

Shadowland consists of much of the handwritten diary (written in English) kept from 1940 until 1943 by Uwe Radok (1916–2009), one of the *Dunera* refugees who was interned in Tatura, Victoria, unlike the majority of the *Dunera* internees sent to Hay in New South Wales, and who had fled from Germany in 1939. Although of only partly Jewish ancestry, he fell afoul of Hitler's antisemitic laws and fled from Germany, albeit at the last possible moment. The most important fact which sets this diary apart is Radok's sexuality. Although he later married and fathered daughters, one of whom is the co-editor of this work, he was also bisexual and much of the diary consists of his longings for another internee, referred to as Fred. Homosexuality was, of course, considered as a criminal act at the time and was much less unofficially tolerated here in Australia than in England, with its long tradition of upper-class gayness at public schools and Oxbridge. This sexual aspect makes the diary different from other accounts and possibly unique. The diary also includes musings about Radok's wide range of readings of the *Dunera* experience and about life in general. After the War, he became a distinguished meteorologist at Melbourne University and elsewhere.

There are some unanswered questions and curious features about his diary. It is unclear if Radok was normally bisexual, or if he was attracted to males while kept at Tatura ... The diary entries are also somewhat curious in that they do not contain one word concerning the fate of the Jews in Germany or in Nazi-occupied Europe; this might well have been unknown to him, of course, but it is still curious. As well, very little is said about the course of the War. However, *Shadowline* is a valuable and authentic record of the Australian echo of one of the darkest pages in history but, after the War was won, proved to be fortunate for our country's intellectual and cultural standing.

William D. Rubinstein

SECRETS BEYOND THE SCREEN

by Anita Jacoby

Sydney, Ventura Press, 2022

Secrets Beyond the Screen is both an autobiographical account of Australian television producer and journalist, Anita Jacoby, and her father, Phillip Heinrich Walter Jacoby, known as 'Jack' in Australia, a non-Aryan Christian who escaped from Nazi Germany in 1934 and

later faced the pressures of internment in Australia. The book effectively interweaves Anita's life experiences with those of her father. In her acknowledgements, she notes that when working on the book she 'had numerous drafts of the manuscript in various states and was wrestling with how to tell my father's story without injecting mine' (p. 305). At the urging of her friend, John Little, a former *60 Minutes* producer, she realised that she needed to put the journalist convention of being a neutral objective observer aside and introduce her own life, thoughts and emotions into the narrative. The result is a powerful, gripping story, which includes her personal feelings but, in terms of her father's life, is also well-researched.

Phillip Jacoby's father, Walter, was Jewish but had converted to Christianity when he married his mother, Magda, so that Phillip was brought up in a Christian environment. However, from being exposed to Hitler and hearing him speak in person, Jacoby became strongly anti-Nazi and joined a resistance group but, following an arrest and two-day imprisonment by the Nazis, he realised he had to be more careful. Following a second threat of prosecution, he realised he had to leave and managed to escape from Germany and arrive in Australia with the help of connections with the small shipping company which employed him.

The title of the book refers to Anita Jacoby uncovering the story of her father's earlier marriages and the dramas associated with them. Initially, her father brought out his non-Jewish German girlfriend, Grace, to Sydney and they married shortly after her arrival. However, Jacoby then fell in love with Emmy, the wife of Hans Levy, (both Jewish refugees), and he left Grace for Emmy, who left Hans and her baby daughter, Marion. However, this love affair ended tragically with Emmy committing suicide by gassing herself. Later, after he brought his parents out and survived challenges as an 'enemy alien' during the war years, he married Phyllis, his secretary and they had a baby daughter, Linda. However, Phyllis suffered from depression, and she also committed suicide by gassing herself. Coming out of this tragedy, Jacoby married for a third time to Bonnie Schnellgrove in 1949, in what proved to be a disastrous relationship. It ended in a divorce and acrimonious legal action which was highly publicised in the media. His fourth marriage to Anita's mother, Josephine Horak, proved successful.

