Henoch Kornfeld

Born: ca. 1938, Poland

Henoch's religious Jewish parents married in 1937. His father, Moishe Kornfeld, and his mother, Liba Saleschutz, had settled in Kolbuszowa, where Henoch's mother was raised. There, Liba's father bought the newlyweds a home and started his new son-in-law in the wholesale textile business.

1938-39: Henoch was born in late 1938, and was raised among many aunts, uncles and cousins. Around Henoch's first birthday, Germany invaded Poland and soon reached Kolbuszowa. Polish soldiers on horses tried to fight against the German army, but they were no match for tanks. After a short battle, there were many dead horses in the streets. Henoch's town came under German rule.

1940-42: Everyone in town, including the children, knew of Hafenbier, the vicious German police commander with the face of a bulldog who was posted in Kolbuszowa. Hafenbier terrorized and killed many of the town's Jews. Henoch often played a game with the other children in town in which he would portray Hafenbier, saying to his friends, "If you are a Jew, you are dead." Then, with a rifle made from a piece of wood, Henoch would "shoot" his playmates. They, in turn, would fall over, pretending they had been killed.

Henoch and his family were deported to the Rzeszow ghetto on June 25, 1942, and then to the Belzec extermination camp on July 7 where they were gassed. Henoch was 3 and a half years old.

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Max Rosenblat

Born: July 1939, Radom, Poland

Max's parents, Taube and Itzik, first met as children in 1925. Taube was the daughter of a tailor who hired apprentices in his shop, and Itzik was one such apprentice. The Jewish youngsters fell in love and dreamed of getting married even though Taube's family frowned upon the match.

1933-39: In 1938 Taube and Itzik married. The couple lived in an apartment on 49 Zeromskiego Street in Radom, where Itzik opened a women's tailor shop. Max was born in July 1939. He had curly hair and blue eyes like his father. Two months after he was born, Germany invaded Poland. The Germans occupied Radom and evicted all the Jews from Zeromskiego Street. The Rosenblats had to leave everything, even Max's baby carriage.

1940-42: Radom's Jewish Council assigned the Rosenblats to a shack, which was enclosed in a Jewish ghetto in April 1941. Max slept in a homemade bed of straw. He had no toys and little food. In August 1942, when Max was 3, the Germans began rounding up and deporting all the Jews in Radom's two ghettos who could not work for them. Max's father tried to hide his family in his shop, but they were caught in a roundup and Max and his mother were taken away. They were marched to the railroad and herded into a boxcar.

In August 1942 Max and his mother were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were gassed upon arrival. Max was 3 years old.

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Urszula Kaczmarek

Born: July 18, 1929, Poznan, Poland

Urszula was one of four children born to Franciszek and Jadwiga Kaczmarek, who lived in the industrial city of Poznan in western Poland. The family lived at 11 Smolnej Street. Like their parents, the Kaczmarek children were baptized in the Roman Catholic faith.

1933-39: As one of the older children in the family, Urszula helped her mother with the housework. She was 10 years old when the Germans invaded Poland on Friday, September 1, 1939. German planes bombed Poznan that same day, and German troops entered the city nine days later. Poznan was in an area of Poland that became formally annexed to Germany [a result of the German-Soviet Pact]. The city was renamed Posen at the end of the month.

1940-43: After the city was occupied, Urszula's parents were among the many citizens put to work as conscript labor for the Nazis. Urszula was left to take care of her younger brother and sister. One day in late 1942, while playing by the house, they were rounded up during a random "street sweep" by the Nazis. That winter, Urszula was deported to a forced-labor camp for children located within Lodz's Jewish ghetto. When she became ill, the guards dragged her into the snow, poured cold water on her, and left her outside.

On May 9, 1943, Urszula died of pneumonia. She was 13 years old. The camp records listed her cause of death as a heart attack.

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Joseph Gani

Born: 1926, Preveza, Greece

Joseph and his family lived in Preveza, a town with a Jewish population of 300 that was located on the Ionian seashore. Joseph's father had a small textile shop. The Ganis were of Romaniot descent, Jews whose ancestors had lived in Greece and the Balkans for more than a thousand years.

1933-39: Joseph attended Greek public school in Preveza. He also received a religious education; the local rabbi would come to the public school for several hours a week to give religious instruction to the Jewish students. Joseph loved sports, especially soccer and baseball.

1940-44: Germany invaded Greece in 1941 and took over the region where Preveza was located in the fall of 1943. The Jews of Preveza were deported to Auschwitz in Poland in March 1944. There, Joseph was assigned to work in Birkenau as part of the Sonderkommando, a work unit that carted corpses to the crematoria. On October 7, 1944, Sonderkommando workers in crematorium IV revolted, disarming SS guards and blowing up the crematorium. Soon, other Sonderkommando workers, including Joseph, joined in the uprising.

Joseph was killed in Birkenau in October 1944. He was 18 years old.

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Wolf Wajsbrot

Born: 1925, Krasnik, Poland

When Wolf was a young boy, his family moved to France to escape Poland's economic instability and growing antisemitism. Soon after they settled in Paris, his father found work in construction, and Wolf started elementary school.

1933-39: Paris was home to Wolf, but he loved to listen to his parents reminisce about autumns in Krasnik and journeys to Lublin. Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. The Wajsbrots learned of the death camps and mass deportations of Jews. Wolf's parents no longer spoke of the past. Wolf received his school certificate, and at age 14 he began an apprenticeship to a mechanic.

1940-44: The Germans crossed into France in early 1940, and by June they occupied Paris. The Wajsbrots escaped many of the early roundups of Jews, but on July 16, 1942, Wolf's parents were arrested and deported. At 17 he joined the armed resistance group, Franc-Tireurs et Partisans, to fight against the German occupation. He helped to set two bombs on a Paris street that killed many German officers and soldiers. In the autumn of 1943 he was arrested.

Wolf was tried by the German authorities in February 1944. Convicted and sentenced to die by firing squad, Wolf was executed on February 21, 1944. He was 19 years old.

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Nelly Adler

Born: February 28, 1930, Liege, Belgium

Nelly was the youngest of three daughters born to Jewish parents in Liege, a French-speaking industrial city in eastern Belgium. Her Yiddish- speaking parents had moved there from Czechoslovakia a year before Nelly was born. The Adlers were one of only a few Jewish families in the largely Catholic city. Nelly grew up speaking French with her friends at school.

1933-39: The Adler's apartment was above a cafe and across the street from a Catholic church. Her parents ran a successful tailoring business from their home. Nelly attended public school and had many Catholic girlfriends. Her religious mother made sure that she and her sisters also studied Hebrew.

1940-44: Nelly was 10 when the Germans occupied her city. Two years later, because they were Jews, Nelly and her sisters were forced out of school. Some Catholic friends helped the Adlers obtain false papers and rented them a house in a nearby village. One Sunday, two days after her ill father had checked into the hospital, the Gestapo came to Nelly's house at 5 a.m. They had heard there was a family of Jews there. They demanded to know where Nelly's father was--she told them the truth, but the Gestapo slapped her for lying.

Everyone in the house was arrested and deported. Nelly was gassed in Auschwitz on May 21, 1944. She was 14 years old.

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Zigmond Adler

Born: July 18, 1936, Liege, Belgium

Zigmond's parents were Czechoslovakian Jews who had emigrated to Belgium. His mother, Rivka, was a shirtmaker. She had come to Belgium as a young woman to find a steady job, following her older brother, Jermie, who had moved his family to Liege several years earlier. In Liege, Rivka met and married Otto Adler, a businessman. The couple looked forward to raising a family.

