47:00.

²⁵⁵ DeGaris, Part I, 22:00.

²⁵⁶ *Star*, 26 May 1942, 3.

remembered that “the Germans allowed children to have full cream milk.”²⁵⁷ And when the occupiers had adequate food, some children were given soup and bread.²⁵⁸ During the last year of the occupation, the Germans requested the delivery of Red Cross food parcels for the islanders. Every interviewee remembered the excitement of receiving the parcels and how they tried to make the food last. LePage described the delight:

*You opened up the Red Cross parcels and you'd see foods I'd never seen before: chocolate, salmon, condensed milk, all this sort of thing. And then the first bread that got baked from that flour that was brought, it was pure white. We'd only seen the German type, a dark rye. This was totally different – like cake!*²⁵⁹

Local German officials occasionally amended their own side's draconian policies. In September 1942, the Romeril family was exempted from deportation to an internment camp:

*We were British-born and should have gone...[however] the Germans allowed one British Methodist minister to stay on the island and Reverend Flint, who was single, offered to go rather than us. We kids were very disappointed; we missed an adventure!*²⁶⁰

Polish POWs—a group least in a position to help others—also demonstrated generosity towards children. DeGaris recalled:

*Shoes were shipped in from France until D-Day. They weren't very nice shoes; they were hard, thick leather. I was more comfortable in the shoes one of the Poles made my sister and I. Those sabots were really comfortable; all wood, the top and all.*²⁶¹

²⁵⁷ Gaudion, Part I, 50:00.

²⁵⁸ DeGaris, Part I, 45:50. and Hurford, Part I, 9:30.

²⁵⁹ D. LePage, Part I, 19:00.

²⁶⁰ Romeril, Part II, 23:00.

²⁶¹ DeGaris, Part I, 29:00.

In general, we can conclude that children who lived through occupation drew on their internal assets to cope with the stresses caused by the German presence. Children learned to speak some German, and they had enough understanding of their enemy to know which Germans to trust and which to avoid. The majority of their interactions with Germans centered on the possibility of getting extra food; beyond that level, children “never gave fraternization or collaboration that much thought.”²⁶² Children creatively challenged some of the German laws, and they continued to play with their friends, attend school and interact with their extended families. In these ways, they coped with the German presence.

In response to shortages, children gathered food, begged and bartered. They made-do with secondhand clothes and homemade toys. Children also drew upon the support of every available emotional and material resource: parents, neighbours, extended families, POWs, trustworthy Germans, the Star Fund and the Red Cross.

²⁶² Romeril, Part II, 45:00.

Chapter 5: Post-war Experiences

The end of the war meant an end to German rule, and although rationing continued, food became more available. These two changes meant an end to the stressors experienced by children who had lived under occupation. However, the post-Liberation period brought new strains once families were reunited. Evacuees had to learn to fit back into Guernsey society and to re-familiarize themselves with their families. And it was not just school children who had to make these adjustments; half the island's population had evacuated to England. Of our pool of interviewees, fully a third suggested that after Liberation, the problem of learning to live with their families and readjust to Guernsey societal norms was a new source of anxiety. This chapter will focus on the narratives of the evacuee participants in order to determine the extent of these new stressors and the assets that children used to cope.

Evacuees returned to Guernsey within several months of Liberation. School aged children traveled with their schools while evacuees who were school graduates and those who had lived with their parents made their own travel arrangements. The voyage home was another adventure. R DeGaris returned to Guernsey at age eight, travelling with her mother:

We came back on this old boat, the Hantonia. It used to leak like a basket. There was water running down the walls! I had to share a bunk with my mother. They used to have a matron that was in charge and, when we were nearly in Guernsey, she came 'round and said, "And you're the little girl who's been talking all night! [laughter]"²⁶³

The younger children had little memory of the island. M. Mabire remembered:

²⁶³ Rosemary DeGaris in John DeGaris, Part III, 5:00.

*...coming in the harbour and looking at all those buildings and thinking as an eleven year old, "How on earth can there be any roads between all those buildings?" It was a lovely day and the sun was shining on them and, of course, my poor Dad, he was at the rail with me and telling me what everything was. You know, as a kid, really I didn't know what he was talking about, but I know he was overjoyed.*²⁶⁴

Older children remembered their country but thought it much changed. Seventeen year old Reddall declared: "Guernsey looked so drab after the war. And the houses – some of them were knocked down."²⁶⁵ Brouard remembered: "It was a different island when I came back after the war. My father procured a bike for me, I don't know how, and we went for a ride down to L'Eree. All the roads had big holes in them where they'd taken the mines out."²⁶⁶ R. Mabire, who had spent his evacuee years in the mill town of Bradford, had a more positive reaction:

*When it came daylight [as our ship entered the harbour] and you saw Guernsey, it was so clean after the filthy black industrial mill towns. We didn't care [that the mill towns had been dirty] but Guernsey was so different!*²⁶⁷

The reunion with parents is something that each interviewee remembered vividly. Older children were shocked by the changes they saw in their parents. Reddall described her reunion this way:

*We had to walk along the quay carrying our bags. There were rolls of [barbed] wire all along by the Weighbridge. There were masses of parents waiting there, waiting for us to arrive. I remembered my parents, but oh, I thought they looked awful, they were little people. My mother had lost three stone! [42 lbs]*²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ M. Mabire, Part I, 12:00.

²⁶⁵ Reddall, 36:00.

²⁶⁶ Brouard in Reddall, 55:00.

²⁶⁷ R. Mabire, Part I, 28:00.

²⁶⁸ Reddall, 36:00.

P. Henry also recognized her parents, though they too had changed physically: “My father was as thin as a rake. My mother had been quite a big woman; she was wearing my sixteen-year-old sister’s dresses when we came back. She lost a lot of weight.”²⁶⁹ D.

Henry and his mother had quite a different reaction when they saw Henry’s father for the first time in five years:

*I recognized my Dad but he had a bloody Hitler mustache! Mum said, “Get that off! Nobody wants to look like Hitler!” Hey, and Christ, my father looked like him... I couldn’t believe it! [laughter]*²⁷⁰

Only one of the five interviewees who had evacuated as five or six year olds could identify their parents.²⁷¹ G. Durman described his homecoming this way:

*It was strange. My mother wasn’t there to meet me, my father was. He’d been taken along by my cousin who was driving a car at the time. There wouldn’t have been room in the car for all of us, so Mother couldn’t be there, you know. I met her, of course, when I got back home. I didn’t recognize my dad at first. I said to my cousin, Roy, because he’d been with me in the north of England but he’d been liberated over here before me. He was older. I said to him, “Who’s that chap with you?” and he said, “That’s your father. [sighs from the four other interviewees in the room]”*²⁷²

R. Duquemin remembered his reunion:

*There were three people waiting when I got off [the boat]. One was the driver of the car and the other two were supposedly my Mum and Dad but I did not know them.*²⁷³

R LeNoury remembered the reunion process differently:

*Down at the White Rock (harbour) they tied a label on you and you were led into a circle [of adults]. Somebody shouted out your name and then somebody claimed you...I felt, I don’t know, it was something like a slave market. There are no words for it.*²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ P. Henry, 7:00.

²⁷⁰ D. Henry, 26:00.

²⁷¹ Lett, Part I, 30:00.

²⁷² G. Durman, Part I, 56:00.

²⁷³ R. Duquemin, 16:50.

²⁷⁴ R LeNoury, Part III, 2:00.

For evacuees, the initial homecoming was a shock.

Children had to become reacquainted with their parents and the consensus among interviewees was that a child's age, not his/her gender, made the significant difference. Children who had been ten or older at evacuation recognized their parents after Liberation, but had to get to know them again.²⁷⁵ The younger group of children started from a different position. Two interviewees described how they felt when they first were reunited with their parents. R. Duquemin said, "I just did not know them; it could have been anybody that picked me up"²⁷⁶; and R. LeNoury remembered: "These people take you home and they think you are their children. But they're strangers."²⁷⁷ Not surprisingly, participants in this study believed that younger children had more difficulty adjusting to family life—"Our age group had to stay with our parents, whether we liked them or not."²⁷⁸ Gaudion and Reddall each independently commented on the adjustment of their brother, Eric, who had been nine when he evacuated to England. Gaudion said, "my brother found it very, very difficult to settle," and he told several stories that illustrated a battle of wills between Eric and his father.²⁷⁹ Lett's memory of her first day back home revealed how challenging it was to reconnect. Her parents did not appear to remember or understand that for the last three years of the war Lett had washed, dressed and looked after the infant her billets had adopted. When Lett returned to Guernsey as an eleven year old, she remembered:

My Mother had given away quite a lot of our toys during the war – you couldn't buy toys – but she'd kept this doll. She's borrowed a doll's push chair and so, after lunch I pushed this doll's pram with my parents, down to

²⁷⁵ Brouard in Reddall, 44:00.

