

HOLLERITH MACHINE

All governments gather information about their citizens. The Nazi regime, however, used such information to track political opponents, enforce racial policies, and, ultimately, implement mass murder. As early as 1934, various government bureaus began to compile card catalogs identifying political and racial enemies of the regime, such as Freemasons, Jews, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), and “genetically diseased” persons. The 1939 census became the basis for a national register of Jews. That year, German census forms for the first time included explicitly racial categories. Jews were identified not only by religious affiliation, but by race as well. Within three years, the completed national register of Jews and some Jewish *Mischlinge* (“mixed breeds”) was to become one of the sources for Nazi deportation lists. Most of those deported perished in the Holocaust.

During the 1930s and 1940s, Hollerith machines were the best data processing devices available. The Nazi regime employed thousands of people in 1933 to 1939 to record national census data onto Hollerith punch cards. The SS used the Hollerith machines during the war to monitor the large numbers of prisoners shipped in and out of concentration camps. The machines were manufactured by DEHOMAG—Deutsche Hollerith Maschinen Gesellschaft or German Hollerith Machine Company, a subsidiary of IBM since 1922.

For educational purposes only. Courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Photographed by Arnold Kramer.



SHOES

The “Final Solution” was not only systematic murder, but systematic plunder. Before victims were gassed at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau, the SS confiscated all their belongings. First to go were money and other valuables; clothes were next. This mass pillage yielded mountains of clothing. Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek together generated nearly 300,000 pairs of shoes, which were distributed among German settlers in Poland and among the inmates of other concentration camps. The shoes in this photo were confiscated from prisoners in Majdanek. The “Final Solution” produced over 2,000 freight carloads of stolen goods.

On loan to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from the State Memorial Museum at Majdanek.

PMM-II-3-5/1-1950/IL89.02.01-.1950, PMM-II-3-6/1-58/IL89.02.1951-.2000

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Photographed by Arnold Kramer.



DANISH RESCUE BOAT

Among the Nazi-occupied countries, only Denmark rescued the overwhelming majority of its Jews. Most Danes regarded Jews as full members of their community and the Danish government resisted Nazi pressure to persecute them. From 1940 to the spring of 1943, the Nazis refrained from harming Denmark's Jews.

On September 28, 1943, Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz, a German diplomat, informed one of his contacts about SS plans to deport the Danish Jews. Three days later, German police began making arrests. Heeding these warnings, the Danish resistance launched a nationwide effort to smuggle Jews by boat to Sweden, a neutral country.

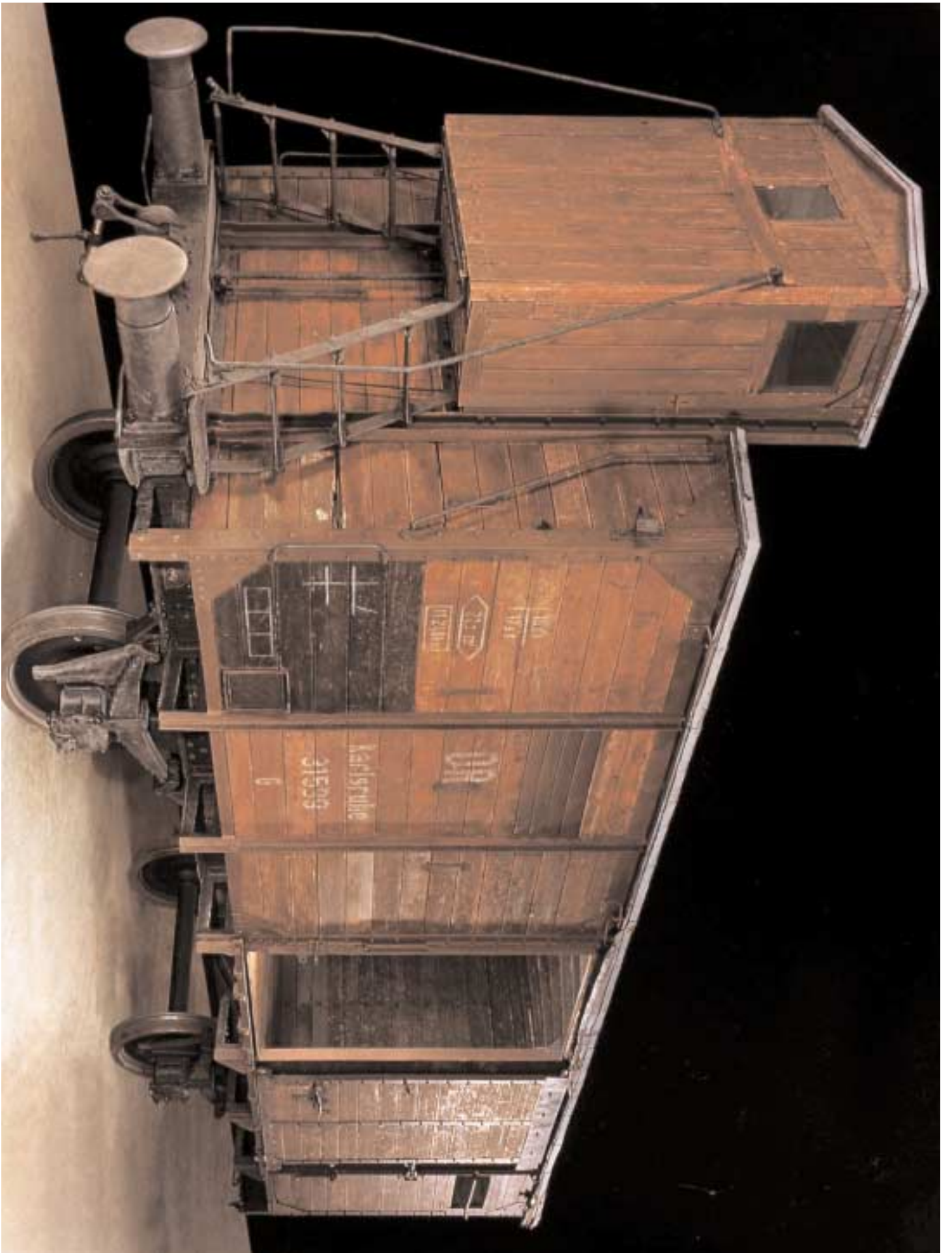
Jews were hidden in homes, hospitals, and churches of coastal towns. Danish police refused to cooperate in arrests. Jewish and non-Jewish Danes raised the equivalent of \$600,000 to pay for passage to Sweden. In October, 7,220 Danish Jews were brought to safety. The Danes thus proved that widespread support for Jews and resistance to Nazi policies could prevent deportation.

