

Anne Frank was a young German Jewish girl who was caught up in the violent **anti-semitism** of Germany in the 1930s and 40s. On her thirteenth birthday, she was given a diary. When she and her family went into hiding during the war, she wrote her deepest feelings in her diary. In spite of the fear and suffering she experienced, Anne held on to her belief in the goodness of people. Millions of people all over the world have read her powerful diary. They have learned the shocking story of the Holocaust.

Annelies Marie Frank was born at 7:30 a.m. on June 12, 1929. Her sister, Margot, was three years older. Anne was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Anne's father, Otto Frank, served in the German army during World War I. He was a businessman when he married twenty-five-year-old Edith Hollander. He was thirty-six at the time.

Otto Frank was a gentle, soft-spoken man. Edith Frank was shy and more religious than her husband. She went to the **synagogue** and celebrated the High Holy Days of the Hebrew faith.

When Anne was very small, she loved to play in her sandbox in the family garden. She and Margot played under the trees in summer. In the winter, they went sledding in the snow. Anne had a special relationship with her father. He was the one who often tucked her in at night. He told her bedtime stories, too.

Anne's father invented an ongoing story about two girls both named Paula. Good Paula was dutiful and well behaved. Bad Paula was always up to **mischief**. Margot Frank was a good student and very dutiful, but Anne was sometimes a little rebel. But she could always depend on her father to defend her when her mother got mad at her.

In 1929 the economy of Germany was very bad. A serious **depression** was sweeping the world. In the United States' the stock market had crashed. This led to bank failures and unemployment. Things were even worse in Germany. Unemployment was widespread. **Inflation** was so bad that money became almost worthless.

Adolf Hitler, a World War I veteran and failed painter, started a political party—the Nazi Party. Hitler promised to improve conditions in Germany. He

blamed the Jews for Germany's problems. There had always been anti-semitism in Germany. But Hitler pushed it up to new levels. Like many German Jews, the Franks were worried about the future.

In the summer of 1929, Otto Frank's brother-in-law opened a branch of the pectin-producing company, Opekta. The branch was opened in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Pectin is a powdered fruit extract used to make jams and jellies. Anne's family began thinking about moving to Amsterdam, too.

In 1931 the Nazi Party was growing in Germany. Hitler was making greater threats against the Jewish people. In January 1933 Hitler was elected **chancellor** of Germany. His Nazi Storm Troopers, called Brown Shirts, marched around Berlin singing songs about



Edith, Margot and Anne Frank