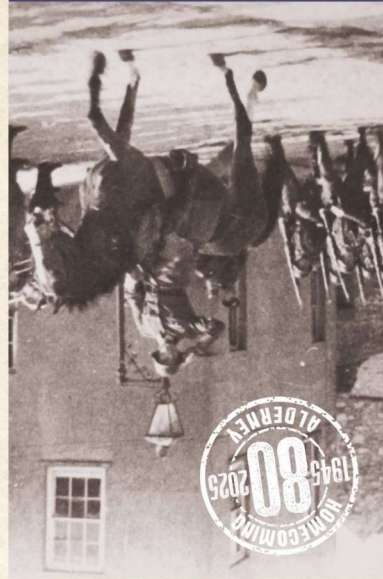


Operation Trail

IIWM



GLOSSARY

Battery: A group of guns of similar calibre

Bunker: Any form of hardened defence position

Casemate: An enclosed concrete gun position

Commandant: Senior officer in charge

Fortress Standard: Two metres minimum reinforced concrete

Field Order Standard: Lighter concrete construction

Organisation Todt (OT): German paramilitary construction force

Strongpoint: A concentration of defence works

Front cover: German troops parade in Marais Square shortly after arriving to occupy the island.

Please take care when using this guide. Access to some of the sites and structures can be dangerous and in some cases not permitted. The States of Alderney can accept no liability for any injury.

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63 INNER HARBOUR Known originally as Little Crabby harbour, and constructed between 1847 and 1849, the eastern quay was added by the Germans. Other German defences include the tank-turret bunker at the entrance.

64 FORT GROSNEZ This Victorian fort was the first to be completed in 1852. In view of its strategic location beside the harbour, the Germans turned it into a strongpoint with two 10.5cm guns, six 2cm anti-aircraft guns, searchlights and machine gun positions.

65 HOMECOMING On 15 December 1945, seven months after the surrender of Alderney - and not until the island had been cleared of mines and properties restored to a habitable state - Braye Harbour welcomed the first group of islanders to return home.

66 PEACEHAVEN Alderney was finally surrendered by the Germans on 16 May 1945, seven days after the liberation of Guernsey and Jersey. The British liberation Force 135 landed at Braye Harbour before accepting the surrender at the former German Naval Officers' Mess. This now pink house was later renamed Peacehaven.

67 YORK HILL Although currently overgrown, most of the bunkers and weapon positions in this German strongpoint, together with a battery of 3.7cm anti-aircraft gun emplacements can still be seen.

68 VAL DES PORTES This large house became the headquarters of the German officer corps and was used as their mess where they could relax off duty.

69 THE VICTORIA This was the communal kitchen where meals were cooked for the civilian employees, the majority of whom were from Guernsey and Jersey, and who were billeted in various houses in St Anne.

70 ST ANNE'S CHURCH The church bells, which rang out shortly after dawn on Sunday 23 June 1940, to let islanders know that ships had arrived to evacuate them, were sent by the Germans to Cherbourg; they were later recovered and returned after the war. In the meantime, the Germans used the church as a wine cellar.

71 SAPPER ONIONS' GRAVE (Churchyard) The only British WWII grave on the Island: Sapper G. E. Onions aged 23, of the Royal Engineers, was killed lifting German mines in June 1945. Over 30,000 mines were lifted before the evacuated population returned home in December 1945.

72 PRISON Built in 1850 at the height of the Victorian harbour works, the surviving jail at the rear of the Court House was used by the Germans for their own military prison. (No public access)

73 EVACUATION PLAQUE (Court House) This plaque replicates the wording used on the public notice pinned to the door of the Court prior to the evacuation on the morning of 23 June 1940.

74 GERMAN PAY OFFICE This corner building housed the administrative office at which the German forces were able to draw their pay, by producing their identity papers.

75 FORMER LLOYDS BANK This prominent building at the top of Victoria Street was the headquarters of the German Field Command which dealt with the administration of the island's affairs from the summer of 1941.

76 THE JUBILEE This former Victorian poorhouse served a number of purposes during the German Occupation, including temporary offices for the military police and latterly as accommodation for employed workers enlisted from Jersey and Guernsey.

