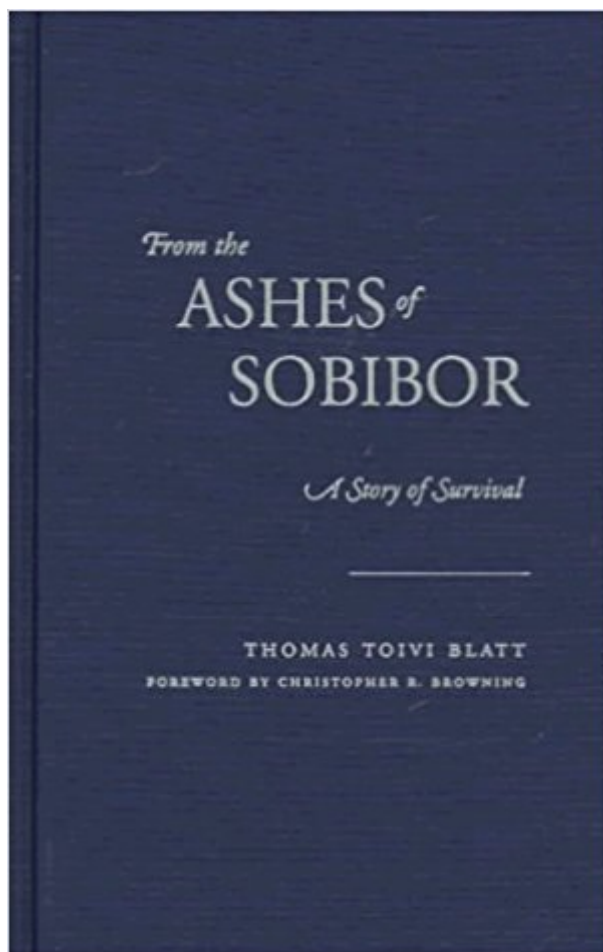


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From The Ashes Of Sobibor: A Story Of Survival (Jewish Lives)



Synopsis

When the Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Thomas Toivi Blatt was twelve years old. He and his family lived in the largely Jewish town of Izbica in the Lublin district of Poland - a district that was to become the site of three of the six major Nazi extermination camps: Belzec, Sobibor, and Majdanek. Blatt's account of his childhood in Izbica provides a fascinating glimpse of Jewish life in Poland after the German invasion and during the periods of mass deportations of Jews to the camps. Blatt tells of the chilling events that led to his deportation to Sobibor, of his separation from his family, and of the six months he spent at Sobibor before taking part in the most successful uprising and mass breakout in any Nazi camp during World War II. Blatt's tale of escape, and of the five horrifying years spent eluding both the Nazis and later anti-Semitic Polish nationalists, is a firsthand account of one of the most terrifying and savage events of human history. From the Ashes of Sobibor also includes a moving interview with Karl Frenzel, a Nazi commandant from Sobibor.

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Customer Reviews

In 1958, when Blatt emigrated to Israel, he sent the story of his incarceration and escape from Sobibor to a notable Auschwitz survivor. The names Auschwitz, Treblinka and Dachau had by then become symbols of the horrors of the Holocaust. But the concentration camp at Sobibor was another site where thousands of Jews had been killed, so Blatt must have been horrified when this survivor wrote in response to his manuscript, "You have a tremendous imagination. I've never heard of Sobibor and especially not of Jews revolting there." Forty years later Sobibor's existence is

no longer in question. But even today it is a camp shrouded in mystery, in large part, as Blatt points out, because "very little official documentation" survives of Sobibor's existence or operation--this memoir is one of the few eyewitness accounts. Through first-person narrative and reconstructed dialogue, Blatt describes with chilling objectivity the German occupation of his hometown of Izbica, Poland; early Nazi roundups; the transportation of Jews to Sobibor; his own internment there; the inmate revolt that followed on the footsteps of Nazi defeats by the Russians; and finally his flight to and from his hometown. Although parts of this story were printed elsewhere and have been incorporated into Richard Rashke's *Escape from Sobibor* as well as a 1987 CBS documentary of the same name, this is Blatt's first full-length account and the result of 40 years of work. Blatt's story is a powerfully written memorial to Sobibor's victims. Copyright 1997 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Among the most common questions asked of Holocaust survivors are why the Jews didn't fight back: Why, it is wondered, did they let their families go to their deaths so easily? The recollections of Blatt, a survivor of the extermination camp Sobibor, in Poland, where Jews staged a successful revolt, addresses these questions in a frank and gripping narrative. Blatt's account demonstrates how the Germans kept Jews in Poland subjugated through random terror combined with promises that the status quo would be maintained if the Jews cooperated. By the time Blatt reached Sobibor with his family, it was too late for resistance. Perhaps the most frightening, and dispiriting, part of Blatt's account is how Christian Poles at times robbed, terrorized, or even murdered Jewish fugitives, such as the Sobibor escapees. A chilling narrative; highly recommended for Judaica collections and Holocaust specialists as well as general readers. ?Frederic Krome, Northern Kentucky Univ., Highland Heights Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

What an incredible story this is. It's one of those stories that really fail you somewhat in explainable words. It's something that moves you internally, moves many emotions within your heart and awakens your most vivid imagination. Mr Blatt has written an account that is certainly haunting and tragic. He manages to introduce you to the most evil and hideous of human behaviour you somehow think is beyond any person. But in fact, all this man has written is true. He begins his story in the town he was born in. Izbica, Poland. From the months the Nazis came, dominated then began the murderous spree. He and his families constant fear, near death experiences and escapes will have you feeling the fear and dread along with them. At times it seems so unreal! Like a fabricated story. You somehow never cease to keep in the back of your mind the thought of "can people really

be capable of such cruelty against fellow humans?" However, we know it to be true. Mr Blatt had an inward strength I found remarkable while reading his story. It's the reason he came thru it all with his life. It's a chilling strength, something I could not wrap my mind around. But then, I have no right to as I shall never be in the position he and others were in. Each page is an adventure and incredibly entertaining. From the beginning in his home town, to his efforts to flee the country, to the Sobibor death factory and the historic camp escape of prisoners, I found myself pause in certain sections, as I became very emotional and felt simply dumbfounded. It is history that will linger in your mind forever. Mr Blatt's life account will linger in your mind forever. This is one book that shall never leave you.

This is a personal story of an amazing rebellion in a death camp. Because it is so detailed it grips the reader with empathy and understanding. The book was written some years after Toivi's escape from Sobibor and its dangerous aftermath, but his memories were kept alive by his determination to tell this story and by his contact with other survivors.

Just started reading the book. Good so far

very well-written and informative memoir, and very moving

such a good book - scary what the jews had to endure - came fast and in good shape - got what I wanted for sure

Book was a great read. I have previously read other books covering the same issues but never heard of Sobibor. Life there was somewhat different than the other camps.

Wonderful book.

I thought this book was okay, but for some reason I was not as enthralled by it as "Escape from Sobibor". Maybe this was because I found it difficult to relate to the author of this book so much. It is definitely worth reading, though, for anybody who is interested in knowing about the resistance to the Nazis.

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