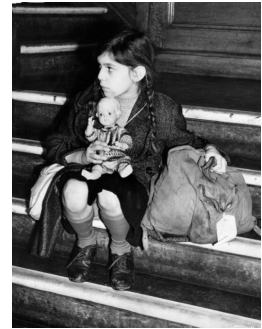


Handout 2.9: *Kindertransports*

Prompted by the events of *Kristallnacht*, Britain agreed to offer temporary refuge to Jewish children from Nazi-occupied lands. Between December 1938 and September 1939, Britain accepted 10,000 Jewish children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Jewish and Christian organisations worked together to find homes for the children; funds were raised, guarantors were found. The children arrived on special trains called *Kindertransports*. They were housed in private homes, farms, castles, boarding schools, holiday camps – anywhere they were accepted. Although most of the children who arrived on the *Kindertransports* survived the war, the majority of their families perished in the Holocaust.



Helga Kreiner,
Germany.

Bertha Leverton, Jewish child, Munich

I remember in my carriage there was a baby of two or three years old, and this child was given to a teenage girl who was told. ‘Look after her until you get to England.’ What courage it took for those parents! We travelled from Berlin for several hours until we came to the Dutch border. It made a huge impression on me: here I’d been in an ever-deepening situation of bad treatment, bullying, vulnerability, victimisation and here comes the Dutch border [...] accompanying the Dutch officials came a load of ladies in grey uniforms and I think it was the first time for years that non-Jewish people said something kind to us.

(Smith, *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust*)