1933-39: Zigmond was born to the Adlers in 1936, but his mother died one year later. His father remarried, but the marriage didn't last. Zigmond's father then married for a third time, and soon Zigmond had a new half-sister and a stable family life. As a boy, Zigmond often visited his Uncle Jermie's family, who lived just a few blocks away.

1940-44: Zigmond was 3 when the Germans occupied Belgium. Two years later, the Germans deported his father for forced labor. After that, Zigmond's stepmother left Liege, giving Zigmond to Uncle Jermie and Aunt Chaje. When the Nazis began rounding up Jews in Liege, some of Uncle Jermie's Catholic friends helped them get false papers that hid their Jewish identity and rented them a house in a nearby village. Two years later, early one Sunday morning, the Gestapo came to the house. They suspected Jews were living there.

Zigmond, his aunt and two cousins were sent to the Mechelen internment camp, and then to Auschwitz, where 7-year-old Zigmond was gassed on May 21, 1944.

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Maria Nemeth

Born: December 14, 1932, Szentes, Hungary

Maria's parents lived in Szentes, a town in southeastern Hungary, located 30 miles from the city of Szeged. Her mother, Barbara, was born in the neighboring town of Hodmezovasarhely, but moved to Szentes when she married. Maria's father was a dentist.

1933-39: Maria was born in 1932. In 1937 her mother took in a young Austrian woman who lived with the family and helped Maria learn German.

1940-44: In March 1944 German troops occupied Hungary. Members of the Hungarian fascist party, Arrow Cross, confiscated Maria's grandparents' store. She and her parents, grandparents, uncle and aunt and their families were among thousands of Jews from towns around Szeged who were deported to a makeshift ghetto in Szeged's Rokus sports field and brickyards. The Nemeths were deported from Szeged to Austria, via the Strasshof concentration camp, to a labor camp in the small farming village of Goestling an der Ybbs.

Maria and her family were among 80 Jews in the camp who were machine-gunned to death by retreating SS soldiers just days before U.S. forces reached the area. Maria was 13.

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Paula Wajcman

Born: 1928, Kielce, Poland

Paula was raised in a religious Jewish family in Kielce, a city in the southeast of Poland. Her family lived in a modern two-story apartment complex. Paula's father owned the only trucking company in the district. Her older brother, Herman, attended religious school, while Paula attended public kindergarten in the morning and religious school in the afternoon.

1933-39: Paula's school uniform was a navy blazer with a white blouse and pleated skirt. At age 9, she did the "Krakowiak" dance at school. Boys flirted with her when her overprotective brother was not around. Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Paula's father did not wait for German troops to reach Kielce. He loaded one of his trucks, and the family fled east to the town of Tuchin, 30 miles from the Soviet border.

1940-44: Paula's mother, returning to Kielce for supplies, was stranded when the border dividing Poland closed. German forces occupied Tuchin on July 4, 1941. Hearing that Jews nearby had been massacred, the family built a bunker under the wooden floor of the textile factory where they worked. They knew that the pits the Germans and Ukrainians were digging were intended for them. At dawn on September 24, 1942, police moved into the ghetto. People set fires everywhere. In the chaos, Paula and her father ran to the bunker.

The bunker was discovered by the Germans, and Paula and her father were shot. She was 14 years old.

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Judith Margareth Konijn

Born: January 7, 1930, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Judith was the younger of two children born to religious, middle-class Jewish parents. Judith's mother, Clara, was Sephardic, a descendant of Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492. Her father, Lodewijk, was a traveling representative for a firm based in Amsterdam. The family lived in an apartment in a new section of Amsterdam on the southern outskirts.

1933-39: Judith attended grade school with her cousin Hetty who was the same age. Judith loved to study. Her mother taught piano to students who came to the house for lessons. Judith loved to play the piano, too. Her family celebrated the Jewish holidays, and like most Dutch families, they exchanged gifts every December 6 on Saint Nicholas Day.

1940-43: After the Germans occupied Amsterdam, they enforced new laws that forbade Jews to enter libraries and museums, or even to use street cars. Then they ordered Jews to wear an identifying yellow badge, and would not allow Jewish children to attend public schools. One by one Judith's relatives disappeared, picked up by the Germans. Then Judith, her mother and brother were arrested in a roundup by the Germans who came while Judith's father was away at work on a night shift.

Judith was deported to the Westerbork transit camp. From there she was sent to an extermination camp in Poland. She was 13 years old when she died.

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Blimcia Lische

Born: late 1938, Kolbuszowa, Poland

Blimcia's parents were religious Jews. Her father, Shaya David, and her mother, Malcia Saleschtz, had settled in Kolbuszowa, where Blimcia's mother had been raised. There, Malcia's father bought the newlyweds a home and started his new son-in-law in the wholesale flour business.

1933-39: Blimcia was born in 1938, and was raised among many aunts, uncles and cousins. Around Blimcia's first birthday, Germany invaded Poland and soon reached Kolbuszowa. Polish soldiers on horses tried to fight against the German army, but they were no match for tanks. After a short battle, there were many dead horses in the streets. Blimcia's town came under German rule.

1940-42: The children in town feared Hafenbier, the vicious German police commander who was posted in Kolbuszowa. Hafenbier terrorized and killed many of the town's Jews. Blimcia often played a game in which her 3-year-old cousin Henoch would portray Hafenbier, asking her and their friends, "Are you a Jew?" "Yes," they would answer. "If you are a Jew," mimicked Henoch, "you are dead." With his rifle fashioned from wood, Henoch would "shoot" Blimcia and the others. They would fall over, pretending they had been killed.

Blimcia and her family were deported to the Rzeszow ghetto on June 25, 1942, and then to the Belzec extermination camp on July 7 where they were gassed. Blimcia was 3 and a half years old.

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Andras Muhlrad

Born: July 27, 1930, Ujpest, Hungary

1933-39: Andras was 4 when his family moved to their own apartment. It was 1936 when he began primary school and Hitler had already been in power in Nazi Germany for three years. At night his father would turn on the radio to listen to news of the Third Reich. All this still seemed far away from Hungary. The young boy concentrated on earning good grades. He knew only a few top Jewish students were admitted to the public high school every year.

1940-44: Four months before Andras turned 14, the Germans invaded Hungary. Soon after, the Muhlrads had to leave their apartment and move in with the family of Andras' friend Yannos, whose building had been marked with a Star of David. At first, living together was tolerable, but conditions became increasingly more crowded until there were 25 in the apartment. The residents were allowed to leave the building for errands a few hours a day. Then one day a gendarme took up guard in front of the entrance. The residents spent three days trapped inside fearing what would happen next.

Andras and his family were among the 435,000 Hungarian Jews deported to Auschwitz in the early summer of 1944. Andras was later moved to a camp in Bavaria, where he perished.

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Helen Katz

Born: January 2, 1931, Kisvarda, Hungary

The youngest of eight children, Helen was born and raised in a religious Jewish family living in a town in northeastern Hungary. She was the "baby" of the family and the focus of everyone's hopes and affection. Although her Hebrew name was Hannah, her family called her by her nickname, Potyo, which meant "the dear little one."

1933-39: Helen liked school, but was afraid because some of the kids and teachers hated Jews. There was talk that there might be a war. Her mother wanted them to leave Hungary before things got worse, but her father, who had been to America before, was reluctant to take the family there because he thought it was not religious enough. But he finally gave in and managed to return to New York, where he tried to get them immigration papers.