77 'THE RINK' Originally built as the Presbyterian Church and subsequently converted to a cinema, this was used by the Germans and updated to act as the garrison cinema. The building has since been demolished.

78 ISLAND HALL Built in the 1760s as the original home of the Le Mesurier family, soon becoming Government House, it was used by the Germans as the 'Soldatenheim' - the off-duty recreation centre for all military personnel of lower ranks.

47 SITE OF LAGER SYLT Constructed in 1942 by the Organisation Todt as one of four Nazi forced labour camps, it was handed over to SS Construction Brigade I in March 1943, becoming the only German concentration camp on British soil until June 1944.

48 TELEGRAPH TOWER Constructed during the Napoleonic Wars to communicate with Sark by semaphore, the Germans inserted a new reinforced concrete roof to mount an anti-aircraft gun which was part of an adjoining battery. (Open daily 10-4)

49 OBSERVATION POST One of the early concrete observation posts, built to provide forward surveillance for the army coastal artillery batteries in the centre of the island, survives at the edge of the cliff.

50 ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY Three circular concrete bases mark the location of this light battery for 2cm guns near the cliff edge. A number of field order positions provided for local defence.

51 ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY This adjoining anti-aircraft battery, similarly of three 2cm gun positions, can be easily located while its surrounding trenches and personnel shelters forming infantry defences are harder to see among the brambles.

52 COAST ARTILLERY BATTERY The four concrete fortress standard emplacements for the 15cm guns are the most prominent features of this naval battery. Associated works include the battery command post, two principal ammunition bunkers, five personnel shelters and a generator bunker.

53 ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY The path at the top of the Zig-Zag passes the site of one of the four heavy 8.8cm anti-aircraft batteries, poorly built to field order standard. Remains of these positions, including a radar, can be still identified amongst the brambles.

54 FORT CLONQUE The most westerly of the Victorian forts, completed in 1855, was occupied by the Germans. A casemate for a 10.5cm coast defence gun was ingeniously inserted into the west face of the fort. (PRIVATE No public access)

55 CLONQUE BAY Two prominent searchlight bunkers overlook the bay, while the casemates of two 10.5cm coast defence guns and two 7.5cm anti-tank guns can be seen below the outer walls of Fort Tourgis.

56 LES CASQUETS This historic Lighthouse, first built in 1724, was the scene of an early British Commando raid in September 1942, when a party of twelve men captured and removed the entire German crew along with their radio equipment.

57 BURHOU Five days after the Casquets raid, another party of twelve British Commandos landed on this barren islet, withdrawing before daylight. At other times the Germans occasionally fired on Burhou, from Alderney, during artillery practice.

58 FORT TOURGIS The second largest Victorian fort, also completed in 1855, contained within its walls a light 2cm anti-aircraft battery of three guns and the original barracks which provided accommodation for the German troops manning the local defences.

59 PLATTE SALINE The ruins of this former Victorian five-gun battery was not occupied by the Germans, but the open area behind was extensively excavated for sand and gravel by the Organisation Todt before being heavily mined and obstructed.

60 SITE OF LAGER HELGOLAND Constructed to house the forced labour brought to the island to construct the fortifications in 1942 by the Organisation Todt, this camp held up to 1,500 workers under extremely harsh conditions. It was the first of the four camps to be evacuated when the workers were withdrawn in late 1943 to other priority construction sites on the Continent.

61 ANTI-TANK WALL The remains of a concrete anti-tank wall can be seen running between Platte Saline Battery and Fort Doyle. The beach in front was heavily obstructed with anti-landing obstacles.

62 FORT DOYLE This Victorian fort was completed in 1854 and was occupied by the Germans as an infantry defence position reinforced by two anti-tank guns, a tank turret and a mortar to defend the adjacent beaches. To the rear, a complete trench system has survived including several bunkers and a personnel shelter. (Open 10-4)

32 ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY This area contains one of the four 8.8cm heavy anti-aircraft batteries. Six poorly built emplacements for these guns can be found amongst the brambles along with support installations.