²⁷⁶ R. Duquemin, 16:50.

²⁷⁷ R. LeNoury, Part III, 2:00.

²⁷⁸ Brouard in Reddall, 44:00.

²⁷⁹ Gaudion, Part I, 58:00; and Reddall, 34:00.

*my Gran's house. I often think, did I do it to please them or had I reverted to dollies and childhood? Thinking that I'd been looking after a real live child only two or three days before!*²⁸⁰

Four of the nine unaccompanied evacuees stated they were unhappy when they returned to Guernsey. One remembered saying to his parents, “Thanks, but I want to go home [to England] now.”²⁸¹ One situation was markedly different from the others; Robins remembered that his parents “...wanted to send *me* back because I was very hard.”²⁸²

Sibling relationships also changed as a result of brothers and sisters being separated during the war. In S. Durman's case, she her older brother Allan had evacuated while she stayed on Guernsey. Allan had billeted with their aunt and cousin Marion. Durman remembered how both she and her cousin thought that Allan was their own brother, but she reflected that it was only Marion who knew Allan.²⁸³ Durman felt she never knew her brother because he had joined the Royal Navy by 1945 and never again lived at home. Some siblings became close friends. Robins met his brother for the first time upon his return: “I was lucky I had this young brother. He was only a youngster at the time. He couldn't say my name when I first got back – it was ‘Eggy’.”²⁸⁴ Other children felt their siblings were spoiled and favoured by their parents. Brouard and LeNoury, for example, were reunited with their younger brother John. Brouard remembered the way their mother treated John:

*John was only six [when we came back] but of course my Mother idolized him. ‘Jacko’ she called him...No matter what she was doing, if John came in the room, she stopped. It was John! And that was understandable, though we didn't think it was at the time. [we] just thought he was a spoilt little brat.*²⁸⁵

²⁸⁰ Lett, Part I, 30:30.

²⁸¹ R LeNoury, Part III, 2:00. and Martin Durman, email from D. LePage to author, 17 December 2011.

²⁸² Robins, Part I, 15:00.

²⁸³ S. Durman, Part I, 35:00.

²⁸⁴ Robins, Part I, 17:00.

²⁸⁵ Brouard, Part II, 59:00.

Conversely, some children who had lived under occupation thought that their evacuee siblings “could tend to selfishness.”²⁸⁶ Gaudion followed family conventions to maintain harmony at home while his brother Eric, who had been an evacuee, fought every rule. After many father-son battles of will, their otherwise strict father permitted Eric to do as he wished. Gaudion remembered an incident in which he wanted to buy a German motorcycle:

*You know that Germans’s equipment was superior to any of the other forces’s - far superior, not only slightly. I told my father, I’m going to St. Sampson’s, they’re auctioning motorcycles. They’re ten pounds! “Oh, that’s fine,” he says with a smirk, “you can go and buy two of them, but they won’t come on my property.” So where was I? Up the country, hey? So that’s what happened. Some years later, Eric goes to university, comes back with a motorcycle. Does my father say the same to him? Not on your life. [sigh] That’s rather irritating.*²⁸⁷

Children responded to new stresses by using the internal and external assets that they had available. Evacuees had developed self-reliance and continued to use this trait. Older children, for example, were young adults by Liberation and were in a position to chart their own life course. Reddall believed that the older group “got on better with their parents [after liberation] because they were going away for training almost immediately so they didn’t have time *not* to get on with their parents.”²⁸⁸ The younger group of evacuees had to re-connect with to their parents and their well-developed self-reliance may have made it easier for them to be satisfied with an emotionally distant relationship. Perhaps this factor eased their reintroduction into Guernsey life, or it may have worked negatively if children’s independence was so strong that getting support from adults other

²⁸⁶ Gaudion, Part I, 59:00.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 59:30.

²⁸⁸ Reddall, 39:00

than their parents satisfied them. Five of nine unaccompanied evacuees stated that they did not rekindle a good relationship with their parents.

Faith was not mentioned as an asset that children drew upon during this time and church attendance was described as an unwelcome expectation that parents placed upon their children.²⁸⁹

Gregariousness, on the other hand, was an asset that helped children to adjust to postwar society. The younger evacuees completed their secondary education on Guernsey and had opportunities to make new friends at school.²⁹⁰ Initially, however, they stood out as being different; they had strong North England or Scottish accents and had not suffered from the food shortages experienced by their counterparts in Guernsey. Thus, they were “fatter, as children should look,” and “taller” by an average of three inches, though these differences did not persist.²⁹¹ Moreover, evacuees were comparatively “so different, so knowledgeable. They had been out in the big wide world and we hadn’t.”²⁹²

D. LePage remembered the initial group dynamics:

*You had the gang, the school gang, and all of a sudden you had all these outsiders coming in. But of course they were equally a gang who knew each other! It was a question of having to get to know all these people again.*²⁹³

J. DeGaris agreed, but noted that although “it was very much us and them” in the beginning, within a few weeks everyone got along very well.²⁹⁴

Outside of school, boys bonded through play. D. Henry described the early months of liberated Guernsey as a boys’s playground: “We got into the bunkers

²⁸⁹ R. LeNoury, Part III, 1:30.

²⁹⁰ M. Mabire, Part I, 33:30; and Brouard, Part II, 1:06:00.

²⁹¹ D. LePage, Part I, 20:30; and Robins, Part II 7:00; and Smith, *Impact*, 104.

²⁹² Marion Tostevin, Part II, 2:40.

²⁹³ D. LePage, Part I, 16:30.

²⁹⁴ DeGaris, Part I, 12:00.

before the [British] Army took the stuff out.”²⁹⁵ Henry and his friends found a full range of German equipment including rifles, bullets, and a spandau submachine gun. He fondly remembered: “I had a field telephone and so did my mate next door... we used to ring each other and talk to each other on our private telephones!”²⁹⁶

Younger boys, such as D. LePage, remembered being warned by their parents that the bunkers might be booby-trapped, but they still took a chance and picked up some German equipment. There were, in fact, no recorded instances of booby-trapped equipment, but British forces kept back 3,200 German soldiers from POW camps to remove land mines, bombs on the cliffs and anti-tank girders on the beaches.²⁹⁷ LeNoury remembered that boys played ‘soldiers’ equipped with: “German coats, arm belts, helmets and bayonets, though not with firearms because those had been collected by the (British) Army.”²⁹⁸

For adolescents who returned and did not continue school, it was more difficult to form friendships. This was the case for one interviewee, R. Mabire, who had spent his war years in Bradford apart from his Guernsey school. Mabire recalled that by the end of the war:

*...all my friends were Bradford boys. When I came here [to Guernsey] I was sixteen, too old to go back to school though now I regret [that I did not] ...My cousin had a job and was always working on Saturday nights...So for twelve months, until I started a [Boys’ Brigade] company of our own, I didn’t really have any friends.*²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ D. Henry, 29:00.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 31:00.

²⁹⁷ Cruickshank, *The German Occupation*, 306.

²⁹⁸ R LeNoury, email message to author, 21 February 2012.

²⁹⁹ R. Mabire, Part I, 28:45.

Older evacuees remained on Guernsey for only six weeks before returning to England for postsecondary education. Romeril noted that, of the families he knew: “most of the older evacuees did not come back after the war. It really broke up the families in Guernsey.”³⁰⁰ The findings of this small study suggest that there were permanent changes to some families, but before we can make broader claims about the effects of evacuation on Guernsey, more work remains to be done.³⁰¹

Once evacuee children returned to Guernsey, their billets supported them through letters and visits. For example, several couples who had billeted LeNoury and Brouard visited Guernsey after the war.³⁰² In many cases life-long bonds persisted: when the evacuees grew up and got married, they invited their billets to their weddings and evacuees sometimes acted as bridesmaids or groomsmen for their billets’s children³⁰³ In essence, some billets behaved as members of the extended family. For example, twelve years after the war, DeGaris and several friends stayed on the farm where his friend’s brother had been billeted many years earlier.³⁰⁴

Schooling returned to a degree of normality. Schoolteachers no longer held *in loco parentis* responsibilities and their importance in children’s daily lives faded, though the emotional bonds remained. Robins remembered that his elementary school teacher, Miss Jones, used to come into the market where he worked. He said:

We always had a bit of banter and chat. I knew the butcher that served her and went to him one day. I explained [who she was to me] and said, “Look, whatever you do, look after her. If there’s any difference, I’ll pay it, whatever

³⁰⁰ Romeril, Part II, 1:24.