1940-44: The immigration papers arrived too late; Hungary was at war with America. Helen began to suffer from nightmares. Following an absence due to illness, Helen was forbidden to return to school because she was Jewish. Later, Hungarian police forced the Katzes to move into Kisvarda's ghetto. On May 28, 1944, they were ordered to be ready to travel at 4 a.m. Helen stayed close to her mother as they boarded a cattle car. It was dark inside and she huddled next to her.

Helen was killed upon arrival at Auschwitz on May 31, 1944. She was 13 years old.

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Lidia Lebowitz

Born: ca. 1934, Sarospatak, Hungary

The younger of two sisters, Lidia was born to Jewish parents living in Sarospatak, a small town in northeastern Hungary. Lidia's parents owned a successful dry goods business. At the time, ready-made clothes were still rare in the countryside. Townspeople and local farmers would purchase fabric at the Lebowitz store and then take it to their tailor or seamstress to be sewn into clothes.

1933-39: Lidia was 2 when her Aunt Sadie, who had emigrated to the United States many years earlier, came to visit with her two children, Arthur and Lillian. All the cousins had a good time playing together on their grandparents' farm. On the trip over from America, Lidia's aunt's ship had docked in Hamburg, Germany, and Aunt Sadie had seen Nazis marching in the streets. Aunt Sadie was worried about what could happen to her family in Sarospatak.

1940-44: In 1944 German forces occupied Hungary. A month after the invasion, Hungarian gendarmes, acting under Nazi orders, evicted Lidia and her parents from their home. The Lebowitzes spent three days crowded into the local synagogue with hundreds of other Jewish citizens. Then they were all transferred to the nearby town of Satoraljaujhely, where some 15,000 Jews were squeezed into a ghetto set up in the gypsy section of town. The ghetto residents had a hard time getting enough food to eat.

The ghetto was liquidated in May and June of 1944. All the Jews were deported in sealed freight cars to Auschwitz. Lidia and her parents were never heard from again.

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Jan-Peter Pfeffer

Born: May 3, 1934, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Jan-Peter's father, Heinz, was a German-Jewish refugee who married Henriette De Leeuw, a Dutch- Jewish woman. Frightened by the Nazi dictatorship and the murder of Heinz's uncle in a concentration camp, they emigrated to the Netherlands when Henriette was nine months pregnant. They settled in Amsterdam.

1933-39: Jan-Peter was born soon after his parents arrived in the Netherlands. He was 18 months old when Tommy, his baby brother, was born. In 1939 the parents and brother of Jan-Peter's father joined them in the Netherlands as refugees from Germany. Jan-Peter and Tommy grew up speaking Dutch as their native language, and they often spent time at their mother's family home in the country.

1940-44: The Germans occupied Amsterdam in May 1940. Despite the German occupation, 6-year-old Jan-Peter did not feel much change in his day-to-day life. Then just after his ninth birthday, the Germans sent his grandmother to a camp called Westerbork. Six months later, Jan-Peter and his family were sent to the same camp, but his grandmother was no longer there. During the winter, the Pfeffers were sent to a faraway ghetto called Theresienstadt where Jan-Peter felt cold, scared, and hungry.

On May 18, 1944, Jan-Peter was deported with his family to Auschwitz. He was gassed on July 11, 1944. Jan-Peter was 10 years old.

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Ossi Stojka

Born: 1936, Austria

Ossi was the youngest of six children born to Roman Catholic Gypsies who traveled in a family wagon. Their caravan spent winters in Vienna, Austria's capital, and summers in the Austrian countryside. The Stojkas belonged to a tribe of Gypsies called the Lowara Roma, who made their living as itinerant horse traders. Ossi's ancestors had lived in Austria for more than 200 years.

1933-39: Ossi was 2 years old when Germany annexed Austria in March 1938. The Stojka family wagon was parked for the winter in a Vienna campground when the Germans marched in. They ordered the Gypsies to stay put. The Stojkas had to convert their wagon into a wooden house and had to adjust to staying in one place.

1940-44: Gypsies were forced to register as members of a different "race." When Ossi was 5, the Germans took away his father. Next, they took his sister, Kathi. Finally, Ossi and the rest of his family were deported to a Nazi camp in Birkenau for Gypsies. There was very little to eat, mostly turnips. Little Ossi fell ill with typhus, and was taken to the barracks for sick prisoners. The infirmary was often referred to by prisoners as the "antechamber of the crematoria."

Ossi was given no medical treatment in the infirmary, and died of typhus and malnutrition. He was 7 years old.

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Tomas Kulka

Born: May 25, 1934, Olomouc, Czechoslovakia

Tomas' parents were Jewish. His father, Robert Kulka, was a businessman from the Moravian town of Olomouc. His mother, Elsa Skutezka, was a milliner from Brno, the capital of Moravia. The couple was well-educated and spoke both Czech and German. They married in 1933 and settled in Robert's hometown of Olomouc.

1933-39: Tomas was born a year and a day after his parents were married. When Tomas was 3, his grandfather passed away and the Kulkas moved to Brno, which was his mother's hometown. On March 15, 1939, a few weeks before Tomas' fifth birthday, the Germans occupied Bohemia and Moravia, including Brno.

1940-42: On January 2, 1940, Tomas and his parents and grandmother were evicted from their house by the Germans. Hoping to save the family business, Tomas' father decided to remain in Brno. Because Tomas was Jewish, he was not allowed to begin school. A year later, Tomas's parents were forced to sell the business to a German for a mere 200 Czechoslovak crowns, or less than $10. On March 31, 1942, the Kulkas were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto in western Czechoslovakia.

On May 9, 1942, Tomas was deported to the Sobibor extermination camp where he was gassed. He was 7 years old.

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Nadine Schatz

Born: September 10, 1930, Boulogne-Billancourt, France

Nadine was the daughter of immigrant Jewish parents. Her Russian-born mother settled in France following the Russian Revolution of 1917. Nadine was born in Boulogne-Billancourt, a city on the outskirts of Paris known for its automobile factories. She was fluent in Russian and French.

1933-39: Nadine attended elementary school in Paris. Her mother, Ludmilla, taught piano, and her Russian grandmother, Rosalia, lived with them. After France declared war on Germany in September 1939, Nadine's mother moved the family to Saint-Marc-sur-Mer, a small village on the Brittany coast, hoping it would be safer. There, Nadine resumed her schooling.

1940-42: Victorious German troops reached Saint-Marc-sur-Mer in June 1940. After France surrendered to Germany, the Germans remained in Brittany. Nadine and her mother moved to the nearby city of Nantes. But local French officials frequently cooperated with the occupying Germans to help enforce anti-Jewish laws. In 1942 Nadine and her mother were arrested by French police. Nadine was separated from her mother and deported to the Drancy transit camp east of Paris.

Twelve-year-old Nadine was deported to Auschwitz on September 23, 1942. She was gassed shortly after arriving.

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Dora Rivkina

Born: November 7, 1924, Minsk, Belorussia

Dora was the second of three girls born to a Jewish family in Minsk, the capital of Belorussia. Before World War II, more than a third of the city was Jewish. Dora and her family lived on Novomesnitskaya Street in central Minsk. Dora's father worked in a state-owned factory building furniture.

1933-39: As a young girl, Dora was athletic and excelled at swimming and dancing. When she was in the second grade, she was chosen to dance the lead part in a New Year's performance. She was also a member of the Young Pioneers, a Soviet youth organization that held lectures on Soviet history, and also organized camping trips.

