

IMPORTANT

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Interview Transcript Title Page

Collection title:	AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive
Ref. no:	60

Interviewee Surname:	Henderson
Forename:	Frank
Interviewee Sex:	Male
Interviewee DOB:	12 March 1916
Interviewee POB:	Gotha, Germany

Date of Interview:	4 May 2004
Location of Interview:	Salford, Manchester
Name of Interviewer:	Rosalyn Livshin
Total Duration (HH:MM):	5 hours and 15 minutes

**REFUGEE VOICES:
THE AJR AUDIO-VISUAL TESTIMONY ARCHIVE**

INTERVIEW: 60

NAME: FRANK HENDERSON

DATE: TUESDAY 4 MAY 2004

LOCATION: SALFORD, MANCHESTER

INTERVIEWER: ROSALYN LIVSHIN

TAPE 1

RL: I am interviewing Frank Henderson and today's date is Tuesday 4th May 2004. The interview is taking place in Salford, Manchester and I am Rosalyn Livshin.

Ok, so if you can tell me first your name.

FH: My name is Frank Henderson.

RL: And what was your name at birth?

FH: Hirschfeld, Friedrich Hirschfeld.

RL: Did you have any other names?

FH: No.

RL: Any middle names?

FH: Friedrich Wilhelm Hirschfeld.

RL: And your Hebrew name?

FH: Tzvi Ben Yaakov.

RL: Were you named after anybody? Were you named after anybody?

FH: No. My great-great grandfather was called Frederick Wilhelm Hirschfeld.

RL: Right.

Tape 1: 1 minute 31 seconds

FH: He was a master of leather workers in the town of Dessau.

RL: Where were you born?

FH: In Gotha, Thuringen

RL: And when were you born?

FH: 12th March 1916.

RL: How old does that make you now?

FH: 88.

RL: Now your parents, your mother and father, what were their names?

FH: Hirschfeld.

RL: First names?

FH: My father was Rene, my mother was Hermine Rose.

RL: What was her maiden name?

FH: Rose.

RL: Rose was the maiden name?

FH: Yes.

RL: Right, and where were they born?

FH: My mother was born in Niedern Tudorf in Westphalia and my father was born in Berlin.

RL: Starting first with your father's family. Can you tell me first about his family background and his parents and about his family?

FH: My father's family, my grandfather, was a procurist of a firm in Berlin and my mother was brought up in the village of Niedern Tudorf in Westphalia, and she finished being the sales manager in the town of Hagen. The firm was called Loewenstein, and from there she married my father and they lived in Düsseldorf and in Düsseldorf my eldest brother was born, 15 months after the wedding.

Tape 1: 3 minutes 47 seconds

RL: When was that?

FH: 31st January 1912.

RL: That was when your brother was born?

FH: That's right.

RL: So you

FH: He now lives in Stockholm, Sweden.

RL: What is his name?

FH: Ludwig Hirschsfield.

RL: Coming back to your father, did you know his parents? Your grandparents?

FH: I knew his mother. Mein gross mutter. Yes, she died in 1942 in Halle.

RL: And what did her husband do for a living, your grandfather?

FH: He was a procurist, a manager of a chocolate firm, they produced chocolate, and he managed that firm until he died in 1911.

RL: How many children did they have?

FH: Five.

RL: Can you tell me about them?

FH: Yes. There was my father, Rene Hirschsfield, then there was the sister, Katja Agatha Hirschsfield, and Edith Hirschsfield, Charlotte Hirschsfield and ... have I got it right ... she must have five children ...

RL: And what happened to these brothers and sisters?

FH: My father died in Auschwitz. Katja Hirschsfield was married to a doctor, (inaudible) Doctor Kahn. Edith Hirschsfield was an invalid and Gerta Hirschsfield married Richard Halberstadt in Offenbach.. All these people died in Auschwitz or next to it. They were collected one day and transported by transport from the Gestapo to the, to the camps and we never saw them again.

RL: Were there any survivors?

