

[Czechoslovakia].”⁵⁶ It was a great joy for Wally to spend several days with Apostle Smith and his wife, and he felt extraordinarily blessed to know them.⁵⁷

Regrettably, the Apostle’s plea to the Father for “unhindered missionary work” was unanswered. Within a few short weeks, peace for Czechoslovakia became a luxury of the past.

56. Toronto, journal, July 16–22, 1939, 386.

57. Toronto, journal, July 23–29, 1939, 389.

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“THIS BOILING CAULDRON OF POLITICAL MADNESS”

A degree of apprehension stifled the level of enthusiasm surrounding the spiritual feast accompanying the visit of an Apostle of the Lord. Just two weeks before Elder Smith’s visit, something happened that tested Wally’s faith and fortitude like nothing else. On July 10, 1939, two missionaries, Robert E. Lee and Rulon S. Payne, disregarded mission rules—and numerous warnings from the mission president—and made contact with a person who was willing to exchange German marks for American dollars at the black market rate (several times greater than the legal exchange rate).¹ The man was an agent for the Gestapo. Consequently, the elders were thrown in prison.

The German government had passed a law against people possessing American dollars for longer than two weeks without converting them into crowns. They also demanded that any transaction from dollars to crowns was to be done in a bank. Wally had warned the missionaries about the laws and given strict orders “not

1. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 51–52.

to exchange money with any individual, no matter how many crowns they were offered per dollar, or how much they pleaded. Dollars were in great demand, and one could sell them for five or six times what they were worth at the legal exchange rate.” One of the missionaries had been approached previously by a stooge (agent) of the Gestapo to arrange the money exchange. When they arrived at the scheduled spot, the Nazi officer arrested the elder and his companion.² He immediately took them to Gestapo headquarters and then to prison.

Historian David Boone described the arrest of two other missionaries:

Two other elders, Asael Moulton and Verdell R. Bishop, who had not seen these missionaries all day, went to their friends’ apartment just in time to be arrested by Gestapo agents who were searching there for evidence against the offenders. They too, were incarcerated in the Pankrac Penitentiary, but unlike the first elders, they had no idea why they were arrested. The latter two may have been set free except for checks bearing their names on the person of the first two elders. Under German law it was illegal to have foreign currency in one’s possession because it was worth more in Germany than the local tender, and therefore was highly prized by the government.³

Martha recorded the events leading up to their discovery that the four elders had been arrested. That night, she had gone to the YMCA on the trolley to attend a Mutual Improvement Association meeting, or “VOS” as it was called in Czech. To her surprise, the hall was still locked when she arrived. Previously, the four incarcerated missionaries had almost always been there early to set up chairs and prepare classrooms. She unlocked the door and went about the business of Mutual, assuming that the elders had been delayed. But the missionaries never got there. When she got home, she told Wally that they never showed up.⁴

2. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 22–23.

3. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 51–52.

4. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 21.

The next morning, Gestapo agents knocked on the mission home door. They entered followed by Asael Moulton, the mission secretary, who was one of the missionaries who had gone missing before the Mutual meeting.⁵ The Gestapo then informed Wally of the elders’ arrests. They “had found a key which Elder Moulton kept on a chain around his neck. The key opened the office cash box, which contained the mission emergency fund in English pound notes and American bills.”⁶ The money was reserved for missionaries in case they needed to get out of German territory quickly. When they were in Wally’s office, Elder Moulton was somehow able to distract the agents long enough for Wally to take some of the cash and hide it in one of the desk drawers. However, the Gestapo agents took the rest of the money in the mission box—along with Wally’s passport. They then left and took Elder Moulton back to the jail at Pankrac.⁷

Wally went to the jail to secure the missionaries’ release the next day. He was told that their bail of \$10,000 was nonnegotiable, but the charge against the missionaries was not disclosed. He wired the First Presidency and asked that they send the \$10,000 by wire. He wanted it on hand in case there was no other way to get the missionaries out of jail. But when he tried to send money to cover the bail, they raised the price. He called Mr. Potter, the American consul, who promised to get started on the case. Wally tried to get permission to see the elders at Pankrac jail, but he was denied the visit.⁸ In fact, the elders were denied all visitors. For over a month, Wally remained uninformed as to why the missionaries had been arrested. He constantly sought out the American consul to secure their release. The charges against the

5. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 21–22.

6. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 52.

7. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 51–52; and Toronto, journal, July 9–15, 1929, 380.

8. Toronto, journal, July 9–15, 1939, 381.

missionaries constantly changed, “ranging from political excitement and insurrection, to black market fraud.”⁹

When he went to retrieve the mission’s emergency money and his passport, Wally was forced to sign a statement verifying that his money was legally confiscated. Once he had his passport back, he would be able to go to Vienna the following week to meet with Elder and Sister Smith at the conference for the mission presidents. In addition, signing the statement ensured that Wally would not have to have a formal court trial for failing to exchange the American dollars and British crowns.

After a week, Wally secured 25,000 crowns, went to the Gestapo office and offered to pay the bond to release the elders. To his great disappointment, he learned that because the protectorate was not interested in the case, the elders could not be released, not even on bond, until a decision came from there. The process was becoming overwhelming. “One hardly knows what to do and how to handle such situations, especially under a new and dictatorial regime. During the whole week we have prayed mightily to the Lord for guidance and wisdom in this matter, and I believe that we shall see that events will work out for the best.”¹⁰

The next Monday, Wally visited the Gestapo office again “only to be told that some new developments had come up which would necessitate the brethren’s remaining in jail another several days.” He felt powerless. “We are doing all we can—but it seems to be so little.” He later learned that the Gestapo had discovered an anti-Hitler poem in one elder’s possession. They also found some pro-Czech books in another elder’s possession. As a result, the four missionaries’ case now took on a political aspect and was transferred to the chief Gestapo headquarters.¹¹ Wally visited the American consulate yet again to talk with Mr. Potter, who had fortunately been admitted to see the four

9. Wallace F. Toronto to the First Presidency, September 18, 1939. Manuscript in possession of Allen Toronto, Brigham Young University, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 53.

10. Toronto, journal, July 9–15, 1939, 382.

11. Toronto, journal, July 16–22, 1939, 383, 385.

missionaries. Potter told him that they appeared to be all right and “as happy as they could be under the circumstances.”¹²

After a week, Wally took some laundry to the prison for the elders. “However, they refused to accept it, for they said it was the wrong day for it.” Czech officials at the prison told him that the missionaries were being well treated and that “he did not have to worry about them.” They expressed their apology to Wally that he couldn’t do anything “since they were in the German section.”¹³

When Wally went to visit the office of the Gestapo chief, he found that the elders’ case had not yet been transferred to them. “We seem to be so helpless in all of this. We must certainly depend upon the Lord for guidance and assistance.” He ran to various offices, attempting to chase down information about the status of the case. He observed, “The secret police just [seem] to pass ‘the buck’, from one office to another. They are doing the same thing with Mr. Potter, [at] the American Consulate, who is working on the case for us.”¹⁴ Wally wrote letters to the parents of the four missionaries to inform them that their sons had been detained and therefore could not write. He also promised that he and the people working with him were doing everything possible for the missionaries with the hope that they would be granted an early release.¹⁵

The price to release the elders varied with each person Wally asked. “One agent promised their release for approximately fifteen hundred dollars, while others demanded ten thousand dollars.” After the missionaries had been held for a month, he came to the startling realization that the purpose of their confinement was to squeeze out “as much money as possible from the Church.” According to his report to the First Presidency, some American or English citizens living in

12. Toronto, journal, July 23–29, 1939, 389.

13. Toronto, journal, July 23–29, 1939, 390.

14. Toronto, journal, July 30–August 5, 1939, 391.

15. Toronto, journal, August 13–19, 1939, 397.

German-occupied territory had been held in lieu of as much as ten thousand dollars each.¹⁶