1940-43: The invading Germans reached Minsk in 1941 and Dora's family was ordered into the Minsk ghetto. In 1943, when the ghetto was emptied, 19-year-old Dora escaped from a transport and joined the partisans but the Germans soon captured her band. When the guards ordered them to identify any Jews, everyone remained silent at first. But after a guard threatened to shoot them all if they didn't speak, a woman pointed at Dora. The Germans bound Dora's hands, tied a rock around her neck, threw her in a river and shot her.

Some young girls who were in the partisan band later related the story of Dora's death to her sister, Berta, the only surviving member of Dora's family.

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Franco Cesana

Born: September 20, 1931, Bologna, Italy

Franco was born to a Jewish family living in the northern Italian city of Bologna. Even though a fascist leader, Benito Mussolini, came to power in Italy in 1922, Bologna's Jews continued to live in safety. Like many Italian Jews, Franco's family was well integrated in Italian society. Franco attended public elementary school.

1933-39: When Franco was 7, Mussolini enforced "racial" laws against the Jews: Franco was expelled from school, and went instead to a Jewish school hastily organized in makeshift quarters in one of Bologna's synagogues. Franco could not understand why he had to leave his friends just because he was Jewish. His father died in 1939, and he moved with his mother and older brother, Lelio, to Turin, where he began religious school.

1940-44: Mussolini was overthrown in July 1943. Two months later, German forces occupied Italy, and gained control of the north, the part where Franco's family and most of Italy's Jews lived. The Italians had been protecting the Jews, but now Germany controlled Italy. The Cesana family went into hiding in the mountains. To evade the Germans, they moved from hut to hut. Lelio joined the Justice and Liberty partisan group. Though only 12, Franco joined as well, proud that so many Jews were fighting in the Italian resistance.

Franco was shot by Germans while on a scouting mission in the mountains. His body was returned to his mother on his 13th birthday. He was Italy's youngest partisan.

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Thomas Pfeffer

Born: November 22, 1936, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Thomas' father, Heinz, was a German-Jewish refugee who had married Henriette De Leeuw, a Dutch-Jewish woman. Frightened by the Nazi dictatorship and the murder of Heinz's uncle in a concentration camp, they emigrated to the Netherlands when Henriette was nine months pregnant with Thomas' older brother. They settled in Amsterdam.

1933-39: Thomas, also known as Tommy, was born 18 months after his older brother, Jan-Peter. In 1939 the parents and brother of Tommy's father joined them in the Netherlands as refugees from Germany. Tommy and Jan-Peter grew up speaking Dutch as their native language, and they often spent time at their mother's family home in the country.

1940-44: The Germans occupied Amsterdam in May 1940. Despite the German occupation, 4-year-old Tommy did not feel much change in his day-to-day life. When he was 6 the Germans sent his grandmother to a camp called Westerbork. Six months later, Tommy and his family were sent to the same camp, where Tommy celebrated his seventh birthday. That winter the Pfeffers were sent to a faraway ghetto called Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia, where Tommy felt cold, scared and hungry.

On May 18, 1944, Tommy was deported with his family to Auschwitz. He was gassed on July 11, 1944. Tommy was 7 years old.

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Zuzana Gruenberger

Born: March 3, 1933, Kosice, Czechoslovakia

Zuzana was the youngest of three children born to Hungarian-speaking Jewish parents in the city of Kosice. She was the baby of the family, and they called her Zuzi. Her father was a tailor whose workshop was in the Gruenbergers' apartment.

1933-39: In November 1938, when Zuzana was 5, Hungarian troops marched into Kosice and made it a part of Hungary. The Hungarians changed the name of the city to Kassa. The Hungarian government was friendly to Nazi Germany and introduced anti-Jewish laws in Kosice.

1940-44: In 1941, one year after Zuzana began school, the Hungarians moved the Gruenbergers and other Jewish families to camps in other parts of Hungary. The Gruenbergers were released the following spring and returned to Kosice, but Zuzana's brother and father were taken soon after for slave labor. In 1944 Kosice's 12,000 Jews, including Zuzana, her mother and sister, were rounded up by Hungarians who were cooperating with the Germans. They were sent to a brickyard at the city's edge and put on trains headed for Auschwitz.

Zuzana and her mother were gassed immediately on arriving in Auschwitz in May 1944. Zuzana was 11 years old.

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Lore Heumann

Born: March 29, 1931, Hellenthal, Germany

The younger of two girls, Lore was born to Jewish parents in a village close to the Belgian border. The Heumanns lived above their general store. Across the street lived Lore's grandfather, who kept horses and cows in his large barn. When Lore was a year old, her family moved to the city of Lippstadt. The Lippe River flowed beyond the large garden in back of their house.

1933-39: When Lore was 6, her family moved to the nearby city of Bielefeld, where she entered public school. A year later, she and her older sister, Margot, were expelled from school. One day they were suddenly kicked out of class. Not understanding why, they stood outside, crying. Then they walked home. After this, their parents sent them to a Jewish school where they had teachers who also had been kicked out of the schools by the Nazis.

1940-44: A few months after Lore turned 11, she was deported with her family to the Theresienstadt ghetto in Czechoslovakia. When the Heumanns arrived at the station, they were met by Lore's thin and sickly-looking grandmother, who had been deported there some six months earlier. She told them that Lore's grandfather had died a few weeks earlier from starvation. In the ghetto Lore attended the classes clandestinely organized by Jewish teachers, but she found it hard to concentrate because she was almost always hungry.

Thirteen-year-old Lore was deported with her family to Auschwitz in May 1944. She and her parents are believed to have perished there. Her sister, Margot, survived the war.

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Eva Heyman

Born: February 13, 1931, Oradea, Romania

The only child of a cosmopolitan Hungarian Jewish couple, Eva grew up in a city on the border between Romania and Hungary. Nearly one-fifth of the city's population was Jewish. Eva was a small child when her parents, Agi and Bela, divorced, and she went to live with her grandparents.

1933-39: After the divorce, Eva saw little of her mother, who remarried and moved to Budapest. She also rarely saw her father, who lived on the other side of the city. Eva lived with her grandmother and grandfather near the pharmacy that they owned. An Austrian governess helped care for her.

1940-44: When the Germans reached Budapest on March 19, 1944, Eva and her grandfather took a walk in Oradea's Bishop's Park but did not see any German soldiers. Six weeks later, the Germans arrived in Oradea, ordering Eva and her grandparents to pack and move to the ghetto. They waited three days until they were taken by truck to 20 Szacsat Street. Their new home was stripped of furniture and packed with families. Rules were posted on every house; to disobey meant death. On May 29, 1944, they heard they would be "resettled in the East."

In June 1944 Eva was deported to Auschwitz. She died there four months later on October 17, 1944. She was 13 years old.

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Judith Schwed

Born: January 11, 1932, Kiskunfelegyhaza, Hungary

Judith was the older of two children born to Jewish parents in the town of Kiskunfelegyhaza in southeastern Hungary. Her mother, Anna, and her mother's sister, Kornelia, were close in age and had a contest to see who would be the first to have a baby. Judith's Aunt Kornelia won the contest and cousin Maria was born in December 1931, just three weeks before Judith.

1933-39: Judith's father had a prosperous wholesale business that sold goose meat, down, feathers and quilts. In 1939, the same year that Judith began attending school, the Hungarian government enacted a new law that decreed Jews were not entitled to the same rights as other Hungarians.

