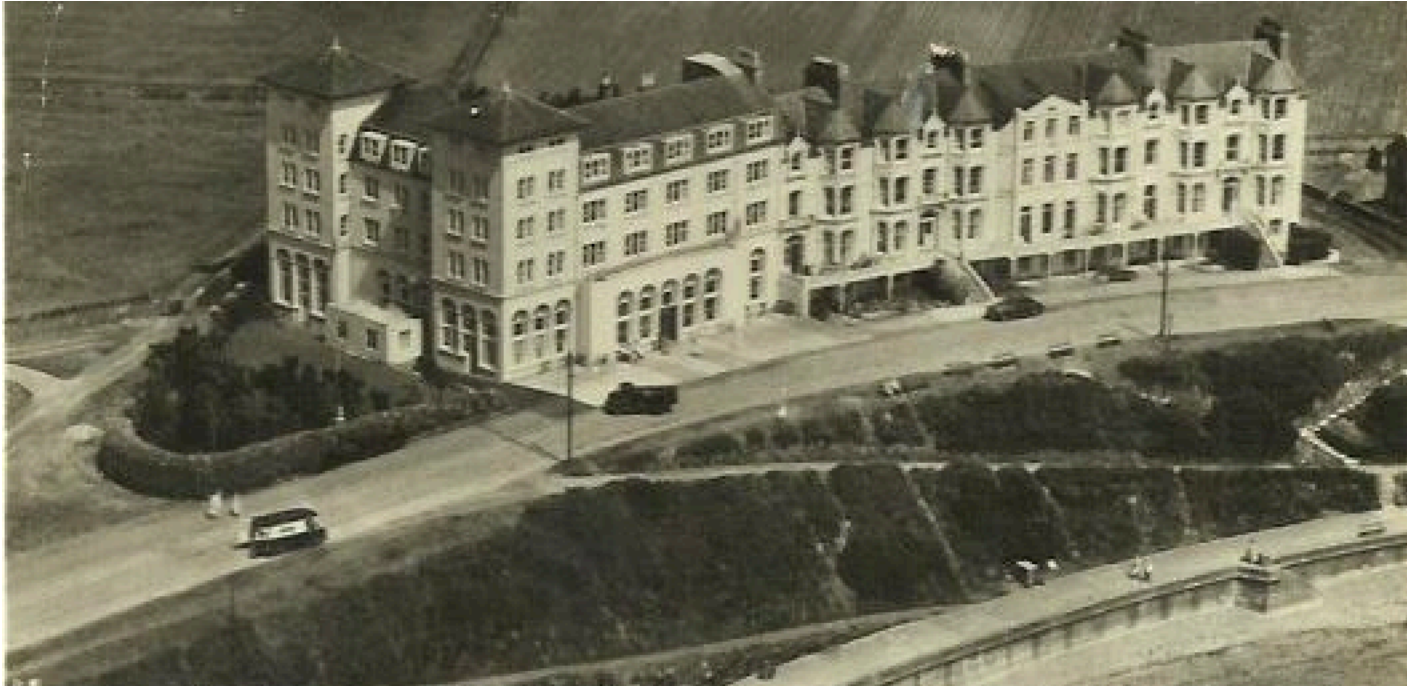


THE BALLAQUEENEY HOTEL- Port St Mary



Before 1939, when war broke out, the Ballaqueeney Hotel was the hub of life in Port St Mary. It was run by Mr Walter Kelly, who had taken over when his parents, Mr and Mrs W.A. Kelly, had retired. Walter had joined the army at the beginning of the war, so his parents came out of retirement to run the hotel while he was away.



When the Internment Camp was set up in Port Erin and Port St Mary in 1940, the Ballaqueeney Hotel housed most of the Jewish internees sent to Port St Mary, so Mr and Mrs Kelly, and the staff provided them with a Kosher diet. (Kosher food and drink is that allowed by the strict Jewish laws.) They were also allocated rooms where they could hold their three daily prayer meetings.

A CHRISTMAS GREETING FROM THE
INTERNEES OF BALLAQUEENEY TO THEIR
BELOVED MRS. KELLY - WITH EVERY
GOOD WISH FOR A HAPPIER FUTURE FOR
YOU AND MR. KELLY - AND ALL ENGLAND.
THIS LITTLE PIECE OF INTERNEE'S
EVENING WORK - IS A TOKEN OF GREAT
GRATITUDE - AS SMALL AS IT IS.

The internees were very grateful to Mr and Mrs Kelly and, for at Christmas 1940, they produced this drawing (in the style of Botticelli) and the greeting seen above, as a 'thank you' for their kindness.

After the war Mrs Kelly received a letter from the Chief Rabbi (head of the Jewish community) in London, thanking her for her kindness to the Jewish community in the internment camp.

In the early days of the internment camp, many of the women discovered that their husbands were also interned on the Isle of Man in camps at Douglas, Onchan, Ramsey or Peel.

After meetings with and pleas to the Commandant, Dame Joanna Cruickshank, it was arranged that the wives and husbands should be allowed to meet for an hour on a monthly basis. In Port St Mary the meeting place was the Ballaqueeney Hotel. The men were brought to Port St Mary by train and marched from the railway station to the hotel, where they spent an hour with their families, before returning to their own camps.

Eventually it was decided to open a camp for married internees and their families in Port St Mary. This was situated in the boarding houses on the Promenade and included the Ballaqueeney Hotel.

This is a painting of the boarding houses on Port St Mary Promenade showing the Ballaqueeney Hotel on the right of the painting at the time of the Married Camp. The picture was painted by one of the male internees, Alex Rummelsburg, in 1941.



Buildings – Port St Mary - The Ballaqueeney Hotel