33 ESSEX HOUSE A new private house now stands on the site of the former headquarters of the Organisation Todt, responsible for overseeing the construction of the island's fortifications. Some of the nearby single storey properties were built as convalescent barracks for OT staff. (PRIVATE No public access)

34 LONGIS HOUSE This large dwelling served as the quarters from late 1943 for the Fortress Commandant, which he shared with the Senior Naval Officer. This house has since been renovated and extended. (PRIVATE No public access)

35 LES ROCHERS STRONGPOINT Situated on high ground in the centre of the island is the infantry strongpoint containing the Fortress Commandant's two-storey bunker completed in 1944, together with four mortar pits, an ammunition bunker and two observation positions.

36 GERMAN CEMETERY The German war dead were buried in a cemetery lying in a field off Valongis, behind the existing Strangers Cemetery in which the former German headstone now stands against the rear wall. The dead were exhumed in 1961 and moved to Mont de Huisnes in Normandy, France.

37 HOSPITAL BUNKER The Hospital Bunker was built for the German army by forced labour in 1943. There were beds for up to thirty patients, separate rooms for the doctors and medical orderlies, an admissions room and operating theatre capable of dealing with major injuries. (Open daily 10-4)

38 SITE OF LAGER BORKUM Lager Borkum was one of the four Nazi labour camps on Alderney, built in 1942 by the Organisation Todt to house forced labourers. This camp was for specialist workers whose treatment was less harsh than in the other camps. It was the only camp to remain habitable at the end of the war.

39 ARMY FIELD BATTERY Located in open fields behind Kiln Farm, this divisional artillery battery mounted four 10cm wheeled guns in open emplacements. They provided short-range fire to support the coastal defence of the island.

40 COAST ARTILLERY BATTERY Little remains of this four-gun 15cm German field battery in open concrete emplacements. It was the target for bombardment by the 16-inch guns of the British battleship 'Rodney' in August 1944. Following repairs to one of the guns in Guernsey, all three damaged guns were back in action by early November.

41 COASTAL STRONGPOINT Commanding the southern cliffs in the area around Cachelière Pier (rendered unusable by the Germans), are a number of bunkers including a 10.5cm gun casemate on the cliff edge.

42 COMMAND CENTRE The coast-watching radar stood next to the Artillery Commander's bunker on The Blaye - the extensive open area in the centre of the island. From here, orders were issued to coordinate the fire of the German coastal artillery on enemy ships.

43 'WILDLIFE BUNKER' Located on the cliff path, close to the large house 'Quatre Vents', which was the site of a 2cm light anti-aircraft battery of four guns, this bunker was designed as a Luftwaffe signal station used for the emergency rescue of downed pilots.

44 AIRFIELD After initial flights in the first weeks of occupation, the Germans took the decision to permanently obstruct the airfield with mines, trip wires and anti-airlanding obstacles. All future communications would therefore be by sea alone.

45 INFANTRY STRONGPOINT A group of several field defence positions, including tank turrets and personnel shelters with the remains of trenches, survive amongst the brambles on the southern side of the airfield.

46 SENTRY POST Beside the track is one of the two surviving one-man bomb-proof concrete sentry posts constructed around the perimeter of Lager Sylt. These unusual structures are the only ones to be found in the Channel Islands.

16 MANNEZ QUARRY This quarry was established in the 1840s to supply stone for construction of the Breakwater. The Germans used it as a source of crushed stone for the fortifications and excavated a short tunnel for storage purposes in the cliff face.

17 MANNEZ LIGHTHOUSE Built in 1912, and maintained by the Germans during the Occupation, it was operated under strict regulations to provide illumination timed to coincide with the movements of their inter-island shipping.

18 FORT QUESNARD This Victorian fort also completed in 1855, was used by the Germans as a light anti-aircraft battery of three 2cm guns together with a searchlight, machine guns and other weapons. (PRIVATE No public access)

19 TRENCH SYSTEM These concrete-lined trenches occupy rising ground overlooking the eastern shores of the island. This location represents a typical German infantry defence position.

20 AUTOMATIC MORTAR BUNKER This is one of two identical bunkers built in Alderney, the other being at Bonne Terre. It housed an automatic 5cm mortar which could deliver high angle fire on approaching enemy troops which may have landed on the island.

