

On the prehistory of the two deportations (sources: www.statistik-des-holocaust.de see 01.06.42 to Maidanek/Sobibor (statistik-des-holocaust.de); lagis-hessen.de, see Zeitgeschichte in Hessen – Daten Fakten Hintergründe : Entdecken : LAGIS Hessen (lagis-hessen.de) and see 11 Richter Die Gestapostelle Kassel HB (vhghessen.de))

Deportation on 31.05.1942 from Treysa station, platform 2

The Gestapo Kassel had already informed the district administrators and police headquarters that “in the course of current deportation measures [...] approximately 840 Jews were to be deported to the East in the near future, also from the administrative district of Kassel“ [HStA Marburg, 180 Fritzlar 2737]. Together with part of the transport from Halle the prescribed number of 1,000 deportees was to be reached. Another document dated 22 May 1942 determined that “according to the rules prescribed [...] for the imminent deportation measure not 844, but rather only 522 Jews from the administrative district of Kassel were eligible. [...] These Jews are to be deported from Kassel to the East on 01.06.1942.“ [HStA Marburg, 180 Fritzlar 2737]. The same document contains a detailed plan of the transportation by train in order to collect the Jews in question from different regions on 30 May and 31 May 1942.

On 1 June 1942 the deportation train brought 508 Jews from the administrative district of Kassel from the train station in Kassel to the concentration camp Majdanek (Lublin) and the transit camp Izbica or the extermination camp Sobibor (situated in what is today the border triangle Poland – Belarus – Ukraine). The train identified as “Da 57“ (according to the timetable of the Reichsbahn) carried 99 Jewish residents of the town of Kassel and 409 people from the independent cities of Fulda (36), Hanau (29), and Marburg (25) as well as residents of the administrative districts of of Hanau (57), Rotenburg (45), **Ziegenhain (39)**, Marburg (34), Waldeck (29), Eschwege (17), Hersfeld (14), Melsungen (11), Frankenberg (10), Wolfhagen (10), Fritzlar-Homberg (9), Schmalkalden in Thuringia (9), Fulda (6), Hofgeismar (4), Hünfeld (2), and Witzenhausen (1). In Lublin the “selection“ of those deported was carried out on a siding. Approximately 100 men between the ages of 15 and 50 were taken off the train by SS officers and sent to the camp Majdanek. For the rest – women, children, and the aged – the transport probably continued directly on to the extermination camp Sobibor.

Eye-witness reports confirm that the Jews taken to Kassel on 31 May were put in the gymnasium of the Bürgerschule (Citizens‘ School) on Schillerstrasse, where they were registered and had to spend the night under surveillance before their deportation on 1 June 1942.

Deportation on 06.09.1942 from Treysa station, platform 2

A document dated 25 August 1942 from department II B 4 (“Jewish affairs“), which was led by detective and SS Obersturmführer (high officer) Mamsch, contained instructions for the beginning of yet another deportation measure. The deportees were again to be taken from their respective places of residence to a collecting point in Kassel. “On 07.09.1942 the remaining Jews from the administrative district of Kassel are to be deported to Theresienstadt. The preparation and execution of the deportation in consultation with the participating authorities lie exclusively in the hands of the State Police Headquarters in Kassel. A list of names of the Jews to be deported according to the regulations prescribed, arranged by district

of residence, is attached. All these Jews will be detained in a reception camp in Kassel prior to their deportation to Theresienstadt. For this purpose we have determined the Bürgerschulen on Schillerstrasse at the corner of Wörthstrasse in Kassel. The exact time of departure of the Jews from their respective train stations and their arrival in Kassel will be made known in due course.“ In addition, the document contains administrative instructions. They show how the Nazi authorities tried to disguise the true nature of these measures, which they tried to conceal by their choice of words, even bordering on lying. For example, when the Jews were stricken from the list of residents at the registration office, there was no note made of where they had gone or why, such as “evacuated to Theresienstadt“, but only “address unknown“ or “emigrated“. Any valuables in the residence of the Jews who had “emigrated“ were confiscated. Moreover, the number of pieces of luggage and contents of baggage of those deported were strictly prescribed. They were allowed only one suitcase or backpack containing equipment, among which were clothing and shoes, bedding, a plate or pot, a spoon, and provisions sufficient for three days. They were instructed to take with them all their cash and told that 50 RM would be provided. They could keep any valuables on their person, such as gold, silver, platinum, etc., until they arrived at the reception camp. There a search would be carried out on their person as well as their luggage, and their food ration cards would be taken from them. In other words, the document made it perfectly clear that this was an evacuation for appearances only, and in reality it was a fatal journey.