

ULRICH ALEXANDER BOSCHWITZ

Lee Haas

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Ulrich Boschwitz was born in Berlin in 1915. I was unable to find anything about his early years. In 1935, he fled Nazi Germany and moved around Europe – Sweden, France, Luxembourg, Belgium – finally settling in England in 1939. He wrote his first novel, Menschen neben dem Leben in Sweden. Then, in a few weeks time, he wrote a draft of his second novel, Der Reisende, (The Passenger) in either Luxembourg or Belgium. He also wrote numerous essays, letters and articles, many under the pen name of John Grane.

When he settled in England, he was imprisoned as an “enemy alien” along with other German refugees and Nazi sympathizers. Eventually, he was shipped to a prison in Australia. While in prison there, he revised the draft of The Passenger.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Boschwitz was reclassified as a “friendly alien” and freed. He boarded an ocean liner for his return to England with the revised draft of The Passenger. But the ship was torpedoed by a German submarine in 1942, and all 362 passengers and crew as well as the revision of The Passenger were lost.

Seventy years later, the original manuscript of The Passenger was discovered in a German archives. It was edited and published in many languages.