³⁰¹ To explore whether evacuation catalyzed changes on Guernsey, a study could be done that compares Guernsey and Jersey. (Jersey shares a similar culture, geography and population but differs in that almost no children were evacuated.) Are there significant differences in the two islands’s postwar emigration rates, divorce rates or mortality rates, for example?

³⁰² R. LeNoury, Part III, start.

³⁰³ P. Henry, 3:00.

³⁰⁴ J. De Garis, 1:16:00.

she wants, she can have.” And when she died, I always remember it, I went to the funeral and I had a shock, so many of them (evacuee boys) were there, they’d come out of the woodwork. Even Owen Mathews and Tony Raybe who’d gone to New Zealand to live, and blow me, they’d turned-up at the funeral. She’d helped us all, really. I don’t know what we’d have done without her during the war.³⁰⁵

Miss Ninnim, another teacher whom Brouard, R. LeNoury and Lett remembered fondly from their primary school days, did not return to Guernsey after the war. However, the interviewees each knew that she had moved in with her friend, Miss Cawley, and remained in England.

Extended families offered evacuees practical support upon their return to Guernsey. Children like M. Mabire and S. Duquemin, who evacuated to England with both their parents, discovered upon their return that their houses were uninhabitable. In Mabire’s case, her house had been “gutted by the Germans” and her parents “lost all their furniture and everything.” Mabire explained: “the first year we were back, we lived with my Gran and my two uncles in Northbrook. It’s a big house. There were four families living in there until our house was ready to move back into.”³⁰⁶ Duquemin her family returned to find that every stone of their house was gone; no one could explain why the Germans had razed the house. She remembered her living arrangements during the first year after Liberation:

We came from a modern house in Doncaster and [after the war] had to live with my grandparents. There was no water in the house; you had a tap down in the garden. The toilet was down in the garden, literally, it was a little shed affair with a wooden seat. You had to heat the water up and wash in a basin. It was terrible after coming from a modern house.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ Robins, Part I, 37:20.

³⁰⁶ M. Mabire, Part I, 14:00.

³⁰⁷ S. Duquemin, 20:00.

Besides offering practical assistance, extended families welcomed back the evacuees. R. LeNoury remembered many family parties:

*A hall would be rented or the St. George's Estate building would be used as some relative worked as the caretaker. The men would buy a barrel of beer and always end up arguing about who had drunk the most! Three or four men would play accordions and Grandpa, when suitably loaded, would do a stick dance and challenge the aunties to dance with him. They would tut tut and say, "Silly old fool," and would only take to the floor when they had taken a few drinks. I was fascinated by the aunties dancing 'Knees up Mother Brown' which showed their elasticated [sic] bloomers! I don't remember how often these parties occurred, but they were often enough so that I knew the routine of what to expect. They were replaced by big family Christmas parties that were held at peoples' homes or in their packing sheds. Everyone had to host a party, so there might be eight or ten parties over Christmas.*³⁰⁸

Extended family members provided emotional support for some of the evacuees. Children who felt distant from their parents sometimes found support from aunts and uncles. For example, Margery Tostevin remembered that her Uncle Ran "was very good" to her, and Brouard and LeNoury said the same of two of their uncles's families.³⁰⁹

Within nuclear families, children felt closer to some family members than others. There was an especially tight bond between siblings who had evacuated together. Brouard described this type of relationship as: "closer than ordinary brother and sister. We'd shared so much."³¹⁰ P. Henry felt the same way about her two sisters and she was particularly close to her older sister, who had been "like a surrogate mother" during the war.³¹¹

Parents wished to resume their traditional roles in the lives of their children. One example of the excitement parents felt about their upcoming reunion with their children

³⁰⁸ Ray LeNoury, email to author, 21 February 2012.

³⁰⁹ Margery Tostevin, Part II, 2:00; and Brouard Part II, 1:07:00; and R. LeNoury, Part II, 29:00.

³¹⁰ Brouard, Part II, 1:07:00.

³¹¹ P. Henry, 23:00.

was captured in a letter written the day after Liberation from D. Henry's father to his son. David's father speculated on his son's size, praised his school accomplishments, organized gifts and asked for "some nice long letters" so that he could get to know his son.³¹² Other examples included Brouard's memory that her mother "kept wanting hugs,"³¹³ and Lett's recollection of how her father wanted her to go with him to a neighbour's farm so he could "show me off." Lett also compared the chores that she had done at her billets' house, as opposed to those she was expected to do after her return to Guernsey, concluding that she had been "spoilt at home. I can't ever remember helping my mother, [except] only by choice."³¹⁴ Other children were welcomed back into their families without any fuss, as was the case with R. Duequemin, whose parents "just accepted" him.³¹⁵ Robins's parents resumed their parenting role in a way that was a turning point for him:

I came back hardened. Until one day, my parents sat me down and Mum said, "what is the problem? Why are you like you are?" I was taken back a bit. Eventually they got it out of me, what had happened [in his Aunt and Uncle's house during the war] and my father was furious. There was one incident, I got hit with an army belt on the back of the head by this... you know. I showed them the scar and Mum was in tears. She got on the phone to my Aunt Nell. You know, I felt awful sitting there. Mum told her what she thought of her. "I never want to speak to you again. You or your family." My Mum was really upset. And Dad said to me, "Now you've told us the truth?" I said, "Dad, every word. I was very unhappy." "Good God, no wonder," he said.

For Robins, the support he received from his parents brought them closer together and helped him bounce back from his wartime experience.

³¹²Letter to D. Henry from his father, 10 May 1945.

³¹³Brouard, Part I, 51:00.

³¹⁴Lett, Part I, 22:40.

³¹⁵R. Duquemin, 17:30.

Fully understanding postwar family dynamics will require further research. For example, how much inter-family friction was due to wartime separation and how much might have occurred in its absence?

In summary, Liberation resolved the stresses that had affected children who lived through the occupation and it ended the evacuees's exile. However, for forty-six percent of our interviewees, adjusting to family life became a new source of stress.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will describe the long-term effects of evacuation or occupation on social and psychological development, with a special focus on how the participants in our study evaluated such determinants within their own lives. We will also compare the Guernsey evacuation to the first wave of British evacuations.

Interviewees who lived under occupation believed that wartime stresses affected some of their life-long behaviors and attitudes. D. LePage suggested that experiencing shortages made him sensitive to waste:

I eat too much because I can't bear to throw it away; if it's on my plate, I am to eat it. It's silly little things, but you know, if you undid a parcel you kept the string. (Shirley: and we still do.) [laughter] It's all sorts of things – my family tells me I am just a hoarder – but I don't like to throw things away. I don't mind giving things away if someone's going to use them, but I don't like throwing things away.

S, Durman agreed:

As a housewife, I used to remember my Mum used to be able to make a meal out of nothing. I quite often say, "Oh well, that's a 'meal out of nothing'" - You know, out of whatever is around. And when I butter the bread, I still put loads of butter on, even now. Some things hold on.³¹⁶

Romeril believed that the shortages, and subsequent need to make-do and mend, made him "a more practical person."³¹⁷ This abhorrence of waste was also expressed by British evacuees but, interestingly, not by any of the evacuees interviewed for this study. Instead, they focused on themes of personal growth and relationship changes.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ D. LePage, Part I, 24:00; and S. Durman, Part I, 24:00.

³¹⁷ Romeril, Part II, 1:12:00.

³¹⁸ Summers, *When the Children came Home* 303 and Lyn Smith, *Young Voices*, 402.