1940-44: In November 1940 Hungary became an ally of Nazi Germany. More laws were passed to restrict the rights of Hungary's Jews. Judith, who was a good student and wrote articles for a weekly children's newspaper, was forced out of public school. In March 1944 the Germans occupied Hungary. That April, Kiskunfelegyhaza's 700 Jews were moved into a ghetto set up by Hungarian officials. Two months later, all 700 were transported to Kecskemet, a deportation center for Jews in southern Hungary.

Between June 25 and 28, 1944, Judith and her family were deported to Auschwitz, where Judith was gassed upon arrival. She was 12 years old.

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Bertha Adler

Born: June 20, 1928, Selo-Solotvina, Czechoslovakia

Bertha was the second of three daughters born to Yiddish-speaking Jewish parents in a village in Czechoslovakia's easternmost province. Soon after Bertha was born, her parents moved the family to Liege, an industrial, largely Catholic city in Belgium that had many immigrants from eastern Europe.

1933-39: Bertha's parents sent her to a local elementary school, where most of her friends were Catholic. At school, Bertha spoke French. At home, she spoke Yiddish. Sometimes her parents spoke Hungarian to each other, a language they had learned while growing up. Bertha's mother, who was religious, made sure that Bertha also studied Hebrew.

1940-44: Bertha was 11 when the Germans occupied Liege. Two years later, the Adlers, along with all the Jews, were ordered to register and Bertha and her sisters were forced out of school. Some Catholic friends helped the Adlers obtain false papers and rented them a house in a nearby village. There, Bertha's father fell ill one Friday and went to the hospital. Bertha promised to visit him on Sunday to bring him shaving cream. That Sunday, the family was awakened at 5 a.m. by the Gestapo. They had been discovered.

Fifteen-year-old Bertha was deported to Auschwitz on May 19, 1944. She was gassed there two days later.

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Ita Grynbaum

Born: 1926, Starachowice, Poland

Ita was the second-youngest of nine children born to religious Jewish parents in Starachowice, a town in east-central Poland. Their small one-story house served as both the family's residence and their tailor shop. The tailoring was often done in exchange for goods such as firewood or a sack of potatoes. Ita often helped her mother with chores around the house.

1933-39: Ita's father died at home on a Saturday in June 1939, shortly after returning from synagogue. He had lain down to rest, when suddenly blood ran from his mouth. Her brother, Chuna, ran for the doctor, but when he returned, their father had already died. They buried him in the Jewish cemetery outside town. Ita's mother and older siblings kept the tailor shop running. That September, German forces occupied Starachowice.

1940-45: In October 1942, SS guards forced the town's Jews into the marketplace. Ita, who already was a forced laborer at a nearby factory, was lined up with the "able-bodied," along with Chuna. They were marched to a nearby forced-labor camp, where Ita was put to work serving food to the Polish workers. When a typhus epidemic struck the camp, Ita contracted the disease. Unable to work, she was sent to the barracks for sick prisoners. Chuna visited her daily, often bringing her rags to pad her painful bedsores.

With no medicine or doctors for the sick prisoners, Ita died of her illness after three months. She was buried in a nearby stone quarry. Ita was 17 years old.

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Zofia Yamaika

Born: 1925, Warsaw, Poland

Zofia was raised in a well-to-do, prominent Hasidic Jewish family in Warsaw. Uneasy with the constant tension between the Polish people and the Jewish minority, Zofia joined the communist student club Spartacus when she was a teenager. Spartacus actively campaigned against the growing fascist movement in Europe.

1933-39: When Warsaw surrendered to the Germans on September 28, 1939, Zofia was 14 years old. She stopped going to school. Though the Nazis banned Spartacus, she secretly helped to revive the club, which printed antifascist posters and leaflets and distributed them throughout Warsaw. The work was dangerous--German troops were all over the city.

1940-43: A year later, Zofia and her parents were among nearly half a million Jews "resettled" in a small section of Warsaw. The ghetto was sealed in November 1940. Through Spartacus, Zofia trained with a pistol smuggled in by communist partisans. Zofia wanted to join them, but escaping meant endangering her parents' lives. When they were deported in July 1942, Zofia escaped and joined the Lion partisans near Radom. Some 300 Nazis attacked her group of 50 on February 9, 1943. Zofia and two Poles offered to cover their unit's retreat.

Zofia, 18, armed with a machine gun, let the Germans come within eight feet before she fired. Her position was overtaken, and she was killed. Her unit managed to retreat.

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Gideon Boissevain

Born: June 5, 1921, Amsterdam Netherlands

Gideon was known affectionately as "Gi" by his family and friends. His parents were descended from the Huguenots, French Protestants who came to the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th centuries. Gi had two brothers and two sisters, and his father worked in the insurance business.

1933–39: Gi had a large circle of friends, both Christians and Jews, and after school they all liked to get together. He and his friends enjoyed taking bike trips, having parties, and playing records. In the mid-1930s his parents joined the Dutch Nazi party because it appeared to them, at first, to offer a good, orderly political system. They quickly abandoned the party, however, when they saw how brutally its members behaved.

1940–42: Gi completed a training course to be an actuary, and was working at an insurance company. Then on May 10, 1940, the Germans invaded the Netherlands, and by the 18th German troops had occupied Amsterdam. Gi and his brother began to work for the Dutch resistance. His parents helped to hide Jews. On Sunday, August 2, 1942, Gi and his brother were arrested and imprisoned. Gi was executed by the Nazis on October 1, 1942, along with his brother and 18 other resistance fighters. He was 20 years old.

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Thomas Elek

Born: December 7, 1924, Budapest, Hungary

Thomas Elek December 7, 1924 Budapest, Hungary Thomas was born to a Jewish family who moved to Paris when he was 6. His father's outspoken criticism of the fascist government and his affiliation with the Hungarian Communist Party led to the family's expulsion from Hungary in 1930. With the help of his father, a professor of modern languages, Thomas quickly learned French and excelled in school. He had a special interest in poetry and music. 1933–39: Thomas's father often argued against fascism, and he was greatly disturbed when Hitler became the chancellor of Germany in 1933. His father's uneasiness permeated the Eleks' family life. Thomas concentrated on his studies and was admitted to the Louisle-Grand secondary school, one of the most prestigious in Paris. He was upset to learn that Hungary, his mother country, had instituted anti- Jewish laws. 1940–44: In 1940, after the Germans occupied France, Thomas's mother enlisted in a women's resistance group. Following her example, Thomas joined a progressive students' organization in 1941 and later, with his brother, Bela, joined the armed resistance group, Franc-Tireurs et Partisans. Thomas participated in sabotage actions against the Germans. His group launched numerous grenade attacks, and set fire to a German library on the Left Bank. On July 28, 1943, his unit blew up a convoy of German officers and soldiers, killing 600. Arrested on November 21, 1943, Thomas was tortured and condemned to death. On February 21, 1944, at the age of 20, he was executed by a Nazi firing squad.

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Marcus Fass

Born: ca. 1925, Ulanow, Poland

Marcus, known to his family as Moniek, was one of three children born to a Jewish family in the Polish town of Ulanow. His father worked as a tailor. Ulanow's Jewish community had many of its own organizations and maintained a large library. From the age of three, Moniek attended a religious school. He started public school when he was seven. 1933–39: In 1935 Moniek's father left for America to find a job so that his family could later join him. He sent money to them while they waited for their emigration papers. Moniek's mother worked as a seamstress to help support the family. At age 14, Moniek graduated from secondary school. In September of the same year, the family was completing the paperwork for emigration when Germany invaded Poland. 1940–43: After Ulanow was occupied, Moniek was forced to work as a laborer for the German army. In 1942 the Nazis ordered a roundup of all Ulanow's Jews. Fearing deportation, Moniek went into hiding with a friend. For more than a year they managed to elude the Germans by hiding in the forests and fields near Ulanow. But during a German search for partisans, Moniek and his friend were trapped in a rye field. Sweeping the field inch by inch with their dogs, the Germans finally captured the pair. After being seized outside Ulanow in 1943, Moniek and his friend were never heard from again.

