



Berlin, 1938

Historical Background

The following pages provide a brief review of the historical context for the Kindertransport. To explore the following topics in greater depth, please refer to pages 32-36.

Background

The children of the Kindertransport (see pages 14-16) featured in the film were born between 1922 and 1931, in what was in retrospect a deeply unstable and volatile region of Europe. Much of the continent had been ravaged by World War I, and recovery was particularly elusive for Germany. Throughout the 1920s, the German people were acutely conscious of their unexpected defeat in the “Great War,” and they were also impoverished by the high cost of war and the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany’s peace accord with Great Britain, France, the United States, and the other victors. Unemployment was high, and in the early 1920s,

uncontrolled inflation rendered German currency nearly worthless—along with the savings accounts of much of the German population. The economy began to recover in the late 1920s, but the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 cast the nation into renewed misery. With the German people demoralized, their democratically elected government found itself increasingly unpopular and vulnerable.

The Rise of the Nazi Party

In 1919, when Adolf Hitler joined what would become known as the Nazi Party (short for the National Socialist German Workers’ Party), it was a little-known fringe group of right-wing extremists. During the 1920s, the Nazis exploited civic discontent to build a small but loyal following, but mainstream public recognition eluded them until 1929. In the vast destitution of the Depression era, the German public began to embrace the Nazis’ messages, which included fanatical pro-German nationalism, the rebuilding of Germany through remilitarization, and open racism and antisemitism which presented ethnic minorities—especially the Jews—as scapegoats for the nation’s troubles. Although the Nazi Party was never able to claim a majority of German votes, it gained enough support for Adolf Hitler to emerge as Chancellor of the nation in 1933. The political establishment viewed Hitler’s ascension with concern, but generally assumed that the realities of the political system would force him to moderate his views. Yet Hitler, who rose to power within a democratic system, invoked the provisions of the German constitution that permitted the suspension of constitutional protections in emergency circumstances. Ruling by decree, he dismantled the democratic structure and proclaimed himself *Führer* (“leader”) of an authoritarian, dictatorial new regime.

A few of the prewar German laws that directly affected Jewish children

April 25, 1933—The government limits the number of Jews who can attend German high schools.

September 15, 1935—The Nuremberg Laws are passed: Jews are no longer German citizens, cannot display the German flag, cannot employ Germans younger than 45 in their homes, cannot marry or have relations with non-Jewish Germans. Jews are defined biologically and designated based on the religion of their grandparents rather than their own faith or cultural identity.

July 23, 1938—All Jews older than 15 must carry a special identification card. In any dealings with the government, Jews must declare they are Jewish and show the card.

August 17, 1938—Newborn Jewish children are to receive names only from a government-approved list.

November 12, 1938—Jews cannot attend plays, movies, concerts, or exhibitions. Jews must pay 1.25 million *Reichsmarks* (almost six million U.S. dollars today) for damages caused on “*Kristallnacht*.” (See box on page 10.)

November 15, 1938—Jewish children are expelled from public schools and must now attend Jewish schools.

December 8, 1938—Jews can no longer attend German universities.

The Jews of Germany

The fewer than 600,000 Jews who lived in Germany in the 1920s accounted for not even one percent of the population, but Jewish people had been present in Germany for hundreds of years. As in the rest of Europe, Jews of the region had once been a subordinate class, subject to legal discrimination, but over the past century the Jews had become more and more integrated into German society. After 1870, they enjoyed full rights and protections as German citizens, and by World War I many Jewish Germans were fully assimilated and patriotic members of society. The 12,000 Jewish soldiers who served Germany during World War I were among the most decorated troops.

With the rise of German discontent and the openly antisemitic Nazi Party, the Jews began to endure a renewal of persecution and a sense of deepening isolation. This experience was disturbing and painful, but not unfamiliar. Like many other minority populations, the Jews had been subject to discrimination and persecution throughout their history. Antisemitism had never truly disappeared in Germany, and it was rampant in neighboring Poland, home to more than three million Jews. To some German Jews, the ebb and flow of antisemitism seemed like an unfortunate but predictable part of life in the region. Others made the decision to emigrate in the early years of the Nazi regime.

