

DEPORTATION TO THE INTERNMENT CAMPS

Channel Islanders were taken by boat to St. Malo where they were transferred onto trains. In some cases they had to travel in luggage or freight carriages. The Germans gave them some food at the start of their journey, but nothing more was forthcoming until they reached their destinations. What followed was an arduous journey lasting several days that took them half way across Europe.

The islanders deported in September 1942 first went to the transit camp of Dorsten, in the German industrial region of the Ruhr. They spent several miserable weeks there before being moved on to their final internment camps of Biberach, Laufen and Wurzach. Some of those who were deported from the Channel Islands in February 1943 were forced to stop at the transit camp in Compiègne, just outside Paris. Segregated from the main part of the camp the islanders spent weeks watching thousands of French Jews through the barbed wire who were being moved on to concentration camps and certain death. During May 1943 these islanders were transported to the internment camps of Biberach and Laufen.

As time progressed internees were moved between the various camps and some found themselves transferred to camps at Kreuzberg, Spittal am Drau and Liebenau.



ROUTE ON MAP

The dotted line shows the route taken by internees sent from Guernsey to Biberach via Dorsten, leaving September 29, 1942 and is taken from the diary account of the trip by Mr Smith???.
Extracts from the diary are shown in italics

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SEPT 29, 1942 3.15PM
3 BOARD A TRAIN AND LEAVE ST MALO
We waited in the train for five hours before it started, during that time two German soldiers came around with our rations ¾ of a German loaf each and a sausage about 14" long, then they came around again with a bunch of French grapes and an apple, this had to last up to three days.

At 3.15 the train started the railway runs alongside a main street in St Malo...

1 SEPT 28, 1942 11.30PM
1 BOAT LEAVES ST PETER PORT HARBOUR HEADING TOWARDS ST MALO
At about half eleven we slipped quietly out of the harbour, there were five boats, two with civilians on, the rest carried German soldiers.

2 SEPT 29, 1942 9AM
2 BOAT ARRIVES AT ST MALO HARBOUR
we entered St Malo about nine. We got off the boat to luggage van...

4 SEPT 29, 1942
4 THE TRAIN JOURNEY ACROSS FRANCE
The journey at first was interesting, miles and miles of country, what stuck out most was the enormous amount of apple trees rows and rows as far as the eye could see.

5 SEPT 29, 1942
5 THE TRAIN CONTINUES THROUGH BELGIUM & LUXEMBOURG
During the day we passed through Belgium and Luxembourg. We were now getting browned off, at least I was.

6 SEPT 28, 1942 9AM
6 THE TRAIN ARRIVES AT COLOGNE
That night in the train passed the same as the other, hardly any sleep, we put the light out and put the blind down and watched the searchlights. Spent anxious hours when we stopped at Cologne, thought the boys would be over. Hundreds of searchlights. Must put up a terrible barrage when our fellows are about. Morning came and we were told to get ready to leave the train at half past nine.

7 SEPT 28, 1942
7 THE TRAIN ARRIVES AT DORSTEN
the train came to a stop. I looked out and found it was a place called Dorsten. eventually a bus and a lorry came, women and children went in the bus men in the lorry.

8 SEPT 28, 1942
8 BUS & LORRY TO THE CAMP AT DORSTEN
They then took our money off us. We were then taken to another place for medical exam by German medical officer. We were given our number then I had to collect my blankets etc and we were taken to our hut when I saw the place it nearly turned me sick.

9 SEPT 12, 1942 AM
9 LEAVING DORSTEN BY TRAIN
On the morning of the 12th at 6 o'clock all bowls knife fork spoon etc had to be handed in. We then had to wait until 9 o'clock, some walked to the station.

10 SEPT 28, 1942 9AM
10 TRAIN ARRIVES AT BIBERACH
In the train for 32 hours no heating, no hot soup or water very very cold. Arrived at Biberach camp about four o'clock Germans assembled us on the square, men one side.

GUERNSEY

JERSEY

ST MALO

DOL-DE-BRETAGNE
COMBOURG

RENNE

VITRE

LAVAL

CAEN

PARIS

COMPIÈGNE

RHEIMS

LUMES

SEDAN

WITTON

ROODT

EGOUVEIZ

BRUSSELS

BELGIUM

LUXEMBOURG

WELSCHBILLIG

JUNKERATH

COLOGNE

LIBLAR

DUISBURG

KIRCHELLEN

DORSTEN

BOTTROP NORD

OSTERFELD

OBERHAUSEN

BENRATH

LAGENFELD

LEVERKUSEN

PORZ

WALDEN

SPICH

TRUISDORF

FRANKFURT

YEMM

BIETHEIM

ASPERG

LUDWIGSBURG

KORNWESTHEIM

STUTTGART

PLÖCHINGEN

SILACH

SÜSSEN

KUCHEN

AMSTETTEN

JUNGINGEN

WURZACH

LIEBENAU

LAUFEN

BERLIN

KREUZBERG

SPITTAL AM DRAU

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

AUSTRIA

POLAND

SWITZERLAND