

1941 there were only one line messages through the Red Cross and then nothing.

### Twice Rescued

There was little entertainment in the village so when Robert H. Pope came and conducted meetings for children everyone in the village went to hear him tell Bible stories and illustrated stories from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. There I heard about Jesus and His invitation to children to come to God through Him. I was assured that I would not be turned away, but that God loved me so much that He sent His son to die instead of me for my sins. When I understood that, I bowed my head and prayed the words of a song, "Come into my heart, Lord Jesus, Come in today, Come in to stay." I was given a Scripture Union Card with verses to read each day because I needed to read the Bible to grow spiritually.

In my reading I came to Exodus 13:2. "Set aside for me the firstborn of every family in Israel. They are mine." I knew I was the firstborn of a Jewish family. Here I saw that God claimed me for Himself. I had been rescued by Nicholas Winton from almost certain death in a concentration camp with my mother and brother. By receiving Jesus I was rescued spiritually, so I owe my life to Nicholas Winton and I wanted to live for Jesus and help anyone I could.

At the close of WWII uncle Beda, who had been in London, returned to Prague with Dr. Benes and the Czech Government in exile. He had advised his and my family to stay when he joined the army. On his return wrote a letter to me saying, "All our relatives who remained in Czechoslovakia died in concentration camp." All through the war I had been looking forward to returning to my home and my family. I prayed and asked God to forgive the Nazis for what they had done to my family, and the bitterness was ultimately removed from my heart.



Mr. Winton in 1939

I trained to be a nurse and worked for 8 years in the Philippine Jungles as a missionary of Overseas Missionary Fellowship. There I met and married Caroline. We now have 4 children and 10 grandchildren who all live near each other in or near Littleton, Colorado. While



Tom and Caroline today.

raising our family and working as nurses we were American Family to students studying English at Spring International. We also sponsored refugees from Laos, Eritrea and Russia.

### Return to the Czech Republic

After the Velvet Revolution grandmother's house was returned to our family. My cousin, Honza Horsky, born after WWII, wrote to me about selling the house. I decided to return to the land of my birth. I retired from nursing and started teaching English. After 60 years, I finally discovered who had rescued me, and I have the opportunity to tell my story and show the documentary, The Power of Good, in schools, museums and churches all over the Czech Republic and also some in the USA.

*Tomáš Graumann*

If you are interested in hearing my story and viewing the film, The Power of Good, you can contact me at: <tomgraumann@juno.com> or <tom.graumann@hotline.com>

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CHRISTIAN NAME SER. NO. BIRTH-DATE

HOCHBERG Thomas 1830 28. 1.31  
Graumann

HOENIG Mita 5582 23. 2.27

Thomas H. Graumann

# THE TWICE RESCUED CHILD



# The Twice Rescued Child

**Thomas H. Graumann**, a Czech Jew, naturalized American, Christian missionary to the Philippines and one of the 669 children rescued by Nicholas Winton tells his story:

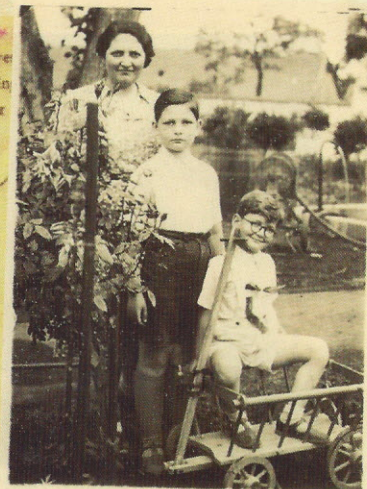
I was born in the town of Brno, in Czechoslovakia in 1931 to a Jewish family. My father, Francis Graumann made and sold shoes. Our family was an assimilated secular family. Shortly after my brother Tony was born, my parents divorced and my mother, Frances, married Julius Hochberg. We moved to the village of Tesany, 15 miles outside of Brno, where my parents were managers of a big estate.

## A lost opportunity

After Hitler annexed Austria to Germany, my step-father's sister, aunt Kamila and her family came from Vienna and lived with us while they were waiting for immigration papers to go to Australia. They warned my family that it was dangerous to stay in Europe, but they decided to stay and take care of our business here.

## What I actually witnessed of Nazism

When I was coming home one evening, I noticed a Nazi tank, stuck in a ditch in front of our house. As a 7-year old boy I was interested in the tank. I watched as the soldiers were pulling it out. I was not aware of all that was going on in my step-father's office. The Nazis brought an ultimatum to evacuate Sudetenland. (The Munich Agreement of 1938, signed by Neville Chamberlain, President Deladier of France and Benito Mussolini of Italy gave the defended border region and its steel and coal industry to Hitler.) The commanding officer took over a room in our house and organized his unit from there. I remember the other Nazis



living in the village going up and down the streets on their motorcycles with sidecars. People watched them from the side of the road, and if they got too close to the road, the Nazis would knock them down and think this was great fun. Mom warned Tony and me not to go anywhere near them.

One day Mom took me to Brno to go to the theater. We saw a gang of thugs along the road knocking down Jews and beating them up and breaking the display windows of Jewish shops. Mother took me to stand beside the armed guard at the door of the theater. I felt very safe. As soon as the thugs passed, we went home without attending the theater. This was a scary situation. Hitler said, "If you give me Sudetenland, I will not ask for any more territory.", but 5 months later, without resistance, Hitler marched into Prague, announced the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, while Slovakia became an independent satellite of Germany.

## Transport to Great Britain

I remember the Pastor of the Evangelic church in the next village visiting us. He had studied in Edinburgh and apparently made a contact for us in Scotland. My mother started going to his church and later joined his church. Possibly through him Mom contacted Nicholas Winton, sent him my photo and completed the application papers.

Karel, our driver, took me to Brno to say goodbye to my Dad. His shop was full of Nazi soldiers. They liked his custom-made boots. There were more workers in the factory behind his shop. By this time he had his main shop in Brno with



- 1) Travel Paper to the U.K.
- 2) With Mom and brother 1939
- 3) Family 36 years ago (Lyn, Paul, Dan, Tim)

branches in Prague and Karlovy Vary. After I went to Scotland someone reported that my Dad was a Jew, and I have been told that he committed suicide, but I have not seen this documented.

Mom and grandma took me to the Prague Wilson Station. There I was given a travel document, the number 652 was tied round my neck. I had 2 suitcases with clothes and a bag with food to eat along the way. I was excited to leave on this adventure. I probably left my mother in tears. She was only 29 when she said goodbye to me. She told me, "Go to Britain, learn English and in a few months everything will be fine and you will be able to come home. When you grow up you may be able to represent your father's shoe company in London."

## In Scotland

First I was a few days at the Priory at Selkirk, on the English/Scottish border, then a short time at the home of Rev. Sawyer. When he was called up to the Army as a chaplain I was sent to the Village of Connel on the shore of Loch Etive in the western highlands of Scotland. Mary Corson, a home economics teacher welcomed Tom Schlesinger and me to her home. He sister, brother-in-law and cousin all came to meet us at the station, 5 minutes walk from her home. Next door was the 2-roomed village school where I played with my classmates and listened to lessons in the classroom for grades 1-5. I soon learned English and forgot Czech and German. At first my Mom wrote to me every week, then by