The Nazi Regime

When Adolf Hitler took control of Germany, the *Kinder* featured in *Into the Arms of Strangers* were still children. Many were too young to understand the significance of the laws that Hitler and the Nazi government began to pass against the Jewish people—who, as early as 1935, were no longer even considered citizens in their own country. These laws would have a devastating impact on their lives, restricting their rights and their access to public services (*see box on page 8*), encouraging the non-Jewish population to degrade them, and legalizing the violence perpetrated against them.

Over time, the Nazi government of Germany also began to increase the persecution of political dissidents, Communists, Sinti and Roma (“Gypsies”), homosexuals, and others. Along with a systematic suppression of their political opponents, the Nazis were beginning to develop and realize a goal of “racial cleansing.” The Nazis’ admittedly racist ideology was based on a theory of a “racial hierarchy” that had northern Europeans (whom they called “Aryans”) at the top and Jews at the bottom. Believing that Germany rightfully belonged to the “Aryans,” they were determined to defend the genetic stock against “contamination” and weakening. Thus the Jews were not seen as a people who practiced a religion or affirmed a historic identity, but as a “race” whose “Jewish blood” threatened “Aryan” supremacy. The Nazis endeavored to force Jews and other potential “contaminants” to emigrate from the country and to eliminate those “Aryans” whose existence was not believed to contribute to a stronger race, such as the disabled.

The German government remilitarized the country—in flagrant violation of the Versailles Treaty that had ended World War I. Great Britain, France, and other European nations permitted this violation as part of their policy of “appeasement” of Hitler, through which the war-weary governments hoped to avoid a direct conflict with Germany. For the same reason, they also did not stop the annexation of Austria in March 1938 (known as the *Anschluss*) and the dismantling and subjugation of Czechoslovakia in September 1938 and March 1939.



Greater German Reich, late 1930s



Austria, 1938

Under German control, the Jewish populations of Austria and part of Czechoslovakia found themselves subject to all the anti-Jewish laws the German Jews had been gradually forced to accept over the previous five years.

Emigration

Until the early 1940s, the primary intent of German anti-Jewish policies was to make life so difficult for Jews that they would leave of their own accord. Although this policy of forced emigration opened a narrow window of opportunity for escape, the decision to leave was not easy. Many people were reluctant to abandon a home in which their families had lived for generations, and few wanted to leave their extended families and communities at a time when they were in most need of support. Some considered themselves patriotic Germans and thought that Hitler and the Nazis could not possibly rule their country for long. In addition, since the German government forbade emigrants to take any valuables or currency, leaving Germany meant starting anew, as penniless refugees, in an unknown land. Many preferred to believe that the events that were occurring, which had no modern precedent, would eventually subside under international pressure.

To make matters worse, those who decided to leave often found it difficult to find a country willing to take them in. Much of the world, including the United States, was still in the grip of the Depression, and, after the devastation of World War I,

the populations and governments of many countries tended toward isolationism—the policy of not becoming involved in foreign affairs, sometimes without regard for their human implications. By July 1938, however, once the growing numbers of desperate refugees from Germany had become impossible to ignore, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt suggested a conference to discuss the issue. The diplomats who convened in the French resort town of Evian spoke eloquently on behalf of the refugees, but of 32 nations represented, only one—the Dominican Republic—agreed to accept more refugees to help the victims of Nazi Germany. Ironically, the only lasting effect of this meeting may have been to prove to Adolf Hitler that no country truly cared about the fate of the Jews.