The second most frequently mentioned effect of the occupation was that it revealed the importance of family. D. LePage expressed this notion from a child's point of view; he noted that remaining on the island during the war was "fortunate because [his] life continued, more or less, within the family as normal."³¹⁹ Hurford and Gaudion talked about the current emphasis that they place on family. Hurford said: "We value our families and we're rewarded. I thank my stars that I've got them next door."³²⁰ Gaudion agreed:

*My girls sort me out. I tell you straight, I hope when you get to my age, you can look back and say, "Aren't we well to have the children." ...without children there's no interest, no anything.*³²¹

A third, somewhat surprising effect of the war was that interviewees believed the experience of occupation had increased their awareness of the larger world. J. DeGaris explained how occupation expanded his worldview and brought distant events close to home:

*The war gave us some insight into what happens in the world because, in that day and age our parents didn't go away that often, maybe once in ten years kind of thing. But get another country here – it opened our eyes to say, "Hang on a minute, there's something else besides Guernsey."*³²²

The degree of importance individuals place on their occupation experiences varies widely. Marion Tostevin kept her occupation memories alive by working at the local museum:

³¹⁹ D. LePage, Part I, start.

³²⁰ Hurford, Part II, 17:00.

³²¹ Gaudion, Part I, 20:30.

³²² DeGaris, Part I, 43:40.

*I've kept up with the occupation all through my life, really. I worked at the Occupation Museum for over twenty years. All the tourists wanted to know what was what.*³²³

Hurford, on the other hand, seemed to view those years as just one episode in her long, eventful life and stated: "I'm amazed that people are still on about World War Two."³²⁴

Guernsey evacuees experienced the stress of being moved to a different environment. Their experiences differed depending on whether they were with parents, one parent, relatives or without parents entirely. The interviewees who had evacuated with both parents, S. Duquemin and M. Mabire, felt they had only gained from their experiences. Duquemin stated that without her wartime years in England:

*I would have missed out on some things...I don't know how to describe it, but you'd had an advantage over those who stayed [on Guernsey] really...I don't think it matters where you are when you are four, as long as you are with your parents.*³²⁵

Children who evacuated with one parent or who lived with extended family expressed a range of conclusions about their experiences. At one end of the spectrum, R. Mabire said that he "...had five happy years in Bradford with his mother and sisters."³²⁶ After Liberation, Mabire was extremely lonely but had a degree of "self-respect that kept [him] from asking for help."³²⁷ D. Henry believed that his wartime experiences were also generally happy ones. Upon his return to Guernsey, he adjusted easily and recalled the fun of playing with the equipment that the Germans had left behind.³²⁸ In contrast, R. Duquemin viewed his wartime experience of billeting with his aunt and uncle as unexceptional and he remembered only a handful of pleasant incidents. Some children

³²³ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 33:00.

³²⁴ Hurford, Part I, 24:00.

³²⁵ S. Duquemin, 29:00.

³²⁶ R. Mabire, Part I, 25:00.

³²⁷ Ibid., 25:00 and 36:00.

³²⁸ D. Henry, 29:00.

had miserable experiences. M. LePage evacuated with her mother and believed that she had such an unhappy time that she has “blocked a lot of it out,”³²⁹ which she believes has been a successful strategy for her. In contrast, Robins dealt with his grim time living with relatives by telling his parents how badly he had been treated. After they learned what had happened, he received their understanding and support.³³⁰ In addition, Robins later faced his aunt and uncle when his younger brother asked him to show him where Robins had lived during the war:

So I thought about it and we dropped in on Oldham. They'd moved from where they were but I found out where they were and we went...My uncle opened the door and I think he had the shock of his life because I was built much bigger and solid. I just said to my brother, “This is your Uncle [who I stayed] with during the war.” Anyway, we went in...I remember he said, “What do you do?” and I said, “I’m training to be a butcher. I’m in the slaughter house,” and his face changed. He was looking at me, but by then, you see, I had bigger arms than I have now...I know my Aunt was fidgety...There was a bit of feeling, but not too bad.³³¹

In this way, he put their bullying behind him. Robins believed that his billeting experiences also impacted the way that he parented his own children:

When I became a father I still had a temper for a while but I would never strike my children. I may have shouted at them to be quiet or whatever, but I never raised my hand to them at all. And as they got older, I mellowed and mellowed. My [billeting] experience taught me that I never wanted it to happen to anyone else.³³²

The interviewees who evacuated without either of their parents believed that their experiences significantly changed them. They acknowledged that they had lost part of their childhood and that bonds with their parents had weakened, but they felt they had

³²⁹ Marion Tostevin, Part I, 59:45.

³³⁰ Robins, Part I, 1:04:00.

³³¹ Robins, Part I, 22:00.

³³² Robins, Part I, 1:05:00.

made a net gain because they had become more independent and confident.³³³ Reddall concluded:

*I'm sure it's damaged all of us, but what would we have been like if we'd stayed [on Guernsey]? We wouldn't be the same people we are now. We would have been little, protected Guernsey women. I'd grown in all sorts of directions. Oh, it was marvelous for me to go away.*³³⁴

It is important to remember that the interviewees were judging their childhoods from the perspective of the early twenty-first century and that they were directing their comments to someone a generation younger than themselves. Their assessments demonstrated an awareness that ideas about childhood have changed significantly since the 1940s. Historians Bill Osgerby and Dominic Sandbrook note some of these changes: youth have become a distinct cultural group; the age of school-leaving has risen from fourteen to sixteen years; youth have required more post-secondary education in order to find employment (at least since the 1970s); and a societal trend towards providing more social welfare and less punishment has become evident in juvenile courts.³³⁵ In other words, childhood has been extended and softened since the interviewees were children. We can see evidence of optimistic thinking in the interviewees's judgment that shorter childhoods and stricter upbringings promoted strong character development. In the perspective of our study, such a view certainly qualifies as a protective internal asset.

Most narratives demonstrated that the evacuees tried to understand their memories of unpleasant billets. Lett, for example, had thought about the capricious nature of a billet that she had not remembered fondly:

³³³ P. Henry, 23:00. and Brouard, Part II, 50:50. and Lett, Part I, 1:01:00

³³⁴ Reddall, 40:00 and 1:04:00.

³³⁵ Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945*, 17-44, 220-224 ; and Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It so Good* (London: Abacus, 2005), xv-xxvi, 735-738.

*Mrs. Baker, she was terribly, terribly moody. The thing is, as you get older you realize that she could have been going through the menopause. Even, she might have been up at night taking [her husband, the doctor] out on a case. Her mood swings were terrible.*³³⁶

Perhaps finding justifications for her billet's behaviour lessened the intensity of Lett's painful memories and thus can be seen as a resilience strategy.

Another key strategy through which evacuees contextualized their wartime experiences was to compare their difficulties to the suffering of others. Comparisons cropped up in every interview and included stories of other children's billeting experiences, acknowledgment that others had been in greater danger from bombing, and a recognition that evacuees had not suffered from food shortages, at least in the same measure as their kinsmen on Guernsey. Interviewees who lived under occupation also used this technique. They noted how relatively fortunate they were to have stayed with their families during the war and they compared their shortages to those that slave workers and POWs had faced. Comparisons continue to this day. One interviewee likened the Guernsey evacuee experience to contemporary difficulties that children face: "We were not remarkable. We had one of the easier rides. Things of this kind are happening in Libya, in Syria, in Somalia as we sit here now. It is awful."³³⁷

There was unanimous agreement among all interviewees that the war had caused their parents a great deal of suffering. Interviewees spoke of the terrible decision parents were forced to make on 19 June 1940. LeNoury described it this way:

Suddenly there was terror I'm sure, for the parents, and the people who are easiest to move are the kids...Remember, this is just happening when your crop is coming into fruit, your livelihood for the year. In the newspaper [the

³³⁶ Lett, Part I, 17:00.