21 ODEON This massive German naval range-finding tower was built by forced labour in 1943 to control the fire of the heavy German coast artillery on naval targets. It was the only one built of six planned locations on the island after the fire control system was superseded. (Open daily 10-4)

22 ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY This heavy battery of six 8.8cm anti-aircraft guns was the only one of four such batteries built on the island to fortress standards. With all of the gun emplacements, personnel shelters and ammunition bunkers remaining, it provides the best example of this type of defence work in the Channel Islands.

23 LE CHALET The middle section of this house was originally the residence of the commandants of Lager Sylt, and which lay outside the camp perimeter. An enterprising returning islander took advantage of the opportunity to remove it to its new location. (PRIVATE No public access)

24 FORT RAZ Completed in 1855 as part of the Victorian defence of the island, it was transformed into a strongpoint with the addition of two 10.5cm coast defence guns in casemates at opposite ends of the fort, together with other close defence weapons.

25 ANTI-TANK WALL This massive concrete anti-tank wall was built in the sand dunes by forced labour to prevent an assault by Allied forces on the open beach. Six metres high, its protruding upper lip was designed to prevent tanks from exiting the beach.

26 'RUSSIAN CEMETERY' This was the principal burial ground for foreign workers in Alderney. 381 bodies were exhumed in 1961 by the German War Graves Commission, most of whom were removed to the ossuary at Mont de Huisnes in Normandy, France.

27 ANTI-TANK BUNKER Sited to flank the wide expanse of Longis beach, and built into the concrete anti-tank wall, this fortress standard bunker housed a 4.7cm Czech anti-tank gun.

28 ROMAN FORT This unique building of Roman origin has been used successively as a fort, Napoleonic barracks, a hospital and Victorian married quarters. During the Occupation, the Germans turned it into an infantry defence position inserting new concrete works into the historic fabric. (Open 10-4.30)

29 LONGIS LINES Taking advantage of this extended Victorian coastal battery, the Germans inserted a searchlight bunker overlooking Longis Bay, together with several open machine gun positions.

30 HANGING ROCK La Roche Pendante, a mythical feature of the island's landscape, was the target of German explosives removing some six metres from the top to improve the field of fire from a coastal battery.

31 ESSEX CASTLE Originally built in the mid-16th century to defend the island's original sheltered anchorage, the site was converted to a Victorian hospital and barracks before being occupied by the Germans as an infantry strongpoint.

1 THE BUTES On 22 June 1940 the Town Crier called islanders to an open-air meeting on the Butes at 2pm. Having sent a plea to the British Home Office for ships to be sent to Alderney, Judge French addressed the islanders. After singing 'God Save the King', with a show of hands they resolved to evacuate the island.

2 HARBOUR On 23 June 1940, early in the morning, six small ships appeared in Braye Harbour to evacuate those islanders who had chosen to leave. Under cover of a sea mist, the convoy escaped the attention of German reconnaissance planes and arrived in Weymouth later that day.

3 GERMAN JETTY In September 1942 the Germans completed a steel extension to the Commercial Quay to improve the facilities for unloading the huge quantities of materials required for the fortification of the island. The jetty was demolished in 1979.

4 CASEMATE BUNKER This bunker was camouflaged as a house and armed with a large 7.5cm anti-tank gun to defend Braye Bay against enemy landing craft and tanks. There is a corresponding bunker for a similar weapon on the opposite side of the bay.

5 BRAYE COMMON This open area beyond the beach was heavily mined as a defence against enemy landings. The Germans built the new concrete road (now called Route de Beaumont) beyond which lay the principal materials dump for the Organisation Todt. The concrete entrance gateposts can still be seen.

6 THE ARSENAL In WWII the Germans used this Victorian store establishment, now private housing, mainly for storage. They installed two anti-tank guns and several machine guns above the beach. (PRIVATE No public access)

7 FORT ALBERT The largest of Alderney's Victorian forts was completed in 1859. During WWII the Germans installed three large 17cm naval guns taken from a WWI battleship, together with a number of support weapons and anti-aircraft guns. (No public access)

8 ROSELLE POINT The Germans installed four 10.5cm guns in casemated bunkers to protect the entrance to the harbour. At the waters edge two concrete searchlight shelters, together with an octagonal machine gun bunker, are relics of the island's WWI defences.