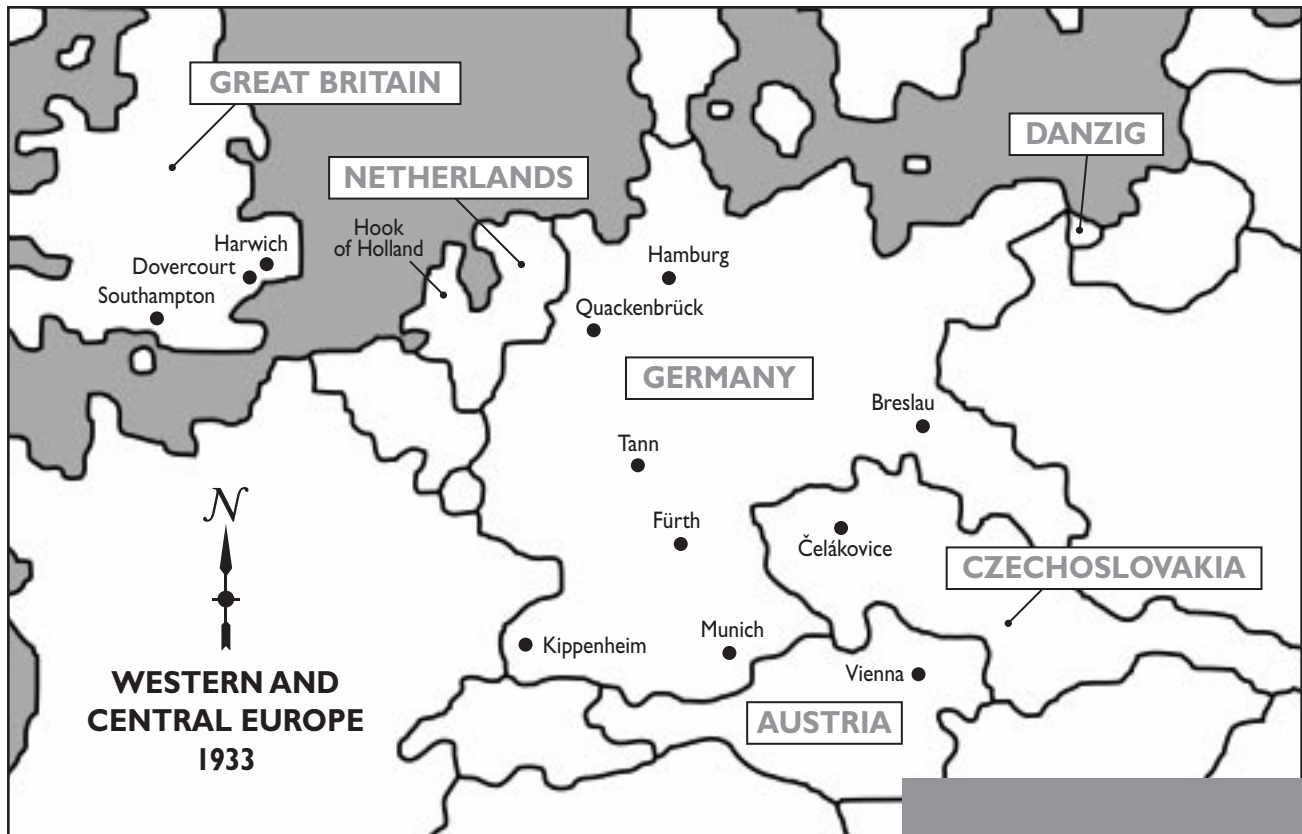
The violence of *“Kristallnacht”* (see box to the left) was widely reported in the international press and left little doubt as to the brutal intentions of the Nazi government. The news fueled international public outrage, creating the possibility that nations might begin to accept refugees from Germany despite the economic hardship and high unemployment that continued to prevail throughout most of the Western world. Most countries, however, did not ultimately choose to do so.

“Kristallnacht”—the November Pogroms of 1938

On November 9 and 10, 1938, the German government coordinated a violent attack on the Jews of Germany and Austria, in which marauding citizens and Nazi storm troopers killed dozens of Jews, burned more than 1,000 synagogues, destroyed and looted more than 7,000 Jewish-owned businesses, and pillaged Jewish cemeteries, schools, and homes as police and fire brigades stood by. In the aftermath, the authorities arrested more than 30,000 Jews, most of them men between the ages of 16 and 60, and sent them to concentration camps. They enacted a new series of devastating anti-Jewish restrictions that effectively removed German Jews from the economy.

The Nazi government used the murder of a German diplomat as a pretense for organizing this rampage, for which they invented the euphemistic and seemingly elegant term *“Kristallnacht,”* literally meaning “night of crystal.” Inspired by the broken glass that covered the streets, this term was meant to obscure a tragic event which in reality was an extraordinarily brutal campaign enacted by a government against its own people and a continuation of the long history of antisemitic pogroms against the Jews.

Kinder Homes and Transport Destinations



The Kindertransport

On November 15, 1938, a few days after “*Kristallnacht*,” a delegation of British Jewish leaders appealed in person to the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. Among other measures, they requested that the British government permit the temporary admission of children and teenagers, who would later re-emigrate. The Jewish community promised to pay guarantees for the refugee children.