³³⁷ R. LeNoury, Part II, 4:30.

headline said] Go to the school tonight and register [if you want your children to evacuate]. You can't imagine it, can you?³³⁸

M. Mabire's parents chose to escape occupation in a relative's boat and she reflected upon their courage:

It was a great adventure for me. I didn't have the worry my Mum and Dad had, but when I arrived at their age, I thought, "My goodness! If I had to up-sticks and leave everything, and also, the responsibility of a child at that age and doing that kind of thing!"³³⁹

Reddall's memory of her father's actions on the day she evacuated with her school revealed her parents's state of shock during a chaotic period. While waiting to get on the boat, her father appeared:

He came up on his bike to give me a pound note, and he only said, "Look, we didn't give you any money." And then off he went again. [laughs while shaking her head in disbelief] It must have been very sad for my father: he'd been in the First World War when he was just eighteen and he had some strong feelings about the Germans.³⁴⁰

Interviewees who lived through the occupation also expressed sympathy for their parents's terrible dilemma:

It has had a lasting effect in that I cannot imagine my Mother and Father having to make a decision as to whether they'd send their five year old child away and not know whether they would ever be able to follow. I wouldn't want to make that decision. They knew the Germans were coming, so they obviously thought it was in the best interest to [send me]. As I explained at the start, it was purely by default that I was here, but they had made the decision to send me.³⁴¹

Participants also realized how painful it must have been for some parents to have endured their children's absence for five years. LeNoury believed that in his mother's case, "the

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:05.

³³⁹ M. Mabire, Part I, 15:40.

³⁴⁰ Reddall, 13:30.

³⁴¹ D. LePage, Part I, 21:00.

war and the business of her kids leaving her affected her mentally. I think it affected a number of [the adults] mentally, though I didn't realize it at the time."³⁴²

Interviewees also recognized the difficulties that parents faced upon their children's return. Brouard described the reunion of parents and children:

*It was a new situation for them and for us. They would have expected we would feel absolutely pleased [to be back]. They didn't know we'd enjoyed our time in England. But we were different. Can you imagine these children coming back that didn't even look like the children who went?*³⁴³

R. DeGaris' memory illustrated how parents had to begin their relationships with their children anew. DeGaris was nine when she returned to Guernsey with her mother. She described meeting her father, who had remained on the island during the war:

*He was a stranger, completely. All I could remember being told [about him] was that he'd taken us down to the boat in my grandparents' big old-fashioned red car... Once we came back I had to get to know him. It was a bit strange, really. A friend of ours, Margaret, who was away with her Mother during the war and her father was here. She said when she came back she resented her father a little bit because she had always shared her mother's bed and she thought, "Who is this man who has suddenly taken my place?" You know, it was understandable. I don't remember feeling anything like that but, of course I did have to get to know my dad, and his parents, and my grandmother, and all that. It took a little while; it was fine, but unfortunately my father died very soon after. Well, not straight away after, but quite soon.*³⁴⁴

Interviewees expressed sympathy for women who evacuated without their husbands and who, upon returning to Guernsey, had to rebuild their marriages. R. Mabire believed his mother had, from necessity, become more independent during her years in England and was apprehensive about returning to Guernsey. "Mother was a bit dubious about what she was going to find when she got back. I mean, we were separated for five years.

³⁴² R. LeNoury, Part III, 16:00.

³⁴³ Brouard, Part II, 54:00.

³⁴⁴ R. DeGaris in DeGaris, Part III, 4:00.

So we didn't come back perhaps as early as we could." Mabire believed that his parents "never got back on the same wavelength. The marriage was okay, it lasted", he said, but he did not think it was as happy as it had been before the war.³⁴⁵ In R. DeGaris's case, the years of separation and the premature death of her father meant that her mother "missed out on a lot of married life."³⁴⁶

In fact, returning to Guernsey had not been the first choice of every adult; S. Duquemin believed her "Dad would have been happy to have stayed in England."³⁴⁷ Most adults did return, however, and found that adjusting to life on Guernsey was sometimes difficult because they had grown and changed in response to the difficulties that they had faced. For example, in LeNoury's family, two of his uncles had evacuated with their families while his parents had sent their two older children to England while they and their youngest child lived under occupation. LeNoury realized that the war had affected the relationships between his father and those uncles:

*[Uncles] Sid and Eugene had found out that they could cope with change because they had had to, and they had done pretty well for two hick Guerns [sic], so had more confidence. Dad had developed good survival strategies so his family was fed, but these were not so easy to recount in the postwar world and he felt inadequate. And he had lost his children [during the war].*³⁴⁸

Several ex-evacuees said they felt guilty for the ways in which they treated their parents after Liberation. Brouard remembered:

*When I came back, I don't think I particularly liked my mother. I hurt her, there is no doubt in my mind, I hurt her. I mean, you shy away from somebody who wants to come and give you a kiss. Imagine!*³⁴⁹

³⁴⁵ R. Mabire, Part I, 31:00.

³⁴⁶ R. DeGaris in DeGaris, Part III, 4:00.

³⁴⁷ S. Duquemin, 29:00.

³⁴⁸ R LeNoury, email to author, 21 Feb 2012.

³⁴⁹ Brouard, Part II, 52:00.

Lett recalled her guilt over not understanding her father's need to reconnect with her. She said that the look of pain on his face, when she chose to stay with her mother rather than go out with him during her first week at home, was "something that really hurts, even to this day."³⁵⁰ Another form of rejection involved disinterest by evacuee children in their parents's stories about the war years. Reddall and Brouard agreed that they had been a poor audience:

*We got fed up hearing their wartime tales. We didn't have much patience. Oh the poor things, you know it was bad for them during the war, wasn't it. Much worse than for us [evacuees]. Oh, much, much worse.*³⁵¹

With time and reflection these individuals recognized the difficulties and losses their parents had endured. Was this understanding instrumental in the eventual empathy evacuees developed toward their parents? Would children's feelings towards their parents have been different if they had not understood the intense fear and panic that their parents felt on 20 June 1940, the losses parents experienced when they lived apart from their children, and the challenges parents faced in reuniting their families? In other words, is empathy an attitude that should be included among protective internal resilience assets?

Parents never openly discussed the emotional difficulties that arose once the evacuees returned. LeNoury described the state of affairs:

*Parents were busy trying to understand the new postwar situation, which they didn't particularly like. If there was discussion about the war, it was how we move onto the next state.*³⁵²

The children adopted this attitude of 'getting on with it'. In fact, a striking finding in this study is that no matter what individual circumstances had been, every interviewee felt

³⁵⁰ Lett, Part I, 31:00.

³⁵¹ Brouard and Reddaal in Reddall, 57:00.

³⁵² R. LeNoury, Part II, 11:00.

that to ‘get on with it’ had been an effective way for him or her to behave in the postwar years. Moreover, more than half of the evacuees indicated their disapproval of the fact that counseling has become commonplace:

*Nowadays, if there's anything that happens, they're going to do counseling. We didn't; we just lived through it and got on with it and that was it. And I don't think we're any worse off. In fact, I think we're better because our outlook was positive.*³⁵³

What might account for this attitude and its prevalence among the evacuees in this study?

First, this study has a sample size of only fifteen evacuees. A broader sample might have revealed different findings. Second, interviewees were speaking to someone a generation younger than themselves and they might have highlighted this subject because there have been vast changes towards the acceptance of professional counseling services during their lifetimes. In the interviewees's youth, people discussed emotional difficulties only within their family circle, if at all, while today the norm is to seek help from professional counselors.³⁵⁴ Third, ‘getting on with it’ was a successful resilience strategy for these individuals; each believed that they had gone on to lead successful lives. Fourth, these participants had not been offered counseling after their traumatic experience of evacuation. If they currently held the position that counseling is an effective coping strategy, then they would have to question their own degree of emotional healing.

Another reason for the prominence awarded to this anti-counseling attitude may derive

³⁵³ M. Mabire, Part I, 36:30.

³⁵⁴ Historian Bill Osgerby claims that reformist beliefs underpinned this cultural shift. With regard to children, reformists hold that the roots of juvenile crime were poverty and working-class culture, not personal wickedness. It followed that troubled youth could be helped by learning discipline and morals through youth groups, welfare services and counseling support. In the 1960s, governmental policy altered to provide funding for the professionalization of youth services and this philosophy continues to determine social policy. Source: Bill Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945*, (Malden: Blackwell Press, 1998), 137-140. Osgerby's thesis is complemented by the work of historian Ross McKibbin, who argues that the postwar Labour government directed more resources to social services as a result of its mandate for social democracy. Ross McKibbin, *Class and Culture: England 1918-1951* (New York: Oxford Press, 1998), 533.

from the fact that all of the participants of this study are at least seventy-five years old. Life expectancy for children born in the 1930s in the United Kingdom was between sixty to sixty-four years of age.³⁵⁵ If resilience is linked to longevity, as some scientists suggest,³⁵⁶ then this study's sample drew from a group of people likely to be particularly resilient. These are individuals for whom 'getting on with it' sufficed.