Throughout the ordeal, Wally kept his sense of humor intact. After every meeting with German officials, he bragged to Martha that the Gestapo meetings gave him an opportunity to learn new German words. During one visit with a high-ranking Gestapo official, however, his lack of German fluency put him into a state of panic. His patience spent, Wally finally got mad and began calling the official some pretty hard names, the meanings of which he was unsure. When he got home, he immediately looked the words up in a German dictionary. When he found out what he had said to the official, he exclaimed, “Oh, my!” and “immediately sat down and wrote a letter of apology” to the offended agent.¹⁷ Fortunately for him, no harm stemmed from his loose tongue.¹⁸

From what his father Wally had told him, Allen remembered:

There is no indication that the missionaries were abused, tortured, or excessively mistreated, although other political prisoners were commonly physically punished. The missionaries were separated and each was kept in an isolated cell. No talking between prisoners was allowed, even during periods when they were allowed into an exercise yard to stretch their legs. Elder Moulton later related that sometimes the missionaries were able to communicate through tapping on cell walls or winking at each other to build morale. Much of the time was passed by remembering scriptures that had been memorized, wondering why they were there, and questioning how long their incarceration would last. One elder suggested that anything helped, and remembered a time when he had used his bread as playing dice to roll on the floor.¹⁹

Finally, after nearly six weeks, Mr. Potter told Wally he thought that he could secure permission for Wally to see the four missionaries at the prison. Wally went to the Gestapo headquarters on Bre-

16. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 24.

17. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 24–25.

18. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 56.

19. Asael Moulton, Czech missionary, interview, by Allen Toronto, date unknown. Notes in possession of Allen Toronto, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 54–55.

dovska Street and met with Dr. Bäumelburg, the second in command. Bäumelburg finally revealed the charges against the missionaries. He told Wally that they were politically dangerous because of certain books and literature found in their possession but that they had been absolved of the charges. However, he said they had been involved in illegal money transactions and would have to stand a fine—one of \$2,500. He ordered that a letter be written entitling Wally and the two men with the consulate to visit the elders at Pankrac under the condition that Wally only speak Czech or German. He sent a young man along with them by the name of Baum to make sure Wally said nothing subversive. Wally delighted to have roughly ten minutes with each missionary. He met “first with Brother Bishop, then with Payne and Moulton together, and then with Brother Lee. They all looked well, despite their six weeks of confinement, and had no major complaints to make. They were delighted to see me and to know that we were doing all we could for their release.”²⁰ “An English-speaking guard was with them the whole time, so they couldn’t discuss their case at all. But Wally was able to see that they were all right—dirty, but shaven and cleaned up for the visit.”²¹

After going home from a visit to the prison, Wally had no idea what else he could possibly do. He woke up the next day confused by “the strange feeling that [he] should go down to the Gestapo office” that day. He told Martha about his impression, to which she replied, “Well, why don’t you go?” He explained, “I’d never get in. . . . How could I ever get in without the American Consul’s presence today?” He dismissed the thought at first, but it would not leave him. Finally, he gave in to the prompting. “I was greatly surprised at the rapidity with which I gained entrance and was admitted. Despite the guards, and questions of the many attendants at the Gestapo office, I found myself soon in Dr. Bäumelburg’s office. I knew that the Lord was with me that morning. He accepted me very cordially.”²²

20. Toronto, journal, August 13–19, 1939, 396–97.

21. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 24–26.

22. Toronto, journal, August 20–26, 1939, 398.

After talking to Wally for a long time, Dr. Bäumelburg finally said, “Your church is a rich church. You could pay that ten thousand with no problem at all.” Wally thought to himself, “You old rascal—if you can bluff me I can bluff you.”²³ So he went out on a limb and told Bäumelburg about many “fine articles” he had written about Germany. He told him that his wish was to tell the world about the fine German people. He showed him some news articles in the *Deseret News*, which had just gone to press that morning. He then informed him about the number of missionaries in Germany who received a sum of money every month, which brought “much good” to Germany.²⁴

Wally declared:

It becomes perfectly clear that there are no serious charges against our missionaries, but that they are being held only for the purpose of exacting from our Church a great amount in American dollars, which the German government sorely needs at the present time. We are willing to pay a reasonable fine for our men breaking the currency regulations of the country, but not the great amount which you require of us. . . . If it is foreign currency you want, then let me point out that you are endangering one of your finest sources of income. Do you know that for the past few years there have been from 250 to 300 Mormon missionaries laboring in Germany to teach you people the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you know that each one of these [missionaries] brings into your country each month from 40 to 50 dollars? . . . Figure it out for yourself, Doctor, and you will find that it totals from approximately 10,000 to 15,000 dollars each month. Now, Doctor, unless you come to terms and deal reasonably with us, I shall request our Church to immediately withdraw every American missionary from German Reich.²⁵