Much of this story, including her father's experiences of imprisonment in Germany and internment experiences in Australia were not

talked about when Jacoby was alive. His daughter, Anita, had to utilise all her journalistic investigative skills to uncover the full story. The most important aspects of this book in terms of Australian Jewish history are the sections dealing with Jacoby's escape from Nazi Germany, his re-establishing his life in Australia facing the 'anti-reffo' outcry and, during the war years, the ongoing restrictions, interrogations and then internment. The tragedy of Emmy Levy's suicide was widely covered in the press of the day: *Truth*, known for its xenophobic and antisemitic views, published an article entitled 'Prussian confessed – Forgot Frau for New Love' which began with the following anti-refugee description:

Foreigners from disturbed Central Europe who have flooded this country in recent years are penetrating almost everywhere. They glower over the electric grillers in the hamburger shops, sit diamond-decked behind the junk – ornaments, garish trinkets and beaded baubles of little wealth – which fill many windows in the heart of this city.

They march among whirring machines in little backyard factories turning out this and that, and they crowd the beaches, fill the picture shows and you meet them at the races and at the dogs. They are everywhere, except where there are gum trees, fertile acres to till, cows to milk and sheep to shear.

Meet them now in the Divorce Court! One Phillipp [sic] Heinrich Walter Jacoby, a Prussian of Jewish extraction, came to this country a bare four years ago. He was followed by his fraulein [sic] and they were married ... (*Truth*, 15 October 1939, quoted on p. 42–3).

Anita Jacoby commented that 'It is depressing to contemplate war-time Australia. The country was riddled with fear and suspicion, and Germans like Dad were easy targets' (p. 43).

Jacoby's troubles continued in the war years when he was classified as an 'enemy alien'. A business associate reported him to the police, claiming he was a German spy. Jacoby was able to refute this accusation, as well as further false allegations against him. However, to renew his driver's licence, he had to be interviewed, and when two policemen came to his office and referred to his Jewish background, he insisted he was a political refugee and responded aggressively to their questioning.

This resulted in his arrest and internment. He was sent to the internment camp in Hay, where he was not housed with the Dunera boys, but with Italian fascists and non-Jewish Germans interned in a separate camp in the area.

Anita Jacoby describes his internment experiences in detail, including his move after six weeks to a camp at Orange, closer to Sydney, as well as his defence at the Aliens Tribunal in March 1941. She then describes how he built up a communications business during the war years, and his contribution to Australia's development in this area. She includes a powerful quotation from a *Sydney Morning Herald* editorial by Sir Walter Murdoch from late 1939 dealing with the plight of the refugees who were 'presumed to be spies and traitors until they can prove they are not; and they have no way of proving they are not.'

It is of interest to note that Anita Jacoby worked with Andrew Denton on the show, *Enough Rope*, from 2003 to 2008, and that Denton also has Jewish heritage. Their television partnership eventually fell apart, as described in the book.

To date, there has been little published on these individual internment stories, apart from the strong focus on the *Dunera* story. By shedding light on her father's internment and eventual release, Anita Jacoby helps us to uncover this part of Australian history, but it is an area where further research is needed. It is a shame that the book lacks references and an index, since this would have added more value to this important aspect of Australia's wartime history.

Suzanne D. Rutland

Endnotes

- 1 Family tree published in Jenny Cowan, *Descendants of Samuel Moss Solomon*, 2019 ISBN: 978-0-9945173-1-9.
- 2 Frances Black (nee Singer), Henry Brodaty, Lucy Chladek (nee Ambrus), Jacqueline Dale, Greta Davis, Evelyn Frybort (nee Zack/Zakrzewski), Eve Grosin (nee Pick), Tania Hammer, Vicki Israel (nee Zack/Zakrzewski), Michael Jaku, Leah James, Dianne Johnstone, Agnes Kainer Geyer, Jeanie Kitchener (nee Wachtell), Evelyn Koster Bowmer, Helen Lavy (nee Sternklar), Peter Nash, Anny Pollak, Yola Schneider, Helen Skurnik (nee Ginsberg), Michael Visontay, Vivienne Weidler, Geoffrey Williamson and Annette Winter (nee Gerson).
- 3 <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/stories-of-the-cross-of-old-are-now-being-told-anew-20111126-1o043.html> Accessed 4 February 2023.