One also wonders whether Guernsey children's relationships with their parents after Liberation could have been improved by open acknowledgment of the difficult adjustments that everyone had to make. Would some form of counseling have helped bring families closer together, or was the damage irreparable, and if so, was the attitude of "getting on with life" the most productive way to behave? To answer this query, specific questions about the ways that parents reunited their families would have to be put to a broader sample of evacuees who had lived in England without one or both parents.

The findings of this case study agree with the empirical findings of Smith's 2007 study: the majority of Guernsey children felt that their wartime experiences had strengthened them in various ways and they were pleased to have lived through the war years, whether they had lived under occupation or been evacuated. The findings also agree with those of other projects employing Resilience theory, as mentioned in Chapter One: Guernsey children coped in the short-term by accepting the stressors they could not change and by drawing on internal and external protective factors for support. There were no significant resilience differences between genders. Guernsey evacuees demonstrated effective long-term responses to wartime stressors—responses that ranged from, at one

³⁵⁵ Joe Hicks and Grahame Allen, "Trends in UK Statistics since 1900" *House of Commons Library Research Paper*, 21 December, 1999.

³⁵⁶ Ke Shen and Yi Zeng, "The Association between Resilience and Survival among Chinese Elderly" in *Demographic Research*, Vol. 23, Article 5 (July, 2010), 105-116. And Martin, da Rosa, Siegler, Davey, MacDonald and Poon, "Personality and Longevity: Findings from the Georgia Centenarian Study" in *Age*, Vol. 28 (2006), 343-352.

end, blocking out memories, to the other extreme of actively reviving the experience by working at a local occupation museum. Interviewees used their memories to share their experiences, to explain how they coped and to find meaning in this period of their lives.

Since completing the research for this thesis, I have wondered how other aspects of wartime events might have affected children's resilience. Was their awareness that others had experienced equal or worse trauma helpful in promoting resilience? For example, Guernsey evacuees saw many hundreds of refugees in Weymouth when they first arrived in England. If one sees that others are having the same or worse difficulties, does this help a person to adopt a more positive attitude about one's own situation? The findings from this study suggest that knowing others shared the same traumatic experience helped individuals to cope. Findings also suggest that when children experience a difficult situation on their own, especially one they believe must be kept a secret, they are unable to draw on external supports, and as a result they become less resilient. Robins's experience was a case in point; while he remained silent about his relatives's cruelty he was unhappy, but once he spoke with his parents and received their support, he lost his 'hardness' and bounced back. This is not to say that Robins was unaffected by his evacuee years. Indeed, he noted that because of his maltreatment he resolved to never hit his own children.

A second question is whether or not it was beneficial for Guernsey evacuees without their parents to have been almost completely cut off from their families, however paradoxical this may appear. Did the absence of contact between children and their mothers and fathers encourage those individuals to actively draw upon their internal assets and external supports? A review of this study's interviews shows that none of the

interviewees mentioned feeling homesick and all of them discussed the many ways in which they had coped with their new situations. In their words, they forgot about Guernsey and got on with their lives. This is not to claim that it was psychologically better for evacuee children to be completely cut off from their parents. Smith's Guernsey study has shown that long-term separation from parents could damage the child-parent relationship. A second caution is that this study mainly represents children who were younger than twelve years of age at the time of evacuation. Older children may have remembered and missed their parents for a comparatively longer time. Evidence for this possibility is suggested by Lett's belief that her older sister felt homesick and hoped that their family would be reunited in England.³⁵⁷ Can the studies of English evacuees shed light on whether age played a significant role in children's adjustment to evacuation? According to the 1941 Cambridge Evacuation Survey, which assessed reasons unaccompanied evacuees returned home, almost twice the number of children younger than twelve years of age did not adjust to being evacuated.³⁵⁸ These findings suggest that being cut off from parental contact helped younger Guernsey children because thinking only about their current situation allowed them to adapt more readily.

The question of whether or not children separated from their parents adjusted more easily to billeting situations should also take into consideration the data from a second group of English evacuees. This group was created after June 1940, when the fall

³⁵⁷ Lett, Part I, 43:00.

³⁵⁸ Isaacs, *Cambridge Evacuation Survey*, 220-221. The effect of parental visits was debated, even at that time. The Cambridge Evacuation Survey declared that regular visits helped children to adjust to their foster homes; conversely, a popular account of evacuation by Strachey held that parental visits sparked fresh waves of homesickness. See, Mrs. St. Loe Strachey, *Borrowed Children: A Popular Account of some Evacuation Problems and their Remedies* (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1940), 28.

of France raised the fear that England would be invaded.³⁵⁹ The threat of invasion prompted a governmental program called the Children's Overseas Reception Scheme (CORB). This project was authorized to send children to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Southern Rhodesia, and South Africa.³⁶⁰ During the summer and early fall of 1940, those countries welcomed 2,664 'seavac' children and their escorts. Once overseas, the program was run by local authorities who organized unpaid volunteer host families to take in evacuees for the duration of the war.³⁶¹ 'Seavac' children, unlike their Guernsey and English counterparts, did not have the support of their teachers and classmates, and consequently they likely faced a more difficult adjustment period. They had to draw most of their external support from their billets and from new friends because they were sent abroad as individuals, not as part of school groups. Once overseas, they were billeted with host families, not boarded in groups, though in some cases siblings were evacuated together and had the potential support of their brothers or sisters. 'Seavacs', like the Guernsey evacuees, were evacuated for a span of at least five years, and in some cases for six years of more,³⁶² but they differed in that they could correspond freely with their parents. How did unlimited correspondence affect these children's adjustment to their new situation? A letter from a host mother to the parents of her evacuee, published in 1942, describes a boy's adjustment to Canada after two month's presence in the country. The billet notes: "I do hope he will not get homesick. The only time he might feel a wee

³⁵⁹ Summers, *When the Children Came Home*, xii. It also led to a second internal wave of evacuation; 200,000 people were moved from coastal towns.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 123, 137; and Jean Lorimer, *Pilgrim Children* (London: Fredrick Muller, 1942), 4-8. Martin Parsons, *I'll Take That One* (Peterborough: Beckett Karlson Ltd., 1998), 158, 170.

³⁶¹ The CORB program came to an abrupt end on 3 October 1940 after a ship that was taking ninety evacuees to Canada, the *SS City of Benares*, was torpedoed and sank on 17 September 1940, killing seventy-seven of the ninety children aboard. Parsons, *I'll Take That One*, 170.

³⁶² Parsons, *I'll Take That One*, 182.

bit that way is when he gets your letters.”³⁶³ Although this is a single document, it implies that in this case at least, letters between an evacuee and his parents were a mixed blessing: they provided the child with external emotional support, but also reminded him of his parents’s absence and, in the short-term, possibly hindered adjustment to a new life overseas. In the long-term, though, such letters may have helped maintain the parent-child bond; this was a vital concern because the program provided for children’s return home at the end of the war.³⁶⁴

A comparison of the Guernsey evacuees to the first wave of English evacuees reveals other factors that promoted an acceptance of evacuation. First, English evacuations occurred during the ‘Phoney War’ period, when English cities did not experience the bombing raids that had been predicted. Consequently, many parents and billets questioned the need for evacuation from the cities.³⁶⁵ At the same time, parents of evacuees resented the payments they were expected to make towards their children’s upkeep in their foster homes. By January 1940, forty-five percent of unaccompanied English evacuees had returned to their homes.³⁶⁶ A comparison between English and Guernsey evacuees thus suggests that children’s acceptance of evacuation occurred more readily because contact with parents was minimized, there was no opportunity to go home, there was an urgent need to provide safety for children and the evacuees’s families did not have to bear extra costs.

³⁶³ Lorimer, *Pilgrim Children*, 103.

³⁶⁴ The work of Parsons and Lyn Smith, however, shows that postwar adjustment to family life was difficult for the ‘Seavacs,’ despite all the letters. Many children and parents did not recognize each other and the youth had taken on the accent and culture of their host countries. Parsons, *I’ll Take That One*, 182. Lyn Smith, *Young Voices: British Children Remember the Second World War* (London: Viking Books, 2007), 379.

³⁶⁵ Julie Summers, *When the Children Came Home* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 23. It should also be mentioned that this comparison describes only the first wave of evacuation in England.

³⁶⁶ Isaacs, *Cambridge Evacuation Survey*, 1. Forty-three percent of unaccompanied children and eighty-seven percent of the total number of evacuees had returned home within 4 months. Parsons, *I’ll Take that One*, 111.

