

RUSHEN INTERNMENT CAMP

Philatelic Description of the item of Postal Stationery:

PRISONER OF WAR MAIL. Isle of Man to Great Britain 15 December 1940. Stampless cover inscribed RUSHEN INTERNMENT CAMP & POSTAGE FREE across top, and addressed to: Miss A Atkins, South Ford House, Paignton District Hospital SCORED THROUGH, Dartmouth, South Downs

WOMEN'S/ INTERNMENT CAMP/ ISLE OF MAN boxed h/s on reverse dated 1946 [sic] from F Lotsch, Hotel Ballaqueeney, Port St Mary, Isle of Man on reverse; incomplete OFFICIAL FREE h/s in red & posted to the UK, with TORQUAY/ DEVON/ POST EARLY FOR CHRISTMAS slogan arrival cancel.

BPA (Expert Committee) 1984 certificate validates and confirms "1946" as being an error.

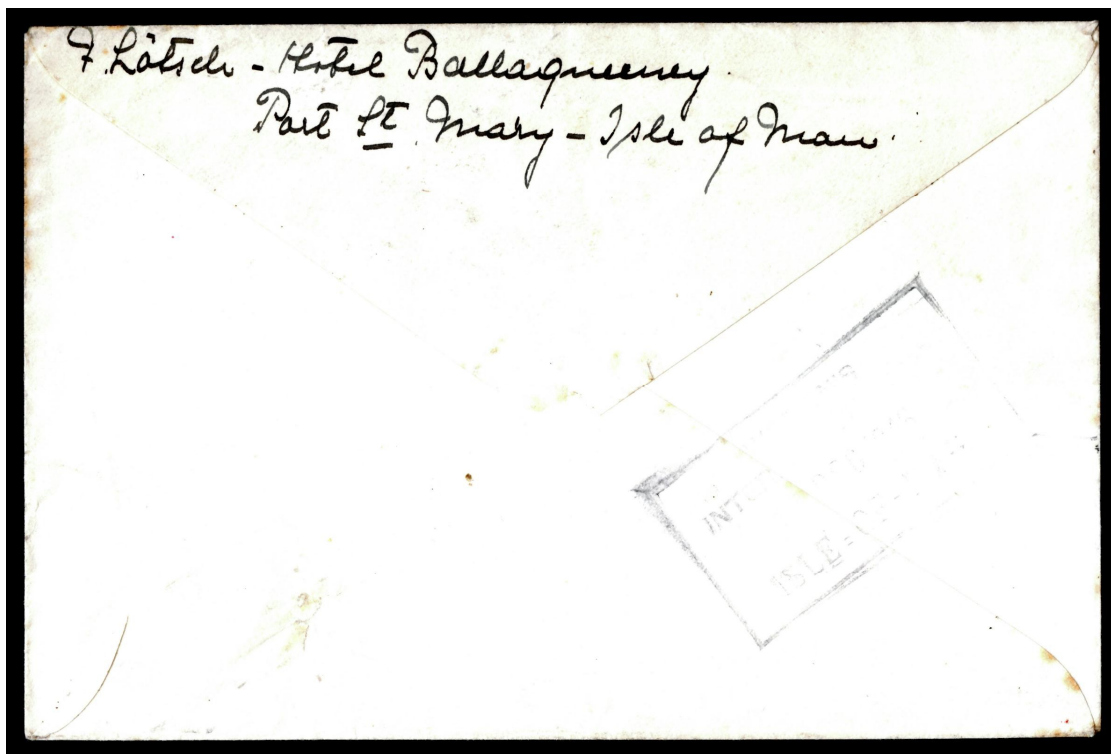


Rushen was a camp for interned women located at Port Erin. By the end of 1940, there were over 3,000 women at the camp.

The correspondent was Lotsch, Franziska Maria No. 2436, an Austrian citizen, date and place of birth 14.8.1903, in Graz, Austria¹. She appeared before the Home Office Advisory Committee, (under escort), at the Court House, Douglas, on Tuesday 29th April, 1941. She was still in "W" Camp 25.10.1943.

¹ Interestingly, the following marriage was registered in the December QRT 1903: Lotsch, Minna District Registry Office: St. Pancras vol. 1b p.34. Whether this is of any significance is unknown

Mr Alan Franklin comments: If it is her she was in the camp probably from mid 1940 to at least October 1943. Whilst most refugees were released in 1940-41, others remained including some National Socialist supporters who were repatriated to Germany via Sweden in 1944 and a small number of others who remained until the camp closed in 1945. The Ballaqueeney Hotel housed a large number of internees in Port St Mary until the size of the Rushen camp was reduced following the release of internees and any remaining residents were then probably moved to Port Erin.



Reference:

1. MNHL MS 11551/5 (TNA HO 215/478) Women's Camp Nominal Rolls.

Acknowledgement: my grateful thanks to Mr. Alan Franklin MA MCLIP, Manx National Heritage Library, Douglas, Isle of Man IM1 3LY