The next day, the British Cabinet debated the issue. The Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, said that the country could not admit more refugees without provoking a backlash, but the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, suggested that an act of generosity might have the benefit of prompting the United States to accept additional immigrants. (See “*The Wagner-Rogers Bill*,” page 13.) The cabinet committee on refugees subsequently decided that the nation would accept unaccompanied children ranging from infants to teenagers under the age of 17. No limit to the number of refugees was ever publicly announced.

On the eve of a major House of Commons debate on refugees on November 21, Home Secretary Hoare met a large delegation representing various Jewish and non-Jewish groups working on behalf of refugees. The groups were allied under a non-denominational organization called the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany. The Home Secretary agreed that to speed up the immigration process, travel documents would be issued on the basis of group lists rather than individual

Lorraine Allard—Fürth

Lory Cahn—Breslau

Hedy Epstein—Kippenheim

Kurt Fuchel—Vienna

Alexander Gordon—Hamburg

Eva Hayman—Čelákovice

Jack Hellman—Tann

Bertha Leverton—Munich

Ursula Rosenfeld—Quackenbrück

Inge Sadan—Munich

Lore Segal—Vienna

Robert Sugar—Vienna



Dutch women greet Kinder at border

applications. But strict conditions were placed upon the entry of the children. The agencies promised to fund the operation and to ensure that none of the refugees would become a financial burden on the public. Every child would have a guarantee of 50 British pounds (approximately \$1,500 in today's currency) to finance his or her eventual re-emigration, as it was expected the children would stay in the country only temporarily.

The Home Secretary announced the program to the assembled Members of Parliament at the House of Commons, who broadly welcomed the initiative that would come to be known as the Kindertransport.

Within a very short time, the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany, later known as the Refugee Children's Movement (RCM), sent representatives to Germany and Austria to establish the systems for choosing, organizing, and transporting the children. On November 25, British citizens heard an appeal for foster homes on the BBC Home Service radio program. Soon there were 500 offers, and RCM volunteers started visiting these possible foster homes and reporting on conditions. They did not insist that prospective homes for Jewish children should be Jewish homes. Nor did they probe too carefully into the motives and character of the families: it was sufficient for the houses to look clean and the families to seem respectable.

In Germany, a network of organizers was established, and these volunteers worked around the clock to make priority lists of those most imperiled: teenagers who were in concentration camps or in danger of arrest, Polish children or teenagers threatened with deportation, children in Jewish orphanages, those whose parents were too impoverished to keep them, or those with parents in a concentration camp. Once the children were identified or grouped by list, their guardians or parents were issued a travel date and departure details.

The first Kindertransport from Berlin departed on December 1, 1938, and the first from Vienna on December 10. For the first three months, the children came mainly from Germany, then the emphasis shifted to Austria. In March 1939, after the German army entered Czechoslovakia, transports from Prague were hastily organized. Trains of Polish Jewish children were also arranged in February and August 1939.

Since the German government decreed that the evacuations must not block ports in Germany, the trains crossed from German territory into the Netherlands and arrived at port at the Hook of Holland. From there, the children traveled by ferry to the British ports of Harwich or Southampton. (See map on page 11.)

The last group of children from Germany departed on September 1, 1939, the day the German army invaded Poland and provoked Great Britain, France, and other countries to declare war. The last known transport of *Kinder* from the Netherlands left on May 14, 1940, the day the Dutch army surrendered to Germany. Tragically, hundreds of *Kinder* were caught in Belgium and the Netherlands during the German invasion, making them subject once more to the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

Life in Great Britain

Upon arrival at port in Great Britain, *Kinder* without prearranged foster families were sheltered at temporary holding centers located at summer holiday camps on the cold windy coast of East Anglia—Dovercourt near Harwich and, for a short

STOKE NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
 (Church Street, Stoke Newington),
 MONDAY, DECEMBER 12th, 8 p.m.
 REPRESENTATIVE SPEAKERS
 TO BE SILENT MEANS TO ACQUIESCE
 SAVE THE CHILDREN

period, Pakefield near Lowestoft. Finding foster families was not always easy, and being chosen for a home was not necessarily the end of discomfort or distress. Some families took in teenage girls as a way of acquiring a maidservant. There was little sensitivity toward the cultural and religious needs of the children, and, for some, their heritage was all but erased. A few, mainly the youngest, were given new names, new identities, and even a new religion. In the end, many of the children for whom no home could be found were placed on farms or in hostels run by the RCM.

