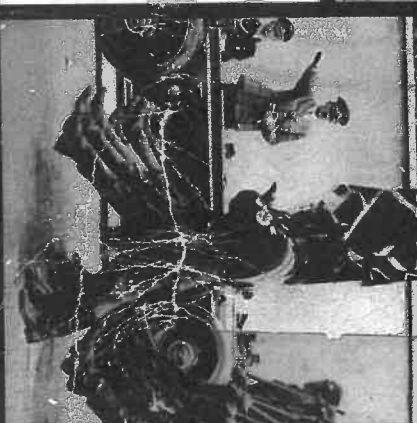


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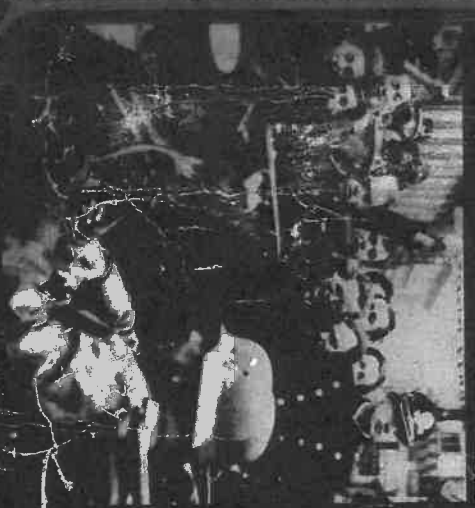


# A PLACE TO HIDE

True Stories of  
Holocaust Rescues



by Jayne Pettit



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SCHOLASTIC

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# Contents

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## Oskar and Emilie Schindler<sup>2</sup>

The silent procession of mourners moved slowly through the streets of Jerusalem. Ahead of them was the long, leaden casket of the friend they had come to bury. He was not an Israeli, nor was he a Jew. And yet, he was one of them.

Later, on a little hill overlooking the Valley of Hinnom, the body of Oskar Schindler was buried under a warm November sun. Itzhak was there, and so were Moshe and Juda and Jakob and Helen. They and each of the other *Schindlerjuden* (Schindler Jews) had come to pay final tribute to the Czechoslovakian German who had saved them from the ovens of Auschwitz and Chelmno and Belzev and Treblinka. He had fed them. He had clothed them and given them places to sleep. In the midst of the evil that had

once surrounded them, he had offered them *hatikva*, hope.

On April 28, 1908, Oskar Schindler, son of Hans and Louisa and brother of Elfriede Schindler, was born in Zwittau, an industrial city in the mountains of the Moravian Sudetenland, an area in northern Czechoslovakia that had once been a part of Austria.

Oskar had a happy, carefree youth. He went to the local German-speaking grammar school, where he and his fellow students trained for careers in engineering. Like most boys his age, he welcomed the days of summer, when he could indulge his love for fast cars and motorcycles. He raced with the best contenders of the villages and towns of the region, outsmarting many champions as he tore up and down the mountainous land on one of his powerful motorcycles.

During the summer of 1928, Oskar Schindler, now twenty years old, met and married Emilie, a nineteen-year-old girl who was the only child of a prosperous farmer from the nearby village of Alt-Molstein. Relatives and friends of both families were shocked by the brief courtship and hasty wedding ceremony, and none were more incensed than the fathers of the bride and groom.

It was an odd match. Oskar, tall, slim, dashingly handsome, already exhibited the flamboyance, charm, and zest for the fast life so like his father's. Emilie, by contrast, had led a sheltered

existence, attending convent schools and dutifully obeying the rules set down by her widowed father and the local parish priest.

Soon after the wedding, Oskar went off to serve the required period of time in the Czechoslovakian Army, while Emilie stayed behind in Zwitterau. The military life, with all of its discipline and order, held no appeal, however, and Oskar counted the days until he could resume the life filled with the comforts he had come to love.

Returning to Zwitterau a private citizen, Oskar went to work at his father's farm-machinery factory and soon found he was developing great skill in selling and marketing the Schindler products. Rumors began to float about, suggesting that Oskar spent his evenings at the local cafes, drinking and flirting.