Nevertheless, almost 500 Danish Jews were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto, among them the elderly and disabled. Still, all but 51 survived the Holocaust.

The clandestine rescue of Danish Jews was undertaken at great personal risk. This boat and several others like it were used by one of the earliest rescue operations organized by a group of Danes code-named the "Helsingør Sewing Club." The escape route they provided, named the "Kiaer Line" after Erling Kiaer, founder of the "Helsingør Sewing Club," enabled several hundred Jews to escape across a narrow strait to the Swedish coast. On each trip, the boat carried 12-14 Jewish refugees. Kiaer himself was betrayed and arrested in May 1944.

1989.222.01

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RAILWAY CAR

Railroads were essential to the killing process. Deportations out of German-occupied Europe were by train. Killing centers were deliberately situated along major rail lines in Poland. Forty-four parallel tracks led to the Auschwitz station alone; a special railroad spur ran directly into the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp.

Most deported Jews endured the torturous journey to death camps in ordinary freight cars under conditions of starvation, extreme overcrowding, and horrible sanitation. In winter they were exposed to freezing temperatures, while in summer they were enveloped in suffocating heat and stench. Many of those deported, especially elderly people and young children, died during the journey.

This authentic 15-ton freight car is one of several types that were used to deport Jews. Its cramped interior would have held 80 to 100 people. Deportation trains usually carried between 1,000 and 2,000 people whose crushing weight slowed the speed of travel to about 30 mph, greatly prolonging the ordeal.

1989.225.01

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RINGELBLUM MILK CAN

The most comprehensive effort to document ghetto life was undertaken in the Warsaw ghetto by a group of several dozen writers, teachers, rabbis, and historians led by Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum in a secret operation code-named Oneg Shabbat (Hebrew for “Sabbath delight”). They wrote diaries, collected documents, commissioned papers, and preserved the posters and decrees that comprised the memory of the doomed community. They had no illusions. Their only hope was that the memory of the Warsaw ghetto would endure.

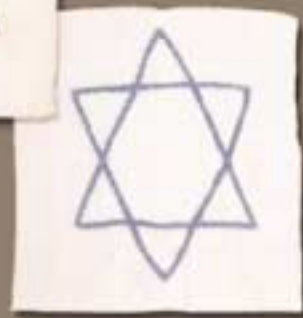
On the eve of the ghetto’s destruction in the spring of 1943, when all seemed lost, the archive was placed in three milk cans and some metal boxes and buried in the cellars of several Warsaw buildings. The first containers were found in 1946, while the milk can in the photograph was unearthed on December 1, 1950, at 68 Nowolipki Street. It contained copies of several underground newspapers, a narrative of deportations from the Warsaw ghetto, and public notices by the Judenrat (the council of Jewish leaders established on German orders).

Despite repeated searches, the rest of the archive, including the third milk can, was never found.

On loan to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.

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STARS, TRIANGLES, AND MARKINGS

The Nazis and their collaborators required Jews to wear badges on their outer clothing so they could identify them easily. The badge varied from place to place. Those seen here are from

- A) France
- B) Croatia (part of prewar Yugoslavia)
- C) Poland
- D and E) See below.
- F) The Netherlands
- G) Poland
- H) Germany

The Nazis used these triangular patches to identify categories of prisoners in concentration camps. They were generally paired with a prisoner identification number. The color indicated the category of prisoner (red—political prisoner, green—criminal prisoner, black—asocial prisoner, purple—Jehovah's Witness prisoner, and pink—homosexual prisoner) and the letter generally indicated the country of origin of the prisoner in German (F—Frankreich, or France; U—Ungarn, or Hungary; P—Polen, or Poland, etc.).