Tape 1: 7 minutes 6 seconds

FH: No, only me and three boys. One died, we were four boys, one died in Argentine and my brother in Sweden and my brother in Australia and myself, ya, that is all that is left.

RL: What kind of an upbringing did your father have?

FH: My father was a pupil of the Leibniz Gymnasium in Berlin. Then he was educated, he was trained as a ladies fashion cutter at the Academy for these things in Beimauwol [?] in Berlin, that is all a long time ago, ya.

RL: Did he have to serve in the First World War?

FH: My father served for four years, yes, and he was acknowledged with the iron cross, first class I think it was.

RL: Did he ever speak about his wartime experiences?

FH: Yes, he told us what, that they had to fight for ...

RL: Did he tell you anything in particular that you remember?

FH: There was nothing in particular, he said we had to do all kinds of attacks and things and he did his duty as a soldier, there was nothing special, ya. He said there were several Jewish soldiers, but no anti-semitism in the army was permitted, that is all I can tell you about that.

RL: What kind of religious upbringing did he have?

FH: My father?

RL: Yes.

FH: He was orthodox, yes, he was, he belonged to the synagogue in Berlin on Lebetso Strasse. And when I visited my grandmother later when she was a widow I always went to the Lebetso Strasse synagogue, it was a beautiful synagogue, it was, and I have been to that synagogue when I was stationed in Berlin, etc, etc, it has been rebuilt and everything but it is not the same as it was, it was a beautiful synagogue. The Rabbi was Dr Yohav Prinz, that I remember, Ya.

RL: Can you tell me now about your mother's family and her parents?

Tape 1: 11 minutes 12 seconds

FH: I don't know much there. My mother was brought up in, Niedern Tudorf, my grandfather was an orthodox Jew and he managed the small congregation in the village of Niedern Tudorf. That is all, what happened to him and these things I do not know.

RL: Do you know what he did ... ?

FH: The brothers and sisters of my mother, they all perished. She had a brother and she had two sisters and they all gone, never seen from or heard from any more, no.

RL: Did you know them?

FH: No. I ... the only thing, I once spoke by telephone to things. They lived in ... one auntie lived in Essen, that is the town where the Grupps factories are, and the others lived in Kale am Rhein , but more I can't tell you, I don't know.

RL: Do you remember their names?

FH: You are asking a question now ... No, I can't remember their names. Hertha Schmidt, that was the eldest sister, Hertha Schmidt, Amanda Kornberg ... I am sorry ... they are names

RL: Do you know what your grandfather did for a living? Your mother's father.

FH: My grandfather, on my mother's side, yes. With a horse and cart he travelled over the villages and brought and sold articles, I don't know what. Well, that was before 1850.

RL: Did you ever meet them?

FH: No.

RL: No.

FH: No, I wasn't born then.

RL: Had they died before you were born?

FH: Yes, yes. They even died before my mother got married, yes, but the sisters of my mother, they perished, yes, they perished.

RL: Did anyone survive from their family?

Tape 1: 14 minutes 23 seconds

FH: No, only we four boys, yes, that is right. I have no records of that. I could get records through the secretary in Prague, he has got all the names, He already helped me with my mother's date and things, and ...

RL: Do you know how your mother met your father?

FH: No, I can't, I am not sure about that, no, no, sorry, my father was probably employed in the same town and through the Jewish organisation, I am sorry I can't help you.

RL: Where was your mother living before marriage? Where was she living just before she married.

FH: In Hagen, in Westphalia, I am sorry I can't help you there.

RL: Do you know when they married?

FH: Pardon?

RL: What date your parents married?

FH: On the 19th February 1911.

RL: And where did they marry?

FH: No ... I will come to it, give me chance, in Dortmund, in Dortmund.

RL: How did they come to marry there? Why in Dortmund?

FH: I am sorry I can't ...

RL: You don't know ...

FH: I have no idea ...

RL: Ok, so how many children were born to that marriage?

FH: To my mother's? Four.

RL: And when were they born?