In 1935, the Schindler factory closed. Oskar became the regional sales manager for an electro-technical firm and was away from Emilie for weeks at a time. He amazed his employers with his extraordinary ability to bring in new business. At the same time, because of the nature of his work, Oskar was making valuable contacts with people rising in political and military power throughout the Sudetenland. These contacts would one day play a significant role in Schindler's life.

At a party one evening in 1938, Schindler was introduced to Eberhard Gebauer, an officer of Abwehr, the Secret Intelligence Service of the Wehrmacht, the German Army. Would Oskar be

interested, Gebauer asked, in using his skills to gather information for the Third Reich? Assignments would take him across the border into Poland, where the Abwehr wanted to acquire intelligence regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the Polish Army. Schindler jumped at the chance. The excitement of working for such a secret operation held much glamour and appeal for him. Soon, he was commuting between Zwitterau and the beautiful city of Kraków, Poland, balancing his work for Gebauer with his expanding interests in the electrotechnical business.

During the month of March, in 1939, Hitler's armies marched into the Sudetenland. By September of that same year, Germany had swept across Poland. Schindler was greatly disturbed, not only by the advances made by Hitler's mighty army, but by the way in which the Jews and Czechs were being treated in the newly occupied territories. Continuing his work with the Abwehr, Schindler became aware of the fact that Gebauer and a number of other officers disapproved of many things that were taking place.

For the next seven months, Oskar Schindler continued to make contacts in southern Poland, dining with leaders in the Polish business and political community as well as with officials representing the German occupation forces. He seemed totally comfortable and in control in both camps, pulling information from the most unlikely sources and flashing his disarming smile across many a dinner table.

During this time, Schindler met Itzhak Stern, who had been a Jewish accountant for a profitable Polish dry goods manufacturer before the German onslaught. Although Stern's responsibilities had been largely taken over by a German supervisor, he was still an employee and an active member of the Jewish business community. Schindler, restless for a new challenge, asked Stern to check into a number of business opportunities he had been investigating for himself. A short time later, Stern presented Schindler with some possibilities. And so Oskar Schindler, now aged thirty-one, with total indifference to the possible consequences, gave up his job as a salesman and bought the little Kraków enamel factory that would become the center of all of his activities for the next several years.

Schindler's private life had taken on new interests as well. Among these was Ingrid, a beautiful and talented German woman who had recently been named manager of a large Kraków hardware business. (By the autumn of 1939, all businesses owned by Jews in Poland had been taken over by the German occupation.) Ingrid shared Oskar Schindler's enthusiasm for parties, weekends with friends, and socializing with important people. Oskar, who spent little or no time with Emilie in Zwittau, moved into a fashionable apartment on Straszewskiego Street, which had, before the occupation, belonged to a prominent Jewish family.

Schindler continued to rely upon Itzhak Stern

for sound business advice regarding his enamel factory, Deutsche Email Fabrik. With his usual energy, he was rapidly expanding the manufacture of enamelware. Soon, through his many contacts with the German occupational forces, he was producing kitchen utensils for the military.

Early one bitterly cold morning in December, Oskar Schindler paid an unannounced visit to Stern, but to Stern's surprise, it was not business the German had in mind. During that visit, Oskar warned Stern that there was soon to be some kind of an action taken against the Jews in the Kazimierz sector of Kraków. Schindler's message was brief. So brief, in fact, that before Stern had time to digest it, Schindler was gone.

Soon after, an *Aktion*, or round-up of Jews — the first of its kind in the city of Kraków — did take place. On street after street and in countless homes throughout the Kazimierz sector, Jews were beaten and robbed. As SS troops rampaged the area, an armored van carrying six Nazi gunmen acting as mobile killing units raided the five-hundred-year-old Stara Boznica Temple, the oldest synagogue in Poland. As the congregation bent over their prayers, the terrorists stormed down the aisles of the temple and broke open the sacred Ark. Tearing the ancient Torah scroll from the Ark, the Nazis threw the parchment to the floor and demanded that the worshippers spit upon it. Seconds later, guns blasted.

