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## OCCUPIED "DOMINIONS"

### The Channel Islands Are Near To France But Very Close To England

THE British commando raid on Sark, with its repercussion of reprisals against prisoners-of-war, has brought the Channel Islands into the news. Here are some notes about them by a New Zealand resident who went to school there.

SAY "Channel Islands" to a New Zealander, and he will say "Jersey cattle". Say "New Zealand" to a Jerseyman, and he may say "there's some fine herds of Jerseys over there". But it's just as likely he will say "kiwis".

Now cows are more important to the Channel Islands than kiwis are to New Zealand, but they are not the main thing. The important things are, or rather were, visitors and residents, in the invisible exports class, and potatoes and tomatoes in the extremely visible exports class, and also flowers. From these things there resulted a large additional summer population, the visitors and the agricultural workers. The English labourers helped to lift the early new potatoes for the English market, and helped to plant out the young tomato plants in their place. This rather astonishing two-crop-a-year "rotation", by the way, depended on just one fertiliser, seaweed.

The visitors spent their fortnights with pay in charabancs and on cliffs and beaches, getting themselves horribly sunburnt, engaged to be married, and so on. The islanders got the impression that this section of the English were much like the puffins, shags and gulls that also flew in to the rocky shores for their limited mating seasons.

#### Which Is The Mainland?

As for the islanders themselves, all the published authorities agree that they are more French than English. This only proves that all the published authorities are Englishmen who have never seen a Frenchman. When a Jerseyman, for example, says "Have you heard what they're doing on the Mainland"? a hearer might think he referred to France and the continent of Europe, which he can see as plainly as this print 14 miles to his eastward. But not at all. The islander's Mainland is not the land-mass which half surrounds him, but a certain island nearly a hundred miles away over the horizon to his northward. The same island which the Germans now call "that aircraft-carrier" and which we call "Home".

To-day the Germans are in France, and therefore, by military and geographical logic, in the Channel Islands also. But as far as the islanders are concerned, these more-French-than-English islanders, the Germans have never been on the Mainland.

When the Nazis came to the surrounding French coasts, a desperate effort was made to get away the potato crop and many of the visiting people to England. Some of the numerous retired people living in the islands, the residents, just locked up their houses and left by potato-boat too. It looked then as though they would get to England just in time to see an invasion there. In the islands there remained the native born, and many of the residents. That makes an elderly population, as the high rate of emigration of young people, and especially of young men, was a notable feature of island life. There remained also some of the English farm workers, and some of the holiday visitors. These would all be people of working age, and they are the people now called upon by the Nazis to go to work in Germany. The report brought back by the recent commando raid on Sark is that 900 have gone already, from Guernsey alone.

#### A Basic Sort of Democracy

The Nazis have no doubt tried to play up the island nationalisms, but that will not stop them from putting the island-born into forced labour in the Reich if they find they have need of them. Such labour would come harder to the islanders than to any other people in Western Europe, for island life has a basic sort of democracy which keeps the state apparatus at a minimum. The majority of the police were the islanders' friends and neighbours, elected and unpaid. Such honorary officials also collected the parish rates, inspected the potato crops for signs of that threatened invader the Colorado beetle, and regulated the collection of seaweed from

(Continued on next page)



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