9 COMMAND POST One of two important battery command posts, this fortress standard bunker surveys the northern approaches to Alderney, and directed the fire of the naval battery mounted on Fort Albert.

10 BIBETTE HEAD This site is the most densely fortified German strongpoint in Alderney, comprising of a fortress standard machine gun bunker with armoured turret, a 10.5cm coast defence gun casemate, four anti-tank guns, two mortar pits, machine gun positions and personnel shelters.

11 SITE OF LAGER NORDERNEY Lager Norderney was one of the four Nazi labour camps on Alderney, built in 1942 by the Organisation Todt to house forced labourers. At its peak in 1943 it held up to 1,500 inmates, amongst whom was a large contingent of French Jews.

12 HAMMOND WAR MEMORIAL Erected in 1966 by islanders, the memorial commemorates all 28 nationalities of slave and forced labourers brought to Alderney by the Nazis during WWII, and who subsequently died on the island.

13 FORT CHATEAU A LETOC This Victorian fort, built in 1855 to defend what would have been the eastern breakwater of Braye Harbour, was used by the Germans as a three gun anti-aircraft battery with a large searchlight, mounted at the tip. (No public access)

14 CORBLETS BAY The site of one of two RAF Spitfire crashes on Alderney (both within a week of each other) in November 1941. Both pilots escaped with their lives to become prisoners of war. The wreckage was retrieved by the Germans for examination and shipped off the island.

15 FORT CORBLETS This Victorian fort completed in 1855, was also taken over by the Germans to house troops manning a variety of light weapons. On the west side of the fort defending Corblets Bay is a field order bunker for a 4.7cm anti-tank gun. (No public access)



Evacuating residents leave the island by boat and take a last glimpse of home on 23 June 1940.



The *Soldatenheim* a 'soldiers home' for off-duty troops, was set up in what is now the Island Hall.



The German cinema at the junction of Le Val and High Street (now demolished).



Oberst Schumacher inspects the local office of the German Field Command set up in Lloyds Bank, Victoria Street. (1941)



The official surrender of Alderney was signed in what was an Officers' Mess, on 16 May 1945. The building is now pink and called Peacehaven.



British troops form a guard of honour at the harbour to welcome islanders off the boat on 15 December 1945.



The 'German Jetty' with three cranes was constructed in Braye Harbour in 1942. It has since been demolished.



The bunker was camouflaged by the Germans as a house. In the background stands a pre-war stone crusher building since demolished.



German naval personnel drag the new coastal defence guns into position in Fort Albert, 1941



