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The SS *Ettrick*, the old tramp steamer which, in July 1940, took uncounted hundreds of refugees in its four holds from Liverpool to Quebec in Canada. Overcrowding was grim, but she was not involved in enemy action as her sister transport, the *Arandora Star*, which was sunk. *Courtesy: Commander Simon Cooper, Royal Navy © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich*

Internment started for me with a short bus journey under police guard to Bury St Edmunds, and later continued for me to Canada and for others to Australia. It ended with an anxious 'Question and Answer' session in the British Parliament. A year later, in the beginning of 1941 the terrible bombing of London and other English cities had swept Internment from public attention. It remained of course a matter of deep anger to those who had so unjustly been deprived of their liberty, whether on the Isle of Man, in Canada or Australia. As free time was endless in Internment, many of us kept diaries and later published their reminiscences.

I have two of these publications now in front of me, "*The Diaries of Harry Seidler*" [Allen and Unwin 1986] and the article by Max Perutz "That was the War" which appeared in *The New Yorker* of 12 August 1985. Perutz, born in Vienna in 1914, and a refugee like myself, is a biochemist who, on returning from internment went to Cambridge, and devoted his research work to the analysis of the haemoglobin structure by means of X-ray crystallography. Thus he elucidated the molecular basis of respiration and in 1962 received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry. During internment we became good friends, as I already knew his wife from Berlin days.

We first met again in the old school hut in Bury St Edmunds where police had taken us both on 12 May. There we slept on a rough concrete floor for a week till we were transferred by train on 20 May under armed guard, to Huyton near Liverpool, to a new and empty housing estate of numerous small one-family units. Beds were provided and apart from the meagre sustenance, mainly porridge and herrings, we were reasonably comfortable for 3 weeks. The next move was to the Isle of Man on 14 June, by one of the regular excursion steamers from the harbour of Liverpool.

As this was to be a permanent site for our Internment—or so it was thought—a quarter of the town of Douglas had been surrounded by barbed wire fencing and we were accommodated in ordinary houses, normally let to holiday tourists. Our 'permanency' lasted for just over 2 weeks, and on 2 July back to Liverpool, where we embarked on the ocean steamer *SS Ettrick*. We landed in Quebec, Canada, on 13 July, after surviving not only the dangers of being torpedoed, but also horrific conditions of overcrowding. Camp L, on the heights of Abraham, high above Quebec, was a holiday home compared with our previous experience in England. In October we were again moved, this time to winter quarters, to Camp N in Sherbrooke, from which I, Perutz and others were released—to travel by train to Halifax and in a large convoy on board the *Thysville*, a Belgian Congo steamer, back to Liverpool, arriving in blacked-out wartime England in January 1941.