From the moment of their arrival, the children struggled to maintain contact with their parents. At first, letters between parents and children flowed fairly easily, and many were filled with hopes and plans for reunion. The beginning of the war in 1939 meant the end of this dream. In addition, the German government restricted the delivery of mail to and from Jews, forcing parents and children to rely on intermediaries or the Red Cross.

As the war escalated, the British government evacuated children and pregnant women from major British cities to “safe areas” in anticipation of devastating German bombing raids. Many *Kinder* were hastily moved to new homes in the countryside. Those who went with their schools benefited from a degree of organization and care, but some found themselves completely isolated and living with uncomprehending families in remote areas. It took years for the refugee organizations to establish contact with many of the scattered children.

Older children suffered a different hardship when, in 1940, the British government ordered the internment of 16- to 70-year-old refugees from enemy countries—so-called “enemy aliens.” Approximately 1,000 of the *Kinder* were held in makeshift internment camps, and around 400 were transported overseas to Canada and Australia. Those shipped to Australia on the HMT *Dunera* were mistreated during the long voyage, and a scandal that followed revelations about the mishandling of internment led to a program of releases in late 1940. Men in particular were offered the chance to do war work or to enter the Alien Pioneer Corps. About 1,000 German and Austrian teenagers served in the British armed forces, including combat units. Several dozen joined elite formations such as the Special Forces where their language skills could be put to good use.

Most of the *Kinder* survived the war, and a small percentage were reunited with parents who had either spent the war in hiding or endured the Nazi camps. The majority of children, however, had to face the reality that home and family were lost forever. The end of the war brought confirmation of the worst: their parents were dead. In the years since the *Kinder* had left the European mainland, the Nazis and their collaborators had killed nearly six million European Jews, including nearly 1.5 million children.

In all, the Kindertransport rescue operation brought approximately 10,000 children to the relative safety of Great Britain—a large-scale act of mercy unique in a tragic historical period marked by brutality and widespread indifference.

Kinder arriving at Harwich, England,
December 2, 1938



The Wagner-Rogers Bill

The Wagner-Rogers Bill, introduced in February 1939 by U.S. Senator Robert Wagner and Representative Edith Rogers, proposed to allow 20,000 refugee children from Germany, over and above the rigid quotas of the 1924 Immigration Act, to enter the United States. Leaders from many aspects of American life, including religion, government, education, and labor, joined in supporting this legislation, but the bill faced strong resistance. Led by organizations such as the American Coalition of Patriotic Societies, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the American Legion, the opposition loudly voiced sudden concern for American children living in poverty. “Charity begins at home” was their slogan, and they made the case that if these refugee children were permitted to enter the country, they would be depriving America’s children of needed assistance. Even in the face of reports from the American Friends Service Committee and a British child refugee agency indicating that the situation for these children was dire, the opposition prevailed, exploiting the fear that this legislation would become the “thin part of the wedge”—the beginning of an uncontrolled wave of immigrants. As political maneuvering on all sides continued, the Roosevelt Administration remained largely silent, and the legislation died in committee.

Adapted from a speech by USHMM Director Sara Bloomfield,
September 11, 2000

The Kinder

LORRAINE ALLARD

Lorraine Allard, born Lore Sulzbacher in 1924, lived with her parents in Fürth, Bavaria, Germany, until being sent on the Kindertransport to Lincoln, England, at the age of 14. She lived with the same foster family until the age of 18, when she joined the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) in 1943 and drove staff cars during the war. After V-E (“Victory in Europe”) Day in May 1945, she learned that both her parents had been murdered at Auschwitz. She died in July 2001 at the age of 76.



LORY CAHN

Lory Cahn was born Lory Grünberger in 1925 in Breslau, then part of Germany. At 14 she was scheduled to leave for England on the Kindertransport but, at the last moment, her father could not bear to part with her. At the end of 1941, she and her parents were deported to Theresienstadt, a Nazi concentration and transit camp in the former Czechoslovakia. She was confined there for a year and a half before being separated from her parents and sent to Auschwitz. For the rest of the war, she was transferred from one concentration camp to another until she was liberated in the Bergen-Belsen camp, weighing 58 pounds. Although her mother was murdered in Auschwitz, her father survived Theresienstadt and returned to Germany, where he died in 1972 at age 79. She currently resides with her husband in Pennsylvania.