Word of the temple massacre spread quickly



throughout the city that night. Many members of the Jewish community who had been skeptical of Schindler's warning now began to fear for their families, their neighbors, and their friends. But Stern also wondered why Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist who was just beginning to make his mark, would risk his reputation for the sake of a few hundred Jews?

Sometime during the early spring of 1940, Itzhak Stern paid a visit to Oskar Schindler at his new offices on Lipowa Street. Stern took note of the man. Only the finest of materials for his suits, it appeared. Pure silk shirts and ties, and jeweled rings that sparkled on his long fingers. Nothing but the best for Oskar Schindler. And to complete the picture, that smile — as if the German hadn't a care in the world.

Schindler discussed with Stern his intention of hiring new employees. Stern marveled at the man. Here he was, after a few short months in Kraków, the head of an expanding company with military contracts and the favor of powerful figures associated with the Wehrmacht's Armaments Inspectorate, and he was asking Itzhak Stern to find him one hundred fifty Jewish men and women to work in his factory. Was the man insane?

After careful thought, Stern agreed. He would find the workers. That would not be difficult. But there were problems. Grave problems.

Among the latest of the German edicts against

the Jews were those excluding Jews from the workplace. Jewish professionals as well as blue-collar and factory workers were losing their jobs to non-Jews in massive numbers throughout Poland.

How then, Stern wanted to know, could Schindler possibly consider the hiring of a *single Jew* — let alone one hundred fifty — in his factory?

Simple, Schindler replied. His work now involved contracts for the military and would therefore count as essential to the war effort. No one would question Herr Oskar Schindler about his unusual hiring practices. After all, some interesting people had invested heavily in this new and thriving enterprise. People in high places. People with influence.

And so, the first of the Jews were hired. As the months rolled by and production continued to expand, their numbers increased. The hours were long, but the work was steady and the morale of the workers was high. The factory — Deutsche Email Fabrik — had become known as a safe place for Jews. A haven from a world that grew more dangerous with each passing day. Schindler was fair; always kind and courteous. Never too busy to stop and offer a word of encouragement to a weary factory worker.

One day, as Schindler made an inspection of a new department of the factory that would be involved in the production of munitions and shell casings, he received word through one of his many contacts that a new Jewish ghetto was to

be established. It would be a walled section, isolated from the rest of Kraków in every respect and guarded by the Kraków police force and the *Judenrat*, a group of Jews appointed by the Nazis as overseers to ensure that the edicts issued by the German command would be obeyed. Now, the Jews were to be isolated from the life they once knew.

A few weeks later, while Schindler made his way about Kraków, he watched wagons and carts moving slowly through the streets, crammed with whatever possessions a family could gather for the move into the ghetto. Behind the vehicles walked Kraków's Jews, parents carrying infants, children clutching the family kitten, a doll, or a small bag of books. Each day, as Schindler's chauffeur guided his sleek black limousine past a procession, he watched the crowds that lined both sides of the street, taunting the Jews and tossing stones at them. He heard jeering voices rising above the crowd.

Inside the ghetto, a family would be assigned a single room, perhaps two, and a kitchen to be shared by several families. Beyond the tiny window lay a view of the sealed wall with its rows of barbed wire, its gatehouse, and its guards.

Soon after the Nazis had established the Jews in the ghetto, Abraham Bankier, Schindler's office manager, paid a visit to an employment office that had been set up within the ghetto walls to hire men and women for jobs connected with the

war production industry. The wages were low and the risks high. Already, there were rumors of Jews who had not returned from a day's work in a Kraków factory.

But Bankier was not concerned with rumors. He knew something about Oskar Schindler that many important people did not know. Schindler was one German you could trust to take care of the Jews who worked for him. He would see to it that they returned home each night. And Oskar Schindler needed more help to work his night shift.