The presence of caring adults may also have played a role in the degree to which the children accepted evacuation. Were the Guernsey evacuees given more support than their English counterparts during the first wave of evacuation? Relations between evacuees and their billets were so varied that it is difficult to find a ‘norm’,³⁶⁷ yet according to the Mass Observation data, the majority of evacuees made their billets happy and the majority of children “enjoyed being evacuated”.³⁶⁸ It is likely, then, that most of the English evacuees gained some sense of emotional support from their billets.

Teachers were the second group of adults who potentially played a significant role in the lives of evacuees. Perhaps, compared to the Guernsey teachers, English educators were less supportive of their charges? This does not appear to be the case: most teachers assumed more pastoral responsibilities for their students. These extra duties included working through holidays, organizing activities to keep children busy beyond regular school hours, assessing and reporting on which children needed clothes, writing letters to anxious parents, and following up with foster parents. Teachers’s testimony also reveals the belief that evacuation created a bond between themselves and their students.³⁶⁹ Did the unaccompanied evacuees also feel this bond? To answer this question, I compiled comments from five books that quote children’s testimony. There was a noticeable difference between how the unaccompanied Guernsey evacuees and their English counterparts described their teachers.³⁷⁰ Within the Guernsey group, five of the seven individuals described teachers in affectionate terms. For example, several had called one

³⁶⁷ Parsons, *I’ll Take That One*, 247.

³⁶⁸ Julie Summers, *When the Children Came Home* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 14.

³⁶⁹ Parsons, *I’ll Take That One*, 70, 83, 88, 130. Peter Cunningham and Philip Gardner, “Oral History and Teachers’s Professional Practice: a Wartime Turning Point?” *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 1997), 334,335. Calder, *People’s War*, 49.

³⁷⁰ The sources used to compile unaccompanied English evacuees oral testimony were: Susan Soyinka’s *From East End to Land’s End*, Summers’s *When the Children Came Home*, Parsons’s *I’ll Take that One*, Goodman’s *Children of War* and Lyn Smith’s *Young Voices*.

of their teachers ‘Auntie’, one called the teachers ‘saints,’ and another fondly remembered how she had lived with her teachers during holidays. Of the forty remarks they made about support from adults, 18% praised teachers and 23% described the teacher’s pastoral duties. No one criticized a teacher. These comments were all spontaneous; the interview questions sheet prompted interviewees to describe their billets and families, but did not list any questions about teachers.³⁷¹ In contrast, testimony in five books about English evacuees includes eighty-one comments about support from adults, and only 10% of these references described teachers in affectionate terms. A further 10% mentioned teachers’s expanded duties or quality of education during the war. There was also mention of four instances in which a teacher did not help a child in distress.³⁷² This evidence suggests that evacuees found emotional support from a variety of adults and it conveys the impression that unaccompanied Guernsey evacuees depended upon the emotional support of their teachers to a greater degree than did their English counterparts. However, before any definitive conclusion can be drawn, a review of the full transcripts of English evacuee interviews should be carried out so that we can identify and categorize every instance in which adult support—or lack thereof—is mentioned. After all, a book can present only a fraction of the testimony gathered as part of a research process, and none of the books used for this comparison explored the particular question of where children found emotional support while undergoing evacuation.

Finally, comparisons of the resilience of other groups of children who experienced evacuation or occupation could improve our understanding of the situations

³⁷¹ The other adults mentioned were as follows: 40% positive comments about billets, 10% praised extended families, 7.5% noted receiving donations from overseas, 2.5% remembered local volunteers’ help.

³⁷² The other adults mentioned were as follows: 28% praised billets, 25% expressed gratitude to the villagers in the reception area, 15% mentioned support from their parents and 1% mentioned help they received from a billeting officer.

that children faced during World War Two. Were English evacuees as resilient as Guernsey evacuees? In 2011, historian Julie Summers surveyed English evacuees memoirs archived at Reading University. She compared the number of individuals who had experienced traumatic and damaging experiences to the number who had judged their time to have been positive, even if they had experienced homesickness, loneliness or difficulties readjusting to family life after the war. She found that over 85% of evacuees felt the experience had “a positive effect on their subsequent lives.”³⁷³ In other words, like the Guernsey evacuees, the majority of English evacuees were resilient.

³⁷³ Summers, *When the Children Came Home*, xv.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Before the war:

Can you tell me about your family? For example, what were your parents's names, occupations?

Can you describe what it was like to live in Guernsey before the war?

How old were you in June 1940?

How was it decided whether you stayed on the island or were evacuated?

Was the same decision made for all of your siblings?

For those who lived on Guernsey during the occupation:

What were the changes you noticed when the Germans arrived?

Were you in school during this time? If so, can you describe your schooling to me?

What changes did you notice over the course of the occupation?

What problems did occupation bring to your life? For example, was curfew an issue?

Was food an issue?

Were there changes that occurred in your family as a result of the occupation?

What was it like when the evacuees returned to the island?

For those who were evacuated:

Can you describe your trip to England and the first few days there?

What do you remember of your billets?

Were you billeted with other Guernsey children? If so, who? Did this change?

How did you communicate with your family during this time?

Did you have any extended family or other connections with people who were in Britain?

Were you aware of the war? (For example did you experience bombing or food shortages?)

How would you describe your return to Guernsey?

Did you keep in touch with your billets after the war?

Once the war was over:

What were the adjustments people had to make to return to 'normal' life?

Do you believe that your experience during WWII affected your subsequent life? Your health?

Do you think that being evacuated or living through the occupation really made any difference to individuals?

Appendix B: Script for Recruitment

Thank you for your interest in this project. Let me tell you more about it so that you can decide whether or not to participate.

I'll tell you a little about me first. As you may know I am Ray Le Noury's daughter and Ethel Brouard's niece. I have grown up in Canada. Two years ago, I returned to school to study History after a twenty-year career as a Nurse. Currently, I am a student at the University of Victoria and this project will form the basis of my research so I can write my Master's Thesis. My goal is to understand how World War II was experienced by Guernsey children and how these experiences affected their lives afterward. I have some understanding of the subject from talking with my Dad about it over the years, but I want to gather more people's perspectives. My study of books written on this subject revealed that there is almost nothing written about the children's experiences.

I want to stress that your involvement in this project is entirely voluntary. In no way should your pre-existing relationship with my Aunt or Father influence your decision to be interviewed. You are under no obligation to participate. People who participate in this project are agreeing to be interviewed by me. The length of the interview will be up to you. If you discover that you have more you would like to tell me beyond our first meeting, then I will gladly return to continue our interview. The interviews will be taped so that I can refer to them during the writing of my thesis. At the end of the interview we will go through a consent form that outlines how you permit me to use the recorded interview. I will also provide you with a CD copy of the interview, should you wish it.

At the end of my project, I would like to store the interview collection in the University of Victoria's Special Collections Library so that the recordings are properly preserved. This will allow other scholars in the future to listen to and learn from you. If there is any part of the interview that you wish to be kept private, we can discuss how that can be done. For example, access to your recording could be denied for a certain length of time.

If at any time you would like to withdraw from the project you may do so, without having to give a reason. There will be no penalties or recriminations. Also, if there are particular topics you would rather not discuss, that is entirely your choice and I will not press you.

I will provide you with a list of general questions that reflect the topics I am wondering about. These questions are intended as a general guide only. If you think of other topics I should explore, please tell me.