HEDY EPSTEIN

Hedy Epstein was born Hedy Wachenheimer in 1924 in Kippenheim, Germany. She was 14 when she was sent on the Kindertransport to London, where she lived with two different foster families. After the war, she returned to Germany as an employee of the U.S. government in order to search for her parents, both of whom, she later discovered, had been murdered at Auschwitz. A German-language memoir of her experiences, *Erinnern Ist Nicht Genug (Remembering Is Not Enough)*, was published in Germany. Her home is in Missouri.

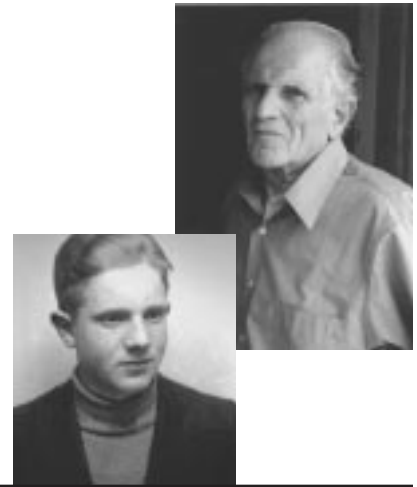


KURT FUCHEL

Kurt Fuchel was born Kurt Fuchsl in 1931 in Vienna, Austria, where he lived until the age of seven. After his parents sent him to Norwich, England, on the Kindertransport, he was taken in by the family of Percy and Mariam Cohen and stayed with them until the age of 16. His parents escaped from Austria to the south of France and were sheltered by French families during the war. In 1947, Kurt was reunited with his parents. They lived together in France until immigrating to the United States in 1956. A past president of the Kindertransport Association, Inc. (KTA), Kurt resides with his wife in New York.

ALEXANDER GORDON

Alexander Gordon was born Abrascha Gorbulski in 1922 in Bergedof, Germany, near Hamburg. His father died when he was three years old, and his impoverished mother was forced to place him in a Jewish orphanage four years later, where he remained until he graduated from high school at age 16. Afterwards, he went to work on a farm to prepare for immigration to Palestine. Following “Kristallnacht,” he was one of the first children to leave Germany on the Kindertransport. Because he was 16 when he arrived in Great Britain, he was arrested in June 1940, when the British government ordered the internment of refugees between the ages of 16 and 70 from enemy countries. Two weeks later, having been declared an “enemy alien,” he was shipped to Australia on the HMT *Dunera* and interned there for more than a year until he volunteered to join the Pioneer Corps and returned to England. He served in Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany until the end of 1947, when he immigrated to the United States. He now lives in New Jersey.

**EVA HAYMAN**

Eva Hayman was born Eva Diamant in Čelákovice, Czechoslovakia, in 1924. She was 15 years old when she left Czechoslovakia with her younger sister, Vera Gissing, both of whom were rescued by a Kindertransport organized by Nicholas Winton. She spent two years in an English boarding school before taking up nursing. Her wartime memoir, *By the Moon and the Stars*, is based on her diaries which she started writing in June 1939, her last day in Czechoslovakia, and finished in July 1945, the day she learned of the death of her parents. She resides in New Zealand, where she has lived since 1957.

**JACK HELLMAN**

Jack Hellman was born in 1925 as Hans Joachim Hellmann. To shelter him from the violent antisemitism he experienced daily in his hometown of Tann, Germany, his parents sent him to boarding school in Frankfurt when he was nine years old. After “Kristallnacht” (see box on page 10), the housemother of his school wrote to Baron James de Rothschild asking if he would take in 26 children as well as her husband, herself, and two daughters. The Baron agreed, and Jack and his schoolmates left Germany on the Kindertransport. Once in England, Jack prevailed upon Baron Rothschild to provide a work permit for his father. His parents arrived in Great Britain on September 1, 1939, the day Germany invaded Poland. They remained for two years until immigrating to New York, where Jack lived until his death in August 2001.

**BERTHA LEVERTON**

Bertha Leverton was born Bertha Engelhard in 1923 in Munich, Germany, the oldest of the three children of a Polish Jewish couple. She was sent on the Kindertransport with her brother Theo and spent her 16th birthday at Dovercourt Camp while waiting to be assigned a foster family. A family in Coventry took her in to be their maid and eventually welcomed Theo and their younger sister Inge, who had been in Germany until that time. Bertha conceived and organized the 50th Anniversary Reunion of Kindertransport in 1989 and also compiled and co-edited a collection of 250 remembrances of the transports, *I Came Alone*. She was a principal organizer of the 1999 60th Anniversary Reunion in London, where she lives.