That evening, as Bankier climbed the stairs to his employer's suite of offices at Deutsche Email, he glanced furtively at the trail of women who followed him. How pathetic they looked, fearful and distrusting of the German who said he had work for them. Why? Were there not plenty of non-Jews in Kraków who would jump at the chance to work in such a place? Why Jews?

As the women filed into the spacious office quarters, they could not help but stare at the elegant surroundings. The finest Turkish Oriental rugs were on the floors. On the walls were exquisite paintings and sculptures. The furniture was of elegant woods, upholstered in the most-expensive fabrics. Who was this man?

And then they saw him. His smile radiant, his voice reassuring. Oskar Schindler was speaking to them, telling them that they need not worry about themselves. He would see to it that they



would be safe. No harm would come to them as long as they were in his employ. Just a few words, and then he was gone.

Oskar Schindler was riding high. Deutsche Email Fabrik was prospering, his influence with the Wehrmacht officers of rank and power continued to expand, and his dealings in black market products had fattened his bank account. When questions arose about the wisdom of employing so many Jews, Schindler just laughed, and steered the conversation onto a discussion of Germany's newest triumphs in the war. Those who might have had the slightest suspicions of the true nature of Schindler's employment practices were rewarded by an expensive gift of some kind.

From time to time, Emilie Schindler would come to Kraków. She loved the city's beauty and enjoyed the chance to leave the provincial atmosphere of Zittau and the gossip about her husband's long absences. In fact, an appearance by Oskar Schindler was usually marked by an event of importance. The death of a family member; an occasional Easter holiday.

Whenever Emilie Schindler stayed with her husband in Kraków, she would hear news about the worsening conditions in the Jewish ghetto, the unemployment and the hunger, the cruelty of the guards, and the beatings by Polish citizens as well as Nazi overseers. She was troubled by the

disappearances of a number of the city's Jews. Rounded up for forced labor at Płaszów, the new concentration camp being built on the outskirts of Kraków, many failed to return at the end of a workday. Emilie Schindler also learned about the sadistic nature of the camp's commandant, Amnon Goeth.

Oskar Schindler's practice of employing Jews at Deutsche Email brought comfort to his wife. She was proud of her husband's work, although she was aware of the risks involved. Twice he had been arrested by suspicious authorities at SS headquarters. Only through his cleverness and the effects of some heavy bribes, was he able to secure his release. Touring her husband's plant on her visits, Mrs. Schindler met many of the men and women who worked in the munitions department. They were well-treated, and deeply loyal to the man who had given them some hope of a better existence. Mrs. Schindler also knew the strange circumstances of their employment. Instead of paying wages to his Jewish workers, Schindler handed rations of food and supplies to them and turned over to the local SS headquarters a daily fee for every person who worked for him!

In the months that followed one of Emilie Schindler's visits, conditions in Kraków deteriorated. There were new executions and disappearances, and hangings in the public square for those who tried to hide their Jewish friends. One

morning, more than one thousand men from the ghetto were marched to the cattle trains and deported to unknown destinations.

Schindler learned from reliable contacts of still another *Aktion* at the ghetto. Upon hearing the news, he quickly set up as many cots as could be crowded within the walls of Deutsche Email. If the worst came, at least he would be able to shelter those people who were working at the factory.

On a morning in June 1942, the terror began. Roused from their beds, men, women, and children of the Kraków ghetto were forced from their rooms and herded onto the streets. Pushed, shoved, and beaten by SS guards and Gestapo police, the men were separated from the women, and the women from their children. Those who protested were gunned down. The Jews watched as their rooms were raided, beds set afire, and the elderly and the sick tossed from open windows. The *Aktion* raged throughout the day, and then the shootings began. Gunfire blasted into the crowds of innocent victims huddled together in the heat of the warm summer day.

Seven thousand Jews were murdered that day, or deported to death camps. This was just the beginning of the many raids that followed, not only at Kraków, but at Warsaw, Lodz, and all of the other Eastern European ghettos as the Nazis moved toward the Final Solution — Adolph Hitler's master plan for the total extermination of the Jewish population. It was on this day that Oskar Schindler made his ultimate commitment

to the five hundred fifty Jews who were now in his employ. He would protect them, somehow. He would find a way to save them from the final horror.

