



# **And Then Came the Liberators**

Albert Jaern

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"This book is about me and mine during the war years but that is the way it had to be. . . . I hope that this journal can serve as a journal for many others. Most of all, I hope that the younger generation will find something that they will always remember about tyranny and oppression."—from the foreword by Albert Jærn, 1945

Albert Jærn captures in words and woodcuts the atrocities and indignities Norwegians witnessed during their country's five-year-long occupation by Hitler's forces from 1940 to 1945. Jærn worked as a book illustrator for Aschehoug, a well-known publishing house, where he also produced the cover art for some 500 books. As in this wartime diary, Jærn favored block cuts of wood or linoleum. In simplified lines and surfaces, free of affectation or exaggeration, he captured the point he wished to communicate and managed to make something new each time.

Keeping this wartime journal put Jærn in great personal danger. He scrupulously hid this work away in a secret safe, which despite repeated Nazi raids and ransacking of his home, went undiscovered by the occupiers. After peace came to Norway in 1945, the notes and woodcuts were published by Ekko Forlag, which had been shut down by the Nazis during the occupation.

Jærn published his diary in the hope that his countrymen would never forget their ordeal. He wanted Norwegians to remember their own confusion and fear as well as the enemies' tyranny and oppression. The book, translated into English for the first time, is a documentation of the occupation and an appreciation of Jærn's artistry and bravery.



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