



My Train to Freedom: A Jewish Boy's Journey from Nazi Europe to a Life of Activism

Ivan A. Backer

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The breathtaking memoir by a member of “Nicky’s family,” a group of 669 Czechoslovakian children who escaped the Holocaust through Sir Nicholas Winton’s Kindertransport project, *My Train to Freedom* relates the trials and achievements of award-winning humanitarian and former Episcopal priest, Ivan Backer.

As Backer recounts in his memoir, in May of 1939 as a ten-year-old Jewish boy, he fled Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia for the United Kingdom aboard one of the Kindertransport trains organized by Nicholas Winton, a young London stockbroker. The final train was canceled September 1 when Hitler invaded Poland. The 250 children scheduled for that train were left on the platform and later transported to concentration camps and presumably perished.

Detailed in this page-turning true story is Backer’s dangerous escape, his boyhood in England, his perilous 1944 voyage to America, and his mantra today. Now he is an eighty-six-year-old who remains an activist for peace and justice. He has been influenced by his Jewish heritage, his Christian boarding school education in England, and the always present question, “For what purpose was I spared the Holocaust?”

My Train to Freedom was thoroughly researched and shaped by Backer’s own memories. It includes interviews he conducted in 1980 in Czech with his mother and her sister, later translated into English; a collection of conversations he had with his older brother and cousin; insights gained from the Czech film, *Nicky’s Family*, about the Kindertransport; and concludes with never-before-published death march accounts by two family members.

Skyhorse Publishing, along with our Arcade, Good Books, Sports Publishing, and Yucca imprints, is proud to publish a broad range of biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs. Our list includes biographies on well-known historical figures like Benjamin Franklin, Nelson Mandela, and Alexander Graham Bell, as well as villains from history, such as Heinrich Himmler, John Wayne Gacy, and O. J. Simpson. We have also published survivor stories of World War II, memoirs about overcoming adversity, first-hand tales of adventure, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a *New York Times* bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home.

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