Later, some would say of Oskar Schindler that he was foolish to take the risks that he took. After a third arrest, many of those closest to him warned him that one day his luck would run out. To these unheeded protests, he would merely shrug and laugh. On more than one occasion, Schindler spent large sums of money in bribes to a local official, an officer of the SS, or a ranking member of the Armaments Inspectorate. Each time he was confronted by a new challenge, a new threat to the safety of his workers or to himself, he would emerge unscathed, undaunted by the dangers that faced him. His energies and his resourcefulness knew no bounds, and the Jews who worked for him marveled at the man.

On March 13, 1943, the war industry facilities at the Plaszow labor camp outside of Kraków were completed and the Kraków ghetto was closed. On Lieutenant Amon Goeth's orders, all of the ghetto's elderly and terminally ill Jews were loaded onto cattle cars bound for the death camps. The Jews who were left, including all of Schindler's workers, were to be sent to the camp and put to work in each of several factories that were to go into operation. Schindler protested that *his* plant was also engaged in essential war industry. Had not Deutsche Email received the



highest of praise from the head of the German Occupational Command? Besides, there were any number of things Amnon Goeth could avail himself of through Schindler's connections with the black market.

Amnon Goeth was a greedy man with insatiable needs. Perhaps Schindler could help with the furnishing of Amnon's new villa at the Plaszow camp.

After a talk that lasted into the early hours of the morning, a deal was struck between the two: The Jews in Schindler's factory would be interned at the Plaszow camp, but continue to work for Deutsche Email, marching each day under heavy guard from the camp to the factory and back again in two shifts covering the twenty-four-hour workday.

As the weeks passed, however, Schindler noted changes in his workers. Increasingly gaunt and fearful, their eyes and vacant expressions seemed to hide secrets they dared not reveal. Frequently late or absent from their work stations, the workers would tell Schindler they had been ordered into one of the labor gangs operating within the camp. Soon, there were stories of floggings and public hangings, which the prisoners were forced to witness. Schindler also learned of one of Amnon Goeth's favorite pastimes — standing on his villa balcony before breakfast in the morning and firing several shots into a group of Jews marching by.

Enraged, Schindler demanded that his workers be released from the Plaszow camp. He would

provide quarters for them near the Deutsche Email factory. After the customary bribes and promises, Amnon Goeth agreed to let Oskar keep his workers — at extraordinary cost to Schindler. What mattered most in the world to Schindler now was the protection of the Jews. They would be housed in clean quarters, given food twice a day, and treated like human beings. There would be no beatings, no dying from starvation or overwork.

Other Polish Jews were not so fortunate. Week by week, trainloads of prisoners were brought into the Plaszow camp, the numbers grew to more than thirty-five thousand. Starvation and disease were rampant among the prisoners. And in the presence of all of this evil, Amnon Goeth was amassing a fortune in juggled account books and bribes.

Late in the summer of 1944, as the Germans took heavy losses along the Eastern Front and the Russians began their advance into Poland, Schindler found out that the Plaszow camp was to be disbanded and its prisoners were to be "relocated," the men to Gross-Rosen and the women to Auschwitz. Certain that the Plaszow Jews were marked for extermination, Schindler began to formulate a plan. An impossible plan, perhaps, but one worth pursuing. Because to Oskar Schindler, nothing was impossible.

Timing was everything. There was but one thing to do: Move Deutsche Email Fabrik to a safer place.



Leaving the factory in trusted hands, Schindler drove across the border and south, toward the rolling terrain of the Jessenik Mountains he had once known and loved so much. Through his contact, he discovered a textile plant that was located on the outskirts of Brünnlitz, near the city of Zwittau. Attached to the plant was an unused annex, which proved to be exactly what Schindler was looking for. Workshops would be set up on the first floor, along with a small apartment for himself. On the second floor, there was adequate room for barracks.