Wally was bluffing. There were no longer that many missionaries serving in Nazi-run territory, and he also had no authority to remove missionaries from his own mission, let alone from all of Germany. But the bluff worked. Dr. Bäumelburg “immediately took the phone, called Herr Wegner, and explained the situation to him, saying that he

23. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 24–26.

24. Toronto, journal, August 20–26, 1939, 398.

25. Czech Mission History, December 31, 1939, 9.

would be willing to pay one thousand dollars, and that in light of the things I had told him, some consideration should be given us. He then informed me that something would be done, and inferred [*sic*] that one thousand [dollars] would suffice.”²⁶

“Two days later, on August 23, 1939, the finance administration agreed on a fine totaling approximately \$1,000. . . . Within a few hours, the four missionaries were released.”²⁷ Nevertheless, they had been ordered to evacuate the country. The rest of the mission was already in the process of evacuating. They had to pack what few belongings they had as hastily as possible. Despite his earlier resistance to being released, Wally “had begun to evacuate the Czechoslovak mission, on the advice of the American consul, even before he received a cable from the first presidency directing him to do so.”²⁸ Martha and the three Toronto children were supposed to be the first to leave. However, Martha insisted that she cook a big meal for the newly released prisoners. After subsisting on a diet of bread, water, and soup for forty-four days, the missionaries’ stomachs could not handle the dinner that Martha had prepared, and each of them became quite ill.²⁹

After the last four elders left the country, Wally pondered on the significance of their prison experience. He summarized that although it had been a great and very disagreeable worry, it had brought him into contact with official personalities whom he otherwise would never have met. Not to mention, he had been able to tell them something about the gospel of Jesus Christ. He concluded, “It is certain that blessings have flown [*sic*] from it. Such contacts may be very helpful to us in our future work and activities.”³⁰

Some complications, however, had arisen during the evacuation of the family and of the remaining missionaries that impeded their

26. Toronto, journal, August 20–26, 1939, 398.

27. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 54.

28. Boone, “The Evacuation of the Czechoslovak and German Missions,” 128–31.

29. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 23–27.

30. Toronto, journal, August 20–26, 1939, 399.

progress. It was against the law to take U.S. dollars out of Czechoslovakia. Wally realized that they “could not enter another country as penniless refugees.” He needed to figure out a solution, “a way to get the money safely over the border in spite of impossible rules.” As the mission president, he “had wisely told the missionaries to save some of their American dollars and to bring them to the mission home in Prague.” He promised he would find some way to get their money back to them while they were in Denmark. He made the situation a matter of fasting and prayer. And he got his answer. He “rolled more than \$3,000 in paper bills into a bundle” and give it to Martha, who would carry it out of the country in the pocket of her coat. If she was caught, she would be thrown in prison.³¹

On August 24, 1939, Martha gathered her children and left first, traveling through hostile territory. Although the Gestapo agents were less likely to search her than to search a man, the possibility still existed.³² “As the customs officers meticulously searched her luggage and purse, they did not touch the pockets of the coat she carried over her arm. They never suspected tender, young, innocent [Martha], with three tiny tots, of such larceny. And miraculously, the money was waiting for the missionaries in Denmark as planned.”³³ While traveling through Berlin, “she observed the people screaming, pushing, and crowding aboard the train to ensure their own escape. Fortunately, an elder from the East German Mission helped her get seats” at the end of one of the train cars. She waited there, trusting in God “that her husband and the missionaries would also escape.”³⁴

On the same day, at about 6:30 in the morning, Wally received a call out of Berlin from President Thomas E. McKay. “He told [Wally] that the American Minister in Berlin was warning all Americans to

31. Miller, “My Story: The Dream,” 3.

32. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 27–29; Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*, 72.