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Moishe Felman

Born: 1926, Sokolow Podlaski, Poland

The youngest of seven children, Moishe was raised in a Yiddish-speaking, religious Jewish home in Sokolow Podlaski, a manufacturing town in central Poland with a large Jewish population of some 5,000. Moishe's parents ran a grain business. Moishe attended a Jewish school and began public school in Sokolow Podlaski in 1933. 1933–39: Summer vacation had just finished and 13-year-old Moishe was about to begin another year at elementary school when the Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. German aircraft bombed Sokolow Podlaski's market and other civilian targets before German troops entered the town on September 20. Three days later, they set fire to the main synagogue. Later, the Germans confiscated the family's grain business. 1940–42: Over the next two years, the Germans imposed restrictions on the Jews, eventually ordering them to wear an identifying Jewish star on their clothing. On September 28, 1941, the Germans set up a ghetto and concentrated all of the town's Jews there. About a year later, on the most solemn holiday of the Jewish religion, the Day of Atonement, the Germans began to round up the people in the ghetto. Those who resisted or tried to hide were shot. Moishe, his mother and sister were herded onto the boxcar of a train. On September 22, 1942, Moishe and his family were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp. He was gassed there shortly after arriving. He was 16 years old.

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Moshe Finkler

Born: October 9, 1926, The Hague, Netherlands

Moshe was brought up in a religious Jewish family in The Hague, the center of government in the Netherlands. His father was a businessman, and his mother raised their seven children. Introspective by nature, Moshe was an avid student. 1933–39: Moshe was starting eighth grade when the war began in September 1939. At home, his family discussed the terrible things happening to Jews in Germany. Moshe believed more than ever that the Jewish people needed their own homeland. He continued attending public school and also was tutored at home in Jewish studies. He loved learning languages and was studying eight of them, including Hebrew. 1940–44: Germany invaded the Netherlands, reaching The Hague on May 10, 1940. When the Nazis began rounding up Jews in the summer of 1942, Moshe and his family escaped to Belgium, where no one knew them and where they hoped they could pass as Christians. His father secured false papers, including an "Aryan" permit to live in Brussels. But on April 7, 1944, while the Finklers were celebrating the Jewish holiday of Passover, Gestapo agents stormed their apartment. They had been betrayed. Moshe and his family were deported to Auschwitz, where Moshe died at age 18.

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Susanne Ledermann

Born: October 8, 1928, Berlin Germany

Susanne was the younger of two daughters born to Jewish parents in the German capital of Berlin. Her father was a successful lawyer. Known affectionately as Sanne, Susanne liked to play with her sister on the veranda of her home and enjoyed visiting the Berlin Zoo and park with her family. 1933–39: After the Nazis came to power in January 1933, it became illegal for Jewish lawyers to have non-Jewish clients. When Susanne was 4, her father's law practice closed down and the Ledermanns moved to the Netherlands. Susanne began attending school in Amsterdam when she was 6. She was a good student, and she quickly made friends in the neighborhood. Some of her friends were also Jewish refugees from Germany. 1940–44: On May 14, 1940, Susanne heard the roar of German planes bombing Rotterdam 35 miles away. Amsterdam was soon occupied by the Germans. When Susanne was 13, the Germans forced the Jews out of public schools and Susanne enrolled in a Jewish school. By June 1942 the Germans were deporting Jews, ostensibly to work camps in the "East." Susanne's father, who worked as a translator for the Jewish council, believed that the family would not be harmed as long as they obeyed the law and followed German instructions. On June 20, 1943, Susanne and her parents were deported to the Westerbork camp in Holland. In 1944 they were sent to Auschwitz, where Susanne perished. She was 15 years old.

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Pola Nussbaum

Born: September 1922, Raczki, Poland

Pola was born to a Jewish family in a small town in Poland about three miles from the German border. Her family had lived there for generations. Pola's father exported geese and other goods to Germany; her mother owned a fabric store. They lived with Pola's grandmother in a large, single-level, gray stucco house. Raczki had a small Jewish community with a Hebrew school that Pola attended. 1933–39: In 1937 Pola began secondary school in the town of Suwalki. She excelled in math, and hoped to study engineering and oil exploration at the university. When World War II began in September 1939, Pola and her father went to a town about 40 miles away to hide some of Pola's mother's valuable fabrics. Then the Nussbaums escaped east towards the Soviet border. 1940–42: By 1941 the family was in the Slonim ghetto. Pola's mother slipped her daughters Pola and Lisa out to a Christian friend in town who refused to hide them and sent the girls to the forest. There they came across Jews being shot into pits. Found by a forester, they were marched to the line of those waiting to be killed but managed to flee. The forester shot at them but missed. Then he threw his axe and hit Pola's leg. The sisters ran to town where a Christian woman hid them in a sofa-bed until the massacre ended. Pola and her sister returned to the ghetto to find their mother dead. On June 29, 1942, Pola was shot to death while attempting to escape under the ghetto fence. She was 19.

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Stefania (Fusia) Podgorska

Born: 1925, Lipa Poland

Stefania (Fusia) Podgorska 1925 Lipa, Poland Bertha was the second of three daughters born to Yiddish-speaking Jewish parents in a village in Czechoslovakia's easternmost province. Soon after Bertha was born, her parents moved the family to Liege, an industrial, largely Catholic city in Belgium that had many immigrants from Eastern Europe. 1933–39:
Bertha's parents sent her to a local elementary school, where most of her friends were Catholic. At school, Bertha spoke French. At home, she spoke Yiddish. Sometimes her parents spoke Hungarian to each other, a language they had learned while growing up. Bertha's mother, who was religious, made sure that Bertha also studied Hebrew. 1940–44: Bertha was 11 when the Germans occupied Liege [Belgium]. Two years later, the Adlers, along with all the Jews, were ordered to register and Bertha and her sisters were forced out of school. Some Catholic friends helped the Adlers obtain false papers and rented them a house in a nearby village. There, Bertha's father fell ill one Friday and went to the hospital. Bertha promised to visit him on Sunday to bring him shaving cream. That Sunday, the family was awakened at 5 a.m. by the Gestapo. They had been discovered. Fifteen-year-old Bertha was deported to Auschwitz on May 19, 1944. She was gassed there two days later.

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Shulim Saleschutz

Born: March 7, 1930, Kolbuszowa, Poland

Shulim Saleschutz March 7, 1930 Kolbuszowa, Poland Shulim was the oldest of three children born to religious Jewish parents living in Kolbuszowa, a town in south-central Poland. His father owned a wholesale general store in town and was known in the region for his impressive strength. Shulim's mother tended to the house and cared for him, his brother, Shlomo, and his sister, Rozia. 1933–39: When Shulim was nine, the Germans invaded Poland.