URSULA ROSENFELD

Ursula Rosenfeld was born Ursula Ellen Simon in Quackenbrück, Germany, in 1925. After her father was arrested during “Kristallnacht” (see box on page 10) and murdered at the Buchenwald concentration camp, her mother sent 13-year-old Ursula and her older sister Hella to an orphanage in Hamburg. The girls remained there until they left for England the following year and were taken in by a widow in Brighton. Ursula’s mother did not survive the war. Ursula remained in England, where she was appointed a magistrate for her adopted city of Manchester.



INGE SADAN

Inge Sadan was born Inge Engelhard in 1930. At the age of nine, she traveled from Munich, Germany, to Coventry, England, after her elder sister Bertha managed to convince her foster family to act as her sponsor. The sisters and their brother Theo spent five difficult years with their foster family until their parents arrived in England in 1944. Inge lives in Jerusalem, Israel, where she co-organized a 1994 Kindertransport reunion and edited a book of Israeli *Kinder* reminiscences entitled *No Longer a Stranger*.

LORE SEGAL

Lore Segal was born Lore Groszmann in 1928, in Vienna, Austria. She was 10 when the German army marched into her country, and nine months later she was on the first Kindertransport to leave Vienna. At Dovercourt Camp, she wrote letters to relatives that eventually reached the Refugee Committee in London and helped to get her parents a domestic service visa. They arrived in Liverpool in time for her eleventh birthday. Lore Segal’s novel, *Other People’s Houses*, recounts her experience as a refugee child living with five different British families during the war. Today, she lives in New York in the same apartment building as her mother, Franzi Groszmann.



ROBERT SUGAR

Born in Vienna, Austria, in 1930, Robert Sugar was eight years old when he left on the Kindertransport. He was sent to a Jewish refugee hostel in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and then to a refugee farming settlement near Millisle, in County Down. After the war, which both his parents survived, Robert immigrated to New York in 1947 to join his mother. A graphic designer and author, Robert still lives in New York and has written extensive educational material on Jewish history as well as designed visual exhibits for the Kindertransport Association, Inc. (KTA), on whose board he serves.

The Parents and the Rescuers

MARIAM COHEN (FOSTER MOTHER)

Mariam Cohen was born in 1911, and married her husband Percy Cohen in 1932. Their son John was born in 1934. During World War II, the family accepted Kurt Fuchel into their home. Percy Cohen died in 1963. Mariam Cohen still lives in Norwich and enjoys regular visits from Kurt.



FRANZI GROSZMANN (MOTHER)

Franzi Groszmann was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1904. In 1939, she and her husband traveled from Vienna to England to join their daughter, Lore Segal. They worked as a domestic couple during the war: she as a cook, he as a butler and gardener. Franzi Groszmann still has breakfast with her daughter every day and has two grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

NICHOLAS WINTON (RESCUER)

Nicholas Winton, born in 1909, was a 29-year-old London stockbroker when he journeyed to Prague in December 1938. The desperation he encountered in the camps of refugees—the thousands of Jews, dissidents, and Communists who had fled the Sudetenland, the portion of Czechoslovakia recently annexed by Germany—prompted him to try to save their children when he returned to London. In the nine months before the onset of World War II, he was able to bring 664 Czech children to England, including Eva Hayman and her sister, Vera Gissing. His commitment to others has continued throughout his life. In 1983, he was honored with the title of MBE (Member of the British Empire) for his services to the community. In Czechoslovakia, he was honored with the Freedom of the City of Prague in 1992. He was awarded the 1999-2000 Service Above Self Award by Rotary International for exemplary humanitarian service.



NORBERT WOLLHEIM (RESCUER)

Norbert Wollheim, born in 1913 in Berlin, Germany, was 25 years old when he began organizing the Kindertransports in Berlin. An escort for several of the transports, he returned each time to Germany to continue his work, which ended upon the outbreak of war in September 1939. In 1943, he, his wife Rosa, and their three-year-old son Uri were deported to Auschwitz. Of a family of 70, he alone survived. In 1951, he sued German manufacturer I.G. Farben for back pay from the two years of forced labor he spent at Auschwitz. His suit led to a settlement that established a fund of \$6.43 million to compensate other forced laborers. He died in November 1998 at the age of 85, five weeks after completing his interview for this film.