33. Miller, “My Story: The Dream,” 3.

34. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*, 72; Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 27–29.

leave the country in view of the tense political situation between [Germany] and Poland. . . . He also informed [him] that he had received a wire from the First Presidency authorizing the mission presidents to act as it seemed wise under such conditions.”³⁵ That next Sunday, Wally conducted Sunday School and asked the Latter-day Saints to remain afterward. He then “told them that it was necessary . . . to leave . . . again because of the German threat of war over . . . the Polish corridor.”³⁶ He assured them that Martha and the children were already safe in Denmark.

Wally put the affairs of the mission in order so that he and the remaining elders could leave. On August 27, 1939, he set Rudolf Kubiska apart as acting mission president and branch president in Prague until he could return.³⁷ That day, Wally wrote a letter to all Church members, “announcing that we would have to leave, and encouraging them to continue on with the work and to remain faithful to the Gospel.”³⁸ He made arrangements for the local Church leaders to take over and urged the members to continue studying *Articles of Faith*.

Wally had “intended to follow [Martha] and the children with the remainder of the missionaries within a few days but was delayed by the re-arrest of Elder Rulon S. Payne. When Elder Payne had gone to the American consul to obtain an exit permit as required by law, he was taken into custody, frisked, strip-searched, and arrested by Gestapo agents. After he sent the rest of the elders to Denmark, Wally demanded an immediate investigation. He learned that Elder Payne had been arrested “because he had the same name as a British spy the Nazis were looking for, a Mr. Payne.”³⁹ Through the prompt

35. Toronto, journal, August 20–26, 1939, 400.

36. Toronto, journal, August 27–September 2, 1939, 401.

37. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*, 86.

38. Toronto, journal, August 27–September 2, 1939, 403.

39. Martha S. Toronto Anderson, James Moyle Oral History Program, interview by Richard O. Cowan and David F. Boone, February 1978, typescript, 1, Church History Library. See Czechoslovak Mission History, December

intercession of the American consul, “it was finally learned,” Wally recorded, “that Elder Payne had been seized because of mistaken identity. Another individual of the same name was apparently being sought for espionage activities, and thus our brother was apprehended.”⁴⁰ Wally and several American consul representatives verified Elder Payne’s identity, after which “Elder Payne was released amid profuse apologies and immediately granted his exit visa. That night, August 31, 1939, Wally and Elder Payne left Czechoslovakia for Berlin; they arrived in Copenhagen on the evening of September 1.”⁴¹

Wally and the missionaries were not the only ones trying to get out of Czechoslovakia. He recorded observing that many Americans and British were “headed anywhere, just to get out of Central Europe. . . . Hitler had given an ultimatum which Poland had refused to answer. England and France were frantically doing all they could to make Germany talk sense, but without success.” At the time, Wally “knew little of what was going on outside of Germany for the Czech papers had to either print German propaganda or suffer the consequences.” Despite it all, Wally was certain that they would return soon enough to carry on the work.⁴²

Meanwhile in Copenhagen, Martha wondered what had happened to her husband. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith was in Denmark too, with the special assignment of directing the evacuation of all seven hundred young men and women.⁴³ As Martha went three days without any word from Wally and the other missionaries, she grew more and more anxious. “Naturally, I was very upset over the whole thing and expressed my concern and worry to President Smith. As a group of mission leaders we met often in prayer circles and discussed the

31, 1939, 11, as cited in Boone, “The Evacuation of the Czechoslovak and German Missions,” 132.

40. Czech Mission History, December 31, 1939, 11, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 58.

41. Boone, “The Evacuation of the Czechoslovak and German Missions,” 131–32.

42. Toronto, journal, August 27–September 2, 1939, 403.

43. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 30.

situation as it changed from day to day, watching the progress of the German army as it swept across Europe to the borders of Poland. . . . Seeing that I was very worried and getting more upset by the minute, President Smith came over to me, putting his protecting arm around my shoulders.”⁴⁴ Sister Evelyn Wood, wife of West German Mission president M. Douglas Wood, recalled Elder Smith’s special promise to Martha. “Don’t worry, the war cannot start until Brother Toronto and those missionaries are out of there.” Naïvely, Sister Evelyn Wood asked, “Do you mean to say they’d hold a whole war up, all of the negotiations that are being made while we get those missionaries out of there?” President Smith turned and declared, “The war will not start until those men . . . are out of the country.”⁴⁵