Polish soldiers on horses tried to fight against the German army, but they were no match against the tanks. After the short battle, Shulim's father and his uncle Naftali were forced to help bury the many dead horses left in the streets. The Germans ordered that Jewish children could not go to school anymore. Shulim stayed at home with his mother, brother, and sister. 1940–42: In July 1941, the Germans forced all the Jews of Kolbuszowa to live in one small section of town. Two of Shulim's grandparents, an uncle, and two aunts moved in with his family, making their apartment very crowded. Shulim's 12th birthday was a milestone— he now had to wear an armband with a Star of David like the other men. He felt proud and asked his uncle Naftali to take a picture of him wearing the armband. Shulim was assigned to work details with the other men. He cleared snow and repaired the roads. Shulim was deported to the Rzeszow ghetto on June 25, 1942, and then to the Belzec camp in July. There, Shulim was gassed with his mother, brother, and sister. He was 12 years old.

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Rozia Susskind

Born: March 1922, Kolbuszowa, Poland

Rozia was born to a Jewish family in the town of Kolbuszowa. Her family lived outside of town, near her uncles. The Susskinds owned a flour mill and a lumber mill. Their home was one of the few in the area with electricity, which was generated at their mills. Rozia had an older sister, Hanka, and an older brother, Yanek.

1933-39: In the early 1930s, the Susskinds' mills burned down. Hanka moved to Cracow to study in the university and married, and Yanek was working in Kolbuszowa's Jewish bank. The Susskinds could not afford to continue Rozia's schooling, so she was apprenticed to a seamstress. When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Hanka and her husband returned to Kolbuszowa and fled to the USSR with Yanek and Rozia's father. Rozia, 17, remained in Kolbuszowa with her mother, who had cancer.

1940-42: In January 1940 Rozia's mother died. In 1941 the Germans established a Jewish ghetto in Kolbuszowa, and Rozia and her uncles were moved there. Like many in the ghetto, Rozia was put to work sweeping streets, shoveling snow and cleaning the homes of the Germans. On June 20, 1942, the Germans issued a decree: Kolbuszowa's Jews had three days to leave their homes and resettle in the Rzeszow ghetto 20 miles away.

On July 7, 1942, Rozia and her uncles were deported from the Rzeszow ghetto to the Belzec extermination camp, where they perished.

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Sarah Rivka Felman

Born: 1923, Sokolow Podlaski, Poland

One of seven children, Sarah was raised in a Yiddish-speaking, religious Jewish home in Sokolow Podlaski, a manufacturing town in central Poland with a large Jewish population of some 5,000. Sarah's parents ran a grain business. In 1930, Sarah began attending public elementary school in Sokolow Podlaski.

1933-39: After graduating from middle school in 1937 at the age of 14, Sarah helped out her now widowed mother in the family's grain business. Two years later, Germany attacked Poland. German aircraft bombed Sokolow Podlaski's market and other civilian targets. German troops entered the town on September 20 and burned the main synagogue three days later. The Germans then confiscated the family's grain business.

1940-42: Over the next two years, the Germans imposed restrictions on the Jews, eventually ordering them to wear an identifying Jewish star on their clothing. On September 28, 1941, the Germans set up a ghetto and concentrated the town's Jews there. About a year later, on the most solemn holiday in the Jewish religion, the Day of Atonement, the Germans began to round up the people in the ghetto. Those who resisted or tried to hide were shot. Sarah, her mother and younger brother were herded onto the boxcar of a train.

On September 22, 1942, Sarah and her family were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp. She was gassed there shortly after arriving. She was 19 years old.

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Gyula (Gyuszi) Brieger

Born: April 15, 1927, Nagyhalasz, Hungary

Gyula was also known as Gyuszi. He was born into a large religious Jewish family in the village of Nagyhalasz in northeastern Hungary. The Briegers spoke both Yiddish and Hungarian. After Gyula's mother died, his father remarried and the family moved to the town of Nyiregyhaza, where his father owned and operated a hardware store. Nyiregyhaza had a Jewish population of 5,000.

1933-39: Gyula was the second oldest son in a household of seven children. Nyiregyhaza was a rural town in which people still used horses and buggies. After Gyula's older brother, Jeno, went away to study at a rabbinical school in Czechoslovakia, Gyula became the eldest son in the house and his father's main helper.

1940-44: Gyula was 17 when German forces occupied Hungary on March 19, 1944. Within weeks, 17,000 Jews from Nyiregyhaza and nearby towns and villages were moved into a ghetto set up by Hungarian officials. In May deportations from the ghetto to Auschwitz began. At Auschwitz, Gyula, his father and Jeno were slave laborers. While in the camp, Gyula learned how to steal food from the Germans. He and Jeno were later moved to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Gyula died in Bergen-Belsen in April 1945, several days after the camp was liberated by British troops. He was 18 years old.

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Frederick Dermer

Born: 1925, Vienna, Austria

Frederick was born to a Jewish family in the Austrian capital of Vienna. His father died when he was a baby, and he and his mother moved into an apartment with Frederick's widowed grandfather. As a young boy, Frederick attended a Viennese public school.

1933-39: Frederick was a rambunctious child. Once, when his grandfather was baby-sitting, Frederick used a silk lampshade as a "parachute," and jumped from the top of the wardrobe closet. That was the last time Frederick's grandfather would baby-sit. Frederick was 13 when Germany took over Austria. Fearing the Nazis, Frederick's mother, together with his aunt's family, arranged for them to be smuggled to Belgium via the Netherlands.

1940-42: As illegal refugees in Brussels, the Dermers were sheltered by the Jewish community. To help support his mother, Frederick worked illegally in a leather shop, tooling items such as wallets and belts. The Germans occupied Belgium in 1940. In 1942 Frederick received a summons from the German authorities to report for "labor" duty.
Frederick was deported immediately after appearing for his summons.
He perished at age 17.

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Baruch Aaron Szabasson

Born: 1927, Kozienice, Poland

Baruch was known by his family and friends as Buzek. He came from the east central Polish town of Kozienice. Kozienice was a popular vacation spot situated near lakes and a birch forest. Baruch's father worked in the lumber business.

1933-39: Baruch attended public school, and in the afternoons he also went to Jewish religious school. On Friday nights for the sabbath, Baruch would go to his grandparents' house, where his relatives would gather to visit with one another. Baruch would run to his grandfather and search his pockets for candies, which he always found. The Germans invaded Poland in September 1939, and after occupying Kozienice that same month, they set up a ghetto there in the winter.

1940-42: In 1940 Baruch was not able to celebrate his bar mitzvah, the Jewish passage to adulthood, because the Nazis forbade large public gatherings in the ghetto. The Szabassons found food any way they could, often by trading on the black market. In 1942, 15-year-old Baruch was deported for slave labor. In the labor camps, he caught typhus.

Baruch died of typhus in the Czesnow labor camp in Poland that year. After the war, his father re-buried him in Kozienice.

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Jozef Wilk

Born: March 19, 1925, Rzeszow

Jozef was the youngest of three children born to Roman Catholic parents in the town of Rzeszow in southern Poland. Jozef's father was a career officer in the Polish army. Jozef excelled in sports, and his favorite sport was gymnastics. He also studied the piano.

1933-39: Jozef was 14 when Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939. The invasion affected him deeply. Brought up in a patriotic family, he had been taught to love and defend Poland. The Germans were bombing Warsaw, the Polish capital, but Jozef was too young to join the army. The Germans reached Rzeszow on Sunday, September 10. After that, Jozef made his way to Warsaw, where he joined his two older sisters.

1940-43: In Warsaw Jozef became a sapper in a special unit of the Polish resistance. His code name was "Orlik." On April 19, 1943, during the Warsaw ghetto uprising, his unit was ordered to blow open part of Warsaw's ghetto wall so Jews could escape. As his unit approached the wall on Bonifraterska Street with explosives and weapons under their coats, his friend "Mlodek" tripped and his pistol accidentally dropped to the pavement. A policeman spotted the pistol and opened fire. Chaos erupted. German units opened fire on the unit before it could reach the wall.