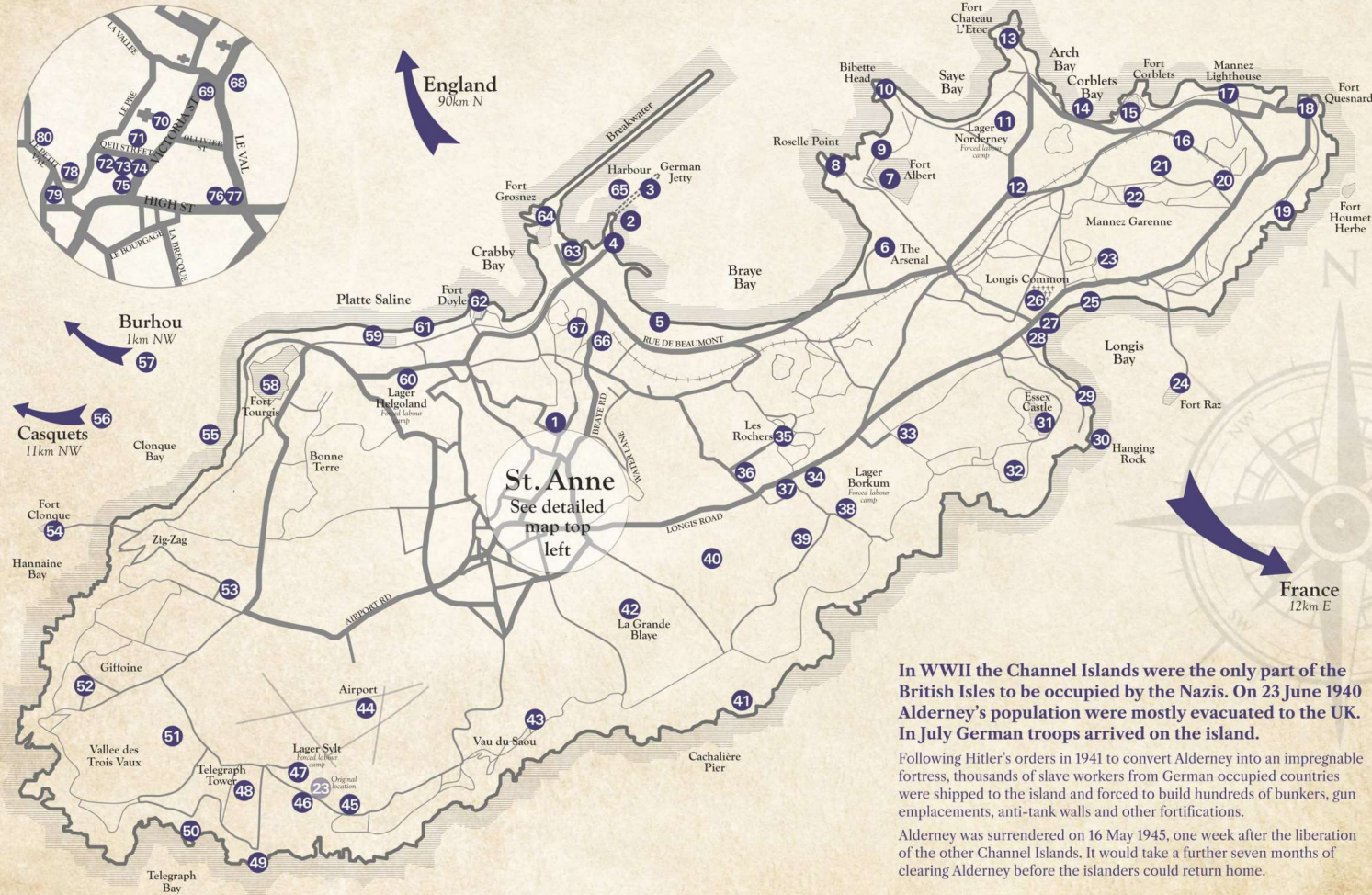
The defences under construction at Bibette Head in 1943, showing the completed 10.5cm casemate.



A wartime view of the forced labour camp at Saye.



This large German anti-aircraft rangefinder was mounted on the roof of the tower now known as the 'Odeon'.



The 'Russian Cemetery' at Longis became the principal burial ground for foreign slave workers.



Slave workers with an Organisation Todt oversee working behind Longis Villas, very close to Essex House.



Some forced labourers marching down Longis Road on their way to a construction site, very close to Longis House.



The German forces cemetery, taken in 1945. The plaque was made after the surrender and is now in the adjacent cemetery.

In WWII the Channel Islands were the only part of the British Isles to be occupied by the Nazis. On 23 June 1940 Alderney's population were mostly evacuated to the UK. In July German troops arrived on the island.

Following Hitler's orders in 1941 to convert Alderney into an impregnable fortress, thousands of slave workers from German occupied countries were shipped to the island and forced to build hundreds of bunkers, gun emplacements, anti-tank walls and other fortifications.

Alderney was surrendered on 16 May 1945, one week after the liberation of the other Channel Islands. It would take a further seven months of clearing Alderney before the islanders could return home.



After setting off from Southampton the first islanders return home on 15 December 1945.



German anti-aircraft gunners on Fort Grosnez.



Target practice by German soldiers on Platte Saline.



One of the naval guns installed on the Giffoine.



Lager Sylt concentration camp, looking from the Schutzstaffel (SS) compound towards the entrance gates.



Germans standing by a 15cm army coastal artillery gun in an open concrete emplacement.