David Boone explained President Smith’s promise in more detail. “This becomes an interesting prophecy when compared with the events as they were occurring in Europe. President Toronto and Elder Payne left Czechoslovakia at midnight of August 31. The invasion of Poland did not occur until the morning of September 1, at five o’clock A.M.”⁴⁶ That they were already in Berlin can be further documented by a letter to the First Presidency from President Toronto. He relates, “We were in Berlin the morning Germany began to bomb Polish cities, but had no trouble in reaching Copenhagen.”⁴⁷ All the elders had left Czechoslovakia by the time the Polish offensive began. In that respect, the evacuation fulfilled Elder Smith’s prediction. “If the prophecy referred to the outbreak of war between the Allied Powers and Germany, the prediction was also fulfilled.”⁴⁸ President Toronto and Elder Payne

44. Martha Toronto Anderson, Czech Mission President’s wife, interview, Salt Lake City, February 1978, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 59.

45. M. Douglas and Evelyn Wood, East German Mission president and wife, interview, Salt Lake City, February 3, 1978, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 59.

46. Czech Mission History, December 31, 1939, 10; *New York Times*, September 1, 1939, 1.

47. Toronto to First Presidency, September 18, 1939, 6.

48. Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 60.

obtained passage on a special train carrying the British Legation out of Berlin. It was the last train to leave before war engulfed Europe.⁴⁹

Wally and his missionaries safely escaped the onslaught of the Nazis in Prague, but 250 children who were assigned to leave the train station on September 1 for safety in England were not so lucky. They waited on the train in anticipation to meet what would have been their foster families.⁵⁰ Many Jews had sought Wally's aid, knowing that he had money from the Church, but he had been helpless. Not even he had known about a young London stockbroker named Nicholas Winton who had been working with the British bureaucracy for the last several months before the war to rescue hundreds of refugee Czech children, most of whom were Jews. Winton organized the escape of 669 children in total. To do so, he had to meet with over a thousand parents who were desperate to save their children from the war, convince as many families in England to take the children in, and remain undetected.

Winton's "office" for organizing the *Czech Kindertransport* was initially his hotel room at Wenceslas Square in Prague. Parents lined up to discuss with him the possibility that he could save their children.⁵¹ His colleagues, Doreen Warriner and Trevor Chadwick, managed to ward off the Gestapo and maintain secrecy, a feat that Winton mentioned much later in his life was far more worthy of praise than anything he had done.⁵² One of the main obstacles for him was the cost. Britain had agreed to take in the children as long as each child could provide a fifty-pound guarantee to the foster families. Winton sent a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in hopes that America could provide him with at least some assistance. He received the reply from an official at the U.S. Embassy in London that they could spare no help. Winton

49. Anderson, *Cherry Tree*, 27–32. For information on mission evacuation in Europe see Boone, "The Evacuation of the Czechoslovak and German Missions," 123–54; Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*, 72–73.

50. "Nicholas Winton," <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/nicholas-winton>.

51. "Nicholas Winton."

52. Stephen Moss, "'British Schindler' Nicholas Winton: I Wasn't Heroic. I Was Never in Danger," <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/09/british-schindler-nicholas-winton-interview>, November 9, 2014.

did his best to raise the money for those families that were too poor to produce the funds. Even then, the British authorities were taking too long drawing up the travel documents necessary for their passage out of the country. Consequently, Winton forged the travel documents for each child. The whole process "took a bit of blackmail on [his] part. March 14, 1939, was the day that the first train car (holding twenty children) left Prague for safety. The next day was when the Germans occupied Prague and the rest of the country, followed by the persecution of and confiscation of property from the Jews that had occurred so heavily already in the Sudetenland. The Nazis, instead of terminating Winton's efforts, allowed him to continue letting the children leave since the process "[kept] with their policy to 'cleanse' Europe of the Jews."⁵³ They likely did not know that the children's documents were not actually valid. Another six trains left throughout the following months, but the last scheduled train never departed, and the children were never heard from again. They had presumably been moved to concentration camps. The 250 families intended to foster the children stood at Liverpool Street waiting for a train that never arrived. The level of desperation and helplessness that Winton felt spread throughout Czechoslovakia, and much of Europe, and escalated dramatically.