If you are willing to be interviewed, please let me know when you are able to meet with me. We can meet where ever you prefer. I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,
Kim Madsen

Appendix C: Guernsey Schools in England

School	Description	Ship	Children	Schools's Locations in England	
Amherst Mr. C. Rawlinson HM	Boys' school 6-14 yrs.		Ray Mabire, 10 yr (6 weeks with school, then to Bradford with his Mother)	<u>Glasgow</u> , Scotland Billeted, by Sept '41- only 20 boys at school	
Castel Miss Ninnim, Miss Duchemin, Le Guet – affiliated with Castel School	Primary, 6-14 yrs old About 300-400 children Kindergarten 4-5 yr olds	<i>The Viking</i>	Eth Brouard (LeNoury), 9 yr Ray LeNoury, 6 yr Gerald Durman, 7 yr Ray Duquemin, 6 yr Olive Lett (LePrevost), 6 yr	Split up between local Cheshire village schools: <u>Pickmere</u> (billeted) (Miss Cawley HM, Wincham school), <u>Warberton</u> , (billeted) <u>Ollerton</u> (100 boarded, by '45 only 2 students)	
Intermediate Boys' Miss Jones, Mr. Fulford (Fluffy), Mr C LePellicier, Mr Ross	Fees paid, ages, prep for industry & commerce, 11-16, many scholarships	<i>Batavier IV</i>	Eddie Robins, 6 yr	<u>Oldham</u> : juniors at Hollins School; seniors at Hulme (billeted) -Photo of school taken July 21, 1944 -R LeNoury joined in '43	School remained a unit throughout the war
Intermediate Girls' Miss Roughton	Same as above	<i>Batavier IV</i>	Patricia Henry(LeGallier), 10yr Margery Tostevin (Brehaut), 9	<u>Rochdale</u> Juniors + seniors boarded, separate ends of town x 6 mo, then billeted → <u>Greenfields</u> (billeted)	School remained a unit throughout the war
Ladies' College Miss Ellershaw HM, Miss Mellish, Miss Bateson	Fee paying, prep for university & professions, 11-18 yrs, few scholarships (about 5/year)	<i>Batavier IV</i> (100 girls) + a second group evacuated 20 June during the night	Ruth Reddall (Gaudion), 12 yr	<u>Oldham</u> , Lancashire: King Street Baptist Sunday School, (boarded) → <u>Great Hucklow</u> , Derbyshire: Holiday Homes (boarded at school) → <u>Denbigh</u> , Wales: joined Howell School, 63 girls + 4 staff (billeted) Brouard joined in '43 → returned to Guernsey on the Hantonia (55 girls + R. DeGaris)	School remained a unit throughout the war
Elizabeth College Mrs. Blackman/more Matron, (from D Henry's interview)	Fee paying, boys' school, 11-18 yrs., few scholarships (about 5/year)	<i>Batavier IV</i>		<u>Oldham</u> , Lancashire → <u>Great Hucklow</u> , Derbyshire: Hangar of gliding club (boarded) → seniors to Buxton, in a large house called Whitehall → juniors to Hucklow, in the holiday homes (boarded) D. Henry joined school in '43	School remained a unit throughout the war

Appendix D: Interviewees's Wartime Domiciles and Vital Statistics

Name	Age June 1940	Domicile during WWII	Vital Statistics
Note: all participants live in their own homes and all live on Guernsey except where stated			
Brouard, Eth (LeNoury)	9	Evacuated with school, three billets	2 siblings, widow, sibling of R LeNoury, 3 children
Durman, Gerald	8	Evacuated with school, two billets	1 sibling, married to S Durman, 3 children
Henry, Patricia (LeGallezss)	10	Evacuated with school, boarded then one billet	2 siblings, married to D Henry, 2 children
LeNoury, Ray	6	Evacuated with school, three billets	2 siblings, sibling of E Brouard, married, domicile Canada, 3 children
Lett, Olive (LePrevost)	6	Evacuated with school, four billets	1 sibling, widow
Reddall, Ruth (Gaudion)	12	Evacuated with school, two billets	3 siblings, sibling of K Gaudion, married, 2 children
Tostevin, Margery (Brehaut)	9	Evacuated with school, boarded, three billets	/7
		Only child, widow, 2 children	
Duquemin, Ray	6	Evacuated with school, second billet was Aunt & Uncle in Doncaster so Ray left the Guernsey school	2 siblings, married 2 children, 2nd marriage to S Duquemin X 30 yrs
Robins, Eddie	6	Evacuated with school, billeted with relatives in Oldham so Eddie remained with Guernsey school	/2
		An only child in 1940, Married, 2 children	
Duquemin, Sheila(LeNoury)	4	Evacuated with both parents, Maltby & Doncaster	Married 2 children, Second marriage to R Duqemin x 30yrs
Mabire, Mary (Robilliard)	5	Evacuated with both parents, Huddersfied & Exeter	/2
		Married to R Mabire, 1 child	
DeGaris, Rosemary (LePage)	4	Evacuated with Mother, attended an English school	An only child, Married to J DeGaris, 2 children
Henry, David	10	Evacuated with Mother, lived in Darby, Oldham then boarded at Elizabeth college '43-'45	An only child, married to P Henry, 2 children
LePage, Marion (Agnes)	5	Evacuated with Mother, lived in Wakefield	An only child in 1940, married to D LePage, 2 children
Mabire, Ray	10	Evacuated with school then left Guernsey school to live with Mother, sisters & cousin in Bradford	/4
		2 siblings, married to M Mabire, 1 child	
DeGaris, John	5	Missed last boat, lived in Castel parish (on a farm)	1 sibling, married to R DeGaris, 2 children
Durman, Shirley (Darville)	5	Missed last boat, lived in St. Peter Port (town)	1 sibling, married to G Durman, 3 children
Hurford, Doreen (Allett)	11	Missed last boat, lived in Castel parish (country)	An only child?, widow, 2 children
LePage, Derek	5	Missed last boat, lived in Castel parish (country)	/4
		An only child, married to M LePage, 2 children	
Falla, Roy	16	Planned to stay	1 sibling, widower, researcher does not know more
Gaudion, Ken	15	Planned to stay, Castel parish (country)	3 siblings, brother to Reddall, married, 2 children
LeNoury, Olive (LeGallez)	1	Unknown	1 sibling, widow of LeNoury's brother, 3 children
Tostevin, Marion(LeTissier)	10	Planned to stay	An only child, Widow, 3 children
Romeril, John	9	Planned to stay, St. Sampson's parish (country)	/5
		British, father a Methodist minister in Guernsey. Married, 4 children, domicile Canada	

Appendix E: Bibliography of Interviews

Interviewee	Date	Place of Interview	Comments/Length of recording
Reddall, Ruth	19/09/2011	Reddall's house	E. Brouard & T. Reddall (husband) present/ Length = 1hour, 45minutes
DeGaris, John & Rosemary LeNoury, Olive	20/09/2011	O. LeNoury's house	E. Brouard, O. LeNoury (friend) and R. DeGaris (wife) present and interviewed afterwards/ Part I = 1 hour, 19 min. Pt II = 7 min. Pt III = 7 min.
Duquemin, Ray and Sheila	21/09/2011	Duquemin's house	E. Brouard present/ 51 min.
Henry, David	22/09/2011	Henry's house	P. Henry (wife) and A. Henry (daughter-in-law) present/ 51 min.
LePage, Derek & Marion Durman, Gerald & Shirley	23/09/2011	LePage's house	E. Brouard present / Part I = 1 hour, 29 min. Part II = 1 min.
Tostevin, Margery	24/09/2011	Tostevin's house	E. Brouard present. Batteries died during interview/ Part I = 11 min. Part II = 2 min.
Robins, Eddie	26/09/2011	Robin's house	Part I = 1 hour, 12 min. Part II = 36 min.
Tostevin, Marion	26/09/2011	Brouard's house	E. Brouard present for some of interview / Part I = 50 min. Part II = 6 min.
Mabire, Ray & Mary	27/09/2011	Mabire's house	E. Brouard present / Part I = 47 min. Part II = 11 min.
Gaudion, Ken	28/09/2011	Gaudion's house	E. Brouard present / Part I = 1 hour, 27 min. Part II = 37 min. (on 4 Oct./11)
Henry, Patricia	28/09/2011	Henry's house	On patio, near roadside = 32 min.
Hurford, Doreen	30/09/2011	Hurford's house	E. Brouard present, recorder not working properly/ Part I = 25 min. Part II = 18 min.
Lett, Olive	30/09/2011	Brouard's house	E. Brouard present / Part I = 1 hour, 6 min. Pt II = 7 min. Pt III = 3 min.
Brouard, Eth	3/10/2011	Brouard's house	Part I A= 5 min. B= 4 min. C=20 min. D= 8 min. Part II = 1 hour, 8 min.
LeNoury, Ray	3/08/2011	LeNoury's house	Part I = 37 min. Part II = 35 min. Part III = 37 min.
Romeril, John	29/03/2012	Romeril's house	Part I = 1 hour, 12 min. Part II = 1 hour, 27 min.
Falla, Roy	4/10/2011	Hurford's house	E. Brouard, D. Hurford present/ Spontaneous interview and short video