FH: My eldest brother was born 31st January 1912, my second brother was born 21st May 1913, I was born 12th March 1916 and my youngest brother was born 9th April 1920.

Tape 1: 17 minutes 8 seconds

RL: And their first names?

FH: Ludwig and the second one was Rolf, Rolf Edgar, and then comes my name and my youngest who lives in Australia is Joachim Wolfgang.

RL: What is your earliest memory as a child?

FH: Oh, that is not so bad, we lived in Halle, no, we moved to Halle when I was three, in 1920 and I made friends, even as a child, and when I was six, by law I had to go to school, and from then I was the only Jewish boy in the whole school, and it wasn't easy, even as a child. I suffered a lot, we took it in, we didn't take much notice and so the days went by.

RL: In what ways would you suffer? What kind of things would happen?

FH: Nothing happened until we left school.

RL: But at school, you know, you say that it was difficult ...

FH: No, no, there were some nasty remarks, but we didn't take any notice, we gave nasty remarks back. I wouldn't be able to make any ... the teacher also protected me, and there was strict discipline in the class, there was no possibility that they would make nasty insulting remarks, nothing. We were most of us friends, those were school times.

RL: Did you have non Jewish friends?

FH: Yes, I had non Jewish friends, oh yes, they came to us and I went to them. No, there was no nothing, and that lasted from 1926 to 1932. No, what am I talking about, I started school in 1922, that's right, I am going meshuga.

RL: Can you remember the, your home, where you were living, the actual ... ?

FH: Yes, of course.

RL: Can you describe to me what it was? What kind of home it was?

FH: It was a big building, and in that big building we had a flat, and there was a bedroom for my parents and a bedroom, two bedrooms for us boys, a living room, a dining room, kitchen and a storage cupboard for food. And without any difficulties or anything, we went up, we went down.

RL: What floor was it on?

Tape 1: 21 minutes 41 seconds

FH: It was between second and third floor. It is very difficult to explain but there was the flat...

RL: And where there any other Jewish people in the block?

FH: No, no, no. But it belonged to a Jewish landlord, yes. That is how we lived.

RL: How did you get on with the non Jewish neighbours?

FH: Very good. We never talked to them. There was no ... we said hello, good morning, good afternoon, there was no reason, they lived their life and we lived ours. If we met on the staircase or things, we talked about what could be improved and things and we would tell the landlord and that is it. Yes, so ... it was a hard time.

RL: What was your father working as at that point?

FH: He was a master tailor, ya.

RL: And did he have ... ?

FH: In Germany you couldn't just be a tailor by yourself, if you wanted to work by yourself you had to have the master degree, in every trade it was that. My father had the master degree.

RL: So did he have his own business?

FH: Yes, yes, yes.

RL: And where was that?

FH: In the flat. He was employed before that but he didn't work after, he worked on his own.

RL: Which room of the flat did he work in?

FH: The smallest, he just made out of the smallest room a very nice workshop, there was everything in it, and everything ... that was where he worked.

RL: And people would come to the flat?

FH: Yes, people would come. Or he went there. He had a lot of police customers, they were ordering him to make a suit, you see when they were off duty they didn't wear a uniform so they needed a civilian suit, that is, that kept him busy, thank G-d.

Tape 1: 24 minutes 38 seconds

RL: Did he belong to any organisations?

FH: Yes, he did. How shall I explain it to you. All ex soldiers of the Jewish, err, it was called the RJF. Would it be of interest if I gave you the translation?

RL: Yes.

FH: Reichsbund Judischer Frontsoldaten. Reichsbund means national bund for Jewish ex soldiers. And you got a needle, and you wear that needle, and everything was alright until 1932, and then you had to take that needle off. Because if you were caught with that needle on your suit they attacked you, you see by 1932 it was already dangerous, Hitler was already in the coming, and you had to be damned careful where you go, what you say, what you wear, everything, you see. You know about this I suppose.

RL: As a member of that society, did they have meetings? Did they have activities this RDF? Did they gather ... ?