Wally, as well as his family and his missionaries, no doubt felt abundantly blessed to have escaped when they did. He and Elder Payne cut it close, but they were protected. They succeeded in getting a second-class compartment. At about two o'clock in the morning, they crossed the border. They then journeyed through Dresden and Berlin, where they were met by two other missionaries, Elder Klopfer and Elder Moulton. They crossed the border on the day Germany declared war. "On Friday, September 1, 1939, President Toronto and his eight missionaries arrived safely in Copenhagen. President Mark Garff of the Danish Mission recorded, 'President Toronto and his missionaries arrived safely on the last train tonight from Berlin. . . . They are tired and worn out and have had many experiences. . . . It was a real thrill to

53. CBS News, "Saving the Children," *60 Minutes*, April 27, 2014, <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/saving-the-children/>.

see him again united with his good wife and three small children.’ The offensive that threw Europe into another conflict and the world into a second World War began the following morning when France and Great Britain declared war on Germany.”⁵⁴

When Wally arrived in Copenhagen, Elder Smith told him the disheartening news that all missionaries were to be released and that he and his family were to return home. Wally had strongly believed that he would only have to leave the Czech members for a few weeks, just as he had the previous fall. But he was ready to leave, the war had begun, and it appeared that it would not be for a short duration a second time.⁵⁵

Several reports claimed that “Warsaw had surrendered after terrific bombing, and that Germany and Russia were ready to divide the conquered but stubborn country.” Wally later found out that the reports were actually false. In reality, Warsaw “held out until the following week, and then [was] crushed by cruel aerial attacks [and] finally gave up.”⁵⁶

Some of the missionaries—Elders Lee, Moulton, and Dees—decided to remain on their missions in the states instead of in Europe. The others wanted to write to their parents and secure permission to remain on the mission. In his journal Wally wrote, “The work in the States will be especially fine and helpful to those brethren who spent forty-four days in prison at the hands of the German Gestapo.” Eight missionaries left on a freighter, with a group of about sixty elders. They were all in good spirits. As Wally left, he could not help but wonder “how long it would be before missionaries would return to Czechoslovakia. I hope that the Lord will see fit to renew the work again, and give our Saints the advantage of missionary leadership.”⁵⁷

Kahlile Mehr wrote: “The achievements of ten years, 1929–39, had been minimal. Fifty-six missionaries had preached in nineteen

54. Mark B. Garff, daily record, September 1, 1939, 10, as cited in Boone, “The Worldwide Evacuation of Latter-day Saint Missionaries,” 61.

55. Toronto, journal, September 3–9, 1939, 406.

56. Toronto, journal, September 17–23, 1939, 414.

57. Toronto, journal, September 10–16, 1939, 409.

cities, published 350 articles in the Czechoslovak press, and publicized the Church widely through sports, public displays, lectures, and other activities. There were 141 names on the membership record and only seventeen priesthood holders. Czechoslovakia was much better informed about the Latter-day Saints, but clearly not disposed to accept its teachings in significant numbers.”⁵⁸

Wally later said that he had gained insight into the Nazi methods of control and domination. “The German attitude, that it is *the* superior nation, renders an unhindered approach to this device, . . . an indication of the submissiveness of the German population to authority and of their blind obedience in time of crisis, as well as of their desire to enter the World War.”⁵⁹

All missionaries in Europe were to leave the country. When the First Presidency said that all seven hundred missionaries were to leave Europe, Wally felt that the First Presidency must have felt that “a great catastrophe [was] impending.” All he could do was pray for them. “May God bless the Saints and the good souls whom we have left in this boiling cauldron of political madness.”⁶⁰

58. Mehr, *Mormon Missionaries Enter Eastern Europe*, 73.

59. Toronto, “Some Socio-psychological Aspects,” 105.

60. Toronto, journal, September 24–30, 1939, 414.