Jozef and "Mlodek" were killed. Their retreating unit detonated the explosives, blowing up Jozef's and "Mlodek's" bodies to make them unrecognizable. Jozef was 18.

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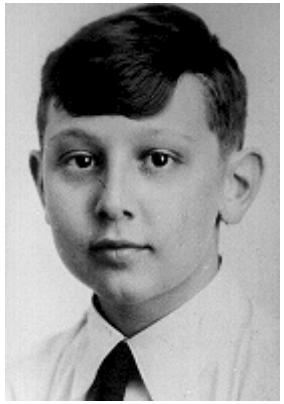
Peter Winternitz

Born: April 28, 1922, Prague Czechoslovakia



Peter was the oldest of two children born to a Jewish family in the Czechoslovakian capital of Prague, a city with a Jewish community that dated back to the eleventh century. His family lived on Karlova Street in the city's Karlin district. Peter's father owned a wholesale business that sold floor coverings.

1933-39: As a boy, Peter was active in a Zionist sports organization, Maccabi Ha-Zair. The group also helped prepare youth to emigrate to Palestine [Aliyah Bet] by training them in agricultural work. In 1937, because of rising antisemitism, Peter and his sister, Lisl, transferred from their German-language school to a Czech public school. On March 15, 1939, German occupation forces entered Prague.

1940-44: In 1941 Peter was sent to the Theresienstadt ghetto. Since he had experience working with animals, he was assigned to tend the SS' horses. In June 1942 Peter's family was sent to Theresienstadt, where his mother soon fell ill. Peter tried to smuggle sugar, used for the horses, to his mother, but was caught. He was taken to be punished to a place outside the ghetto from which few were known to return. After a few days, Peter did return, though barely recognizable from beatings. He had been spared to care for the horses.

In September 1943 Peter volunteered to join a transport to Auschwitz on which his family had been placed. He died in Auschwitz.

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Willibald Wohlfahrt

Born: December 15, 1927, Koestenberg-Velden, Austria

Willibald was the youngest of six children born to Catholic parents in a village in the part of Austria known as Carinthia. Disillusioned with Catholicism, his father and mother became Jehovah's Witnesses when Willibald was an infant, and they raised their children in their new faith. His father became the leader of the local Jehovah's Witness congregation.

1933-39: Willibald lived in a beautiful area near lakes and mountains. The Wohlfahrts were active in Jehovah's Witness missionary work, even though the Austrian government was opposed to the teachings of the faith. In 1938 the Nazis took over. Willibald's father was arrested on September 1, 1939, for opposing military service; three months later he was executed.

1940-45: Willibald's oldest brother was sent to a concentration camp and his brother Gregor was executed for refusing to join the German military. When Willibald was 14, he and his remaining sisters and brother were taken away by the Germans. Willibald was sent to a Catholic convent in Landau, where a Nazi instructor tried to indoctrinate him. He beat Willibald when he refused to salute Hitler. When Allied armies approached, Willibald was sent to the battle front to dig trenches for the German home defense.

Willibald was killed in 1945 while on the work detail digging trenches in western Germany. He was 17 years old.

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Adela Low

Born: April 18, 1924, Ulanow, Poland

Adela, known as Udl to her family, was one of four children born to a Jewish family in the Polish town of Ulanow. Her father was a landowner and cattle merchant, transporting calves from the Ulanow area for sale in other towns in the region. From the age of 3, Adela attended a private religious school for girls where she learned Jewish history and Hebrew. At age 7 she began public school.

1933-39: Adela came from a charitable family; when her mother baked challah, a special bread for the Jewish Sabbath, she had Adela and her sister Sabina deliver some of the loaves to poor families. The town had a domed synagogue and in it a local artist had painted scenes depicting the Ten Commandments. The synagogue was destroyed when the Germans reached Ulanow in September 1939, soon after the German invasion of Poland.

1940-42: On October 4, 1942, the German authorities ordered Ulanow's Jews to Zaklikow, a nearby town. Fearing they would be killed, Adela, her mother and her younger brother, Moniek, hired a Polish peasant to smuggle them in his wagon to Sandomierz, a town where the Low family had relatives. Not far from Ulanow, the wagon was stopped by a German patrol. The Low's "guide" betrayed them and turned them over to the Germans.

After they were captured, Adela, her mother, and her brother were shot and dumped into a mass grave.

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Tchiyah Perllmutter

Born: 1925, Horochow, Poland

Tchiya was the eldest of two daughters born to a Jewish family in the town of Horochow, 50 miles northeast of Lvov. Her father was a philosophy professor who taught at the university in Lvov, and both of her parents were civic leaders in Horochow.

1933-39: In September 1939 Germany invaded western Poland, and three weeks later the Soviet Union occupied eastern Poland [as a result of the German-Soviet Pact], where Horochow was located. Hordes of refugees fleeing the Germans streamed through the town. Soviet rule did not change the Perlmutters' daily lives much. They remained in their home and Tchiya's father continued to teach in Lvov.

1940-42: In 1941 Germany invaded Soviet territory and set up a ghetto in Horochow. In 1942, with rumors that the ghetto was about to be destroyed, Tchiya's mother arranged a hiding place for Tchiya with a Polish family near Horochow. The escape plan called for Tchiya to report as usual to her work detail outside the ghetto. Someone was to meet her at the end of the day and lead her to the hiding place. The day Tchiya left she said goodbye to her mother and her sister, Shulamit. They all promised to find one another after the war.

After the war, Tchiya's sister found out that Tchiya had been betrayed to the Germans. Tchiya had been paraded naked through the town, tortured and killed.

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Hacia Rivkina

Born: 1923, Minsk, Belorussia

Hacia was the oldest of three girls born to a Jewish family in Minsk, the capital of Belorussia. Before World War II, more than a third of the city was Jewish. Hacia's father worked in a state-owned factory building furniture, an occupation in which several of his relatives also made a living. Hacia attended Soviet public schools throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s.

1933-39: The Rivkins' home was in central Minsk, on Novomesnitskaya Street. Hacia was a talented singer and was known as being the best singer in her neighborhood. As a young girl she was a member of the Soviet youth organization, Young Pioneers. By the late 1930s Minsk was filled with Polish refugees fleeing the German invasion.

1940-43: The invading Germans reached Minsk on June 27, 1941. Hacia's house was bombed the next day, and the family lived on the street until forced into the Minsk ghetto that August. On November 7, the anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Hacia and her family hid in their ghetto apartment during a German roundup of Jews. Leaving meant risking deportation or death. Waiting was agonizing. They were certain the Germans would come at any time. To soothe his family's nerves, Hacia's father recited stories from Jewish history.

Though they escaped deportation in 1941, Hacia's family was deported two years later. Hacia's sister Berta escaped the ghetto, but the others were never heard from again.

Downloaded from United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Website (ushmm.org)

THE DAFFODIL PROJECT

THE DAFFODIL PROJECT aspires to build a Living Holocaust Memorial by planting 1.5 million daffodils around the world in memory of the 1.5 million children who were murdered during the Holocaust and in support for children who continue to suffer in humanitarian crises around the world today. To date, more than 1.2 million daffodils have been planted at more than 750 locations around the world. The yellow daffodil is reminiscent of the yellow star that Jews were forced to wear during the Holocaust. The daffodils are symbolic because they are resilient and return with a burst of color and energy each spring, reminding us that life is eternal.

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