FH: No, no activities, we kept to ourselves, we wouldn't go out or anything to any meetings or anything, it was already too late.

RL: But before that?

FH: Before that, yes, we marched on a certain date, in Berlin, it was, they marched as Jewish ex soldiers and we carried the German flag and everything. But I asked my father once "What actually is the meaning of it?"

"We have been together in the army," he said.

"Good, nu."

He said, "There is no nu."

That's it. I said, "It makes no sense to me." I said "You had better forget about it."

And he wouldn't, he was really annoyed with me.

I said, "Can't you see that Russia every day he is getting stronger."

"So are we."

I said, "No, we are not."

They were clinging to the times past without thinking of tomorrow, of what tomorrow is, what can you do? We had to pay for it. Yes.

RL: Did he belong to anything else?

FH: No, there was nothing else. The Jewish congregation of Halle, we lived in Halle, Halle am Saale

RL: How big a community was in Halle?

Tape 1: 28 minutes 30 seconds

FH: In good days we were about 400 to 500 people, I remember on Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur, the synagogue was full and the synagogue could take about 450 to 500 men. Upstairs was the ladies.

RL: Who was the Rabbi?

FH: Dr Albert Karlberg, his son and I, we are best friends, I visit him in Israel, he is married and his father, the Rabbi, died in Gothenburg in Sweden. From one day to the next he was gone and there was no congregation any more, how should I say, there were no services, we assembled in a small room and made a service of some kind. Yes, at the end of things, the synagogue was then demolished by the people there, and when I was invited to come to Halle by the Lord Mayor for a visit I was a stranger, there was nothing, what, how should I say, I went from there to there, I went to the cemetery, ya, I saw the graves of all the friends and people we knew, anything else is, all the members of the congregation today are Russian Jewish people, who lived in Russia as Jews, but not as acting Jews. I spoke to them, they couldn't say one word in Hebrew, they couldn't read, nothing, they just came from Russia and settled in Halle. I have got a friend in Halle, a teacher, who sends me reports etc., it's not the same. Every report, is ... how shall I say, it's a report ...

RL: How active a community was it when you were living there? How active a Jewish community was it?

FH: Very active.

RL: Can you tell me a bit about it?

FH: Very active. We had, through the Rabbi, we had meetings, we had evenings' entertainments, we had a sports club and we had a team playing handball and this team, I belonged to the team, we went on Sundays to the outside towns and during the week I belonged to the choir. So, the chazzan of the Shul, his children live in London, I think they belonged to the JRA too. It was a homely atmosphere, where each one knew each other, we went to their houses and they came to us, and we talked and we met in the evenings ... all gone, all finished.

RL: How religious a community was it?

FH: It was, it was religious, they took liberties, but it was Yom Tov and Shabbos there was a service properly. But you see, there is a difference about the laws, in Germany there was a law that you had to go to school, and there was no permission for us not to go to school on Saturdays, unless in a town like Frankfurt, Berlin and Leipzig, there was a special school for going on Sunday, then it was permitted, but a little town like where I lived, in Halle, there was no such things and the school insisted I must come on Saturday to school. So my mother said,

Tape 1: 35 minutes 1 second

“Go and just sit there, don’t do anything.” And I was sitting in amongst the pupils and didn’t even answer the questions. That was the life, what could you do? We did our best to keep up with the laws. It wasn’t easy. But on Rosh Hashona, on Yom Kippur, on Pesach, we did our best, ya.

RL: Did you have to attend school even at those times?

FH: We had to attend school ...

RL: On Yom Tov as well?

RL: No, no, my mother wrote a note that I will not attend. No questions asked for a permit or not. My mother just wrote ‘he will not attend’ and there was no complaints. There was once, I was Each class had to collect for the Germans overseas, so each one got a notebook and you had to bring some money in the next day. So I went to all the Jewish people I knew, and each one gave me a Mark, two Marks, and the goyim they got 10 pence, 20 pence and things, so I came back and handed over around about ten German Marks, and when I said, when each of us was asked how much we got I said “Tzen Mark”. “What!”

So the teacher took my book and she said “Where did you go to?”

I said, “All my friends.”

“Oh I see.”

So the headmaster came in and he said, “Where did you go?”

I said, “I went to the people over here.”

“Let me have a look, very good, excellent.” So I got top marks. There you are. That I have never forgotten. Yes.

RL: Do you have any special memories about Yom Tov time? Anything that sticks in your mind?

FH: Yes. We had, I belonged to the choir and we had several rehearsals between the chazzan and the choir master and things, and we were upstairs, not like here, we were upstairs, with the organist. And the organist, he was not Jewish, no he wasn’t Jewish, so, at the end of the service he said, “Can we rehearse that...part?” And he pronounced it, what we had to sing, with such perfection that we had to laugh. He could speak better Hebrew than I, ya, that was, those were the days. He was a very good organist.

RL: How often did the choir sing? Did they sing every week?

FH: No, no, no, no, only on Yom Tov. Yes. We had to work, there wasn’t anything you could take off or anything, even on Pesach you went to Shul in the morning, ok, but in the afternoon you had to attend to your work, it was not easy you know. And the firms who employed you, told you, it’s your choice, if you want to stay away it is up to you, but we cannot tolerate that you stay away and the others come, so we went to synagogue

Tape 1: 40 minutes 14 seconds

in the morning on Pesach and Shavuos and on Yom Kippur, and in the afternoon, except on Yom Kippur and Shavuos, that we didn't do, and that was, every day in life, in Halle, you know, you see, if you are not a big congregation, there is nothing you can do, you can't take liberties either. And the teachers, the teachers wouldn't understand what you are talking about, when you say that it is Pesach and things, just be here they told you, it was very, very difficult.

RL: Did your father have to work on Yom Tov?

FH: No, he was self employed.

RL: That's right, yes, yes.

FH: No, we were all right, it was even before Hitler. It was a difficult time. You see, in a town like Berlin where there were 200,000 Jews, you could do what you liked, but in a town with 450 people, you had to obey the law, yes.

RL: What about Hebrew education?

FH: Yes, we had Hebrew education, every Tuesday and Saturday afternoon we had to attend. On Tuesday we had with the Rabbi or the Chazzan, they gave special instructions and teachings in the afternoon and on Sunday we had to come after school and we went to the synagogue and there was a youth service, youth service, and the Rabbi gave a special talk about this and that and about explanations, that was the Jewish education and things. And, sometimes, there came famous people and gave a talk, one called Stern, I have got a book by him, and then I have got a friend, we went to school together, Fackenheim. Have you heard the name before? He and I ... he died in Israel, not long ago, and we sat together and listened to the Rabbi and he gave us a nice talk and so on. We grew up together and one day he came to Manchester, he was a Professor Doctor Fackenheim. You don't know? And he wrote a book, and he gave me one, and he often came from Israel to Germany to ... to one of the towns in Germany. They called for him and he came and gave a lecture and a speech.

RL: What was he a professor of?

FH: Pardon?

RL: What was he a professor of? What was his subject?

FH: He was a Rabbi. He was Professor Rabbi Doctor Rabbi Phil, G-d knows what, he had about half a dozen titles, oh yes, I will show you the book afterwards. Yes, yes.

RL: What about your Bar Mitzvah?

Tape 1: 45 minutes 9 seconds

FH: My Bar Mitzvah!

RL: Mmm

FH: Oh, ah, well, I was Bar Mitzvah on 23rd March 1929 and the Rabbi gave me a nice speech on the bimah I think, and then he gave me the five books of Moses, I have still got it, I will show you after, ya, I have still got it. Ya, I have always, when I left Germany, that book was in my suitcase, and one of the guards on the Dutch border said "What do you need that book for? Throw it away."

I said, "You throw your books away. I will throw my books away."

"What do you want with that rubbish?"

I said, "Just you do your job and leave me alone."

I went back into the train and the guard was on the other side fortunately. I will tell you that later on.

RL: Yes, yes. Did you have to do anything in Shul