

Tallinn

(in Russian, Revel), capital of the Baltic state of Estonia. In 1939 some 2,300 Jews lived in Tallinn, making up almost half of Estonia's entire Jewish population. In 1940 Estonia was annexed by the Soviet Union. The Soviet authorities arrested and expelled hundreds of Tallinn's Jews to remote parts of the Soviet Union, along with many other Tallinn residents.

In June 1941 Germany invaded the Soviet Union and Soviet-held territories, including Estonia. At that point, many Jews from Tallinn voluntarily joined Estonian defense units. The Soviets began evacuating the city's residents, and despite the German siege and bombing, about half of Tallinn's Jews managed to escape.

German troops conquered Tallinn on July 25, 1941. The Jews were immediately commanded to wear the Jewish badge (see also Badge, Jewish) and their lives were harshly restricted. Many women and children were made to do forced labor, while most of the men were imprisoned in the city jail. During September and October these men were executed by Estonian Nazi collaborators under the supervision of a *Sonderkommando* unit. By December 19, 610 Jews had been murdered. The rest of the city's Jews were killed during early 1942.

Soviet troops liberated Tallinn on September 22, 1944. Only five Jews had survived in the city.