After extensive appeals to Schindler's influential sources in Berlin, permission for the move was granted. Hurrying back to Poland, a list of prisoners began forming in his mind. Of utmost importance were his own workers. They would be the first to move, but there were others. On his many visits to Amnon Goeth's villa at the Plaszow camp, there were scores of prisoners with whom he had come in contact. Among these were people who worked in the uniform factory. He could use them at the new plant. Schindler's list was growing.

After almost two months, the Brünnlitz factory camp was ready for production. Male prisoners were to be moved first and the women to follow. The train journey would take several days to complete, but the workers were not fearful. Schindler was in charge. They would be safe. All would be well.

But all was not well. Following the arrival of the men at the Brünnlitz camp, months went by with no sign of the three hundred women Schindler had included in his list. The men, many of whom had wives in the group, became frantic. What had gone wrong?

At last, Schindler learned the truth. The Deutsche Email women had been deported to Auschwitz, the death camp near Birkenau.

Schindler tried everything to acquire the release of the women, but the usual bribes would not do. One day, as he contemplated his next move with his old friend Itzhak Stern (who had been on Schindler's list), a secretary came into his office. Studying the young woman for a moment, Schindler had an idea. Pointing to a large diamond ring on one of his fingers, Schindler offered it to the woman, in return for a favor. Without hesitation, she agreed to help.

Following Schindler's orders, the woman filled a large suitcase with the finest foods and liquor she could carry. Then, clutching a list of the names of the three hundred women, she started off for Auschwitz.

Days passed, with no word from the woman. Emilie Schindler, who had joined her husband once again, grew extremely anxious, having known the woman's family for many years.

Then, one icy winter morning soon after the secretary's return to Brünnlitz, a train arrived. As the huge doors were opened, the women stumbled out. Full of lice, wracked by dysentery and

typhus, and in rags, the women stared at the sight before them. Standing before an open gate and surrounded by SS guards, stood Oskar Schindler in a Tyrolean hat and fur-trimmed coat. Many years later, one of the women said of him, "He was our father, he was our mother, he was our only faith. He never let us down."

From the autumn of 1944 until May 7, 1945, Schindler's factory continued to operate. The women slowly recovered from their Auschwitz ordeal (the only such group to have been released from the camp during the entire war), due partly to Emilie Schindler's remarkable care. To them, she was a saint, nursing them with medicines she got, at great risk, from the black market. At any time of the day, she could be seen carrying portions of thick, steaming soup to the infirmary where a number of Jewish physicians worked. In a memoir published in 1974, Schindler wrote of his wife's loyalty. "My wife, Emilie, shared my views on the importance of saving Jewish lives... she often worked a fourteen-to sixteen-hour day alongside me, as we faced to crisis after another."

Throughout the seven months that Brünhlitz Schindler was arrested for a third time, before his wife finally arranged for his release. There were food shortages requiring many black market dealings with local merchants, and frequent scuffles with some of the more zealous of the SS

guards posted at the camp. And there were the two deportation trains that pulled up in the railroad yard outside of the camp, full of half-starved prisoners bound for nowhere. Upon hearing that the guards in charge of the trains intended to shoot everyone inside who was still alive, the Schindlers demanded the release of the prisoners and took them in.

During the first few days of May 1945, with the end of the war just days away, the SS guards assigned to Brünhlitz deserted the camp. When the Russians arrived on May 7, one of the Jews slipped a letter to the officer in charge. In it was a testimonial attesting to the Schindlers' courage and determination in saving the lives of the Jews.

A short time later, the Russians allowed the Schindlers to leave Brünhlitz. Accompanied by about ten Jews, they journeyed through Allied lines, stopping at roadblocks to present their letter to the authorities, sometimes Russian, and at other times Czech. One morning after stopping at a local inn to rest, the little group discovered their car broken into — and all of their food and clothing gone. Jewels and money that they had hoped to use in their escape had been ripped out of a secret pocket in one of the car doors. Later, after a long journey in boxcars and on foot, the Schindlers and their former prisoners arrived in the American zone. Hungry and sick with exhaustion, they met a Jewish officer who made arrangements for their departure to South America.

After the war, Oskar and Emilie Schindler, with the help of some of their devoted Jewish workers, bought a small farm in Argentina's Buenos Aires province, where they remained for almost ten years. But farming was not for Oskar Schindler, and in 1957 the Schindlers went bankrupt. Supported by the Jewish organization B'nai B'rith, he tried a number of commercial ventures, none of which was successful. He returned to Germany, moving into a small apartment in Frankfurt, again with funds supplied by many of his former workers, while Emilie Schindler remained in Buenos Aires, where she continued to live for many years.

In 1961, a number of the Jews who had worked for Schindler and who had moved to Israel, among them Itzhak Stern, invited Schindler to Jerusalem to be honored by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, as one of the Righteous Among Nations. This is a distinction given to the men and women who had risked their lives to rescue Jews from Hitler's tyranny.

What motivated Oskar Schindler to help the Jews? He was not a religious man, nor was he a man of the highest ethical standards. To those who knew him best, there was no easy explanation for his actions.

Oskar Schindler's remaining years were difficult ones. Appearing on the streets of Frankfurt, he was frequently hissed and taunted by those who knew of his activities during the war. Many Germans continued to be fiercely anti-Semitic

and their attitudes took a desperate toll on the man who had once fought so tirelessly for the lives of his workers. With a small pension that was finally awarded him by the German government, Schindler divided his time between Frankfurt and Jerusalem. On one of his visits, he expressed his desire to be buried on the hills above the city, the only place on earth where he thought he could find peace.

On a warm November day in 1974, the Catholic priest at a cemetery on the hill overlooking the Valley of Hinnom in the ancient city of Jerusalem intoned his final prayers. Oskar Schindler, German industrialist, spy, entrepreneur, and rescuer of more than twelve hundred Jews, found his peace at last.

After the service, those who had come to mourn him inched closer to his grave and stood in silence, each remembering the years that had gone before. As the sun rose higher in the sky, someone began to sing softly. It was, perhaps, a final tribute to the man who, in the midst of unsurpassed evil, had brought them hope.



### 3 *Defiance in Denmark*

**E**arly one April morning in 1940, the skies over Denmark were filled with German aircraft. Swooping down close to the ground, the planes dumped thousands of green leaflets. The people were to remain calm, the messages read. There was nothing to fear from the Germans of the Third Reich. But within hours, Denmark was swarming with tanks, SS troops, and Gestapo police, who quickly defeated the Danish army. Without warning, Denmark had been invaded and conquered.

The Germans went to work immediately, making noisy speeches in public gathering places and handing out anti-Semitic literature encouraging the isolation of Jews from Danish society. But the campaign against the Jews backfired. The Germans had counted on the kind of cooperation they

had had in their own country and in Eastern Europe. Denmark was different. Its Jewish population of roughly eight thousand had been totally integrated since the early part of the nineteenth century. Danes were Danes, whether they were Jews, Catholics, Protestants, or otherwise.

During the 1930s, Christian X, King of Denmark, had warned the German ambassador to Denmark that anti-Semitism was unacceptable. And as news about the violent raids against the Jews in Germany spread, the Danes were angry and ashamed. In ceremonies marking the one hundredth anniversary of the great Crystal Synagogue in Copenhagen, the king defied the actions and participated in the services, accompanied by his entire family.

This mistake on the part of the Germans combined with another unusual situation. The Danes were considered by the Nazis to be purely Aryan like themselves. So when the people of Denmark openly defended the Jews, the Germans changed their tactics. Until 1943, no Jewish businesses were shut down, university professors and other people of influence continued their work, and synagogues stayed open. Then came the new orders from the German high command.

In 1943, the Danish government was ordered to begin legislation against the Jews, ghettos were to be established, and the yellow Star of David was to be worn by every Jew.

The Danes took to the streets in protest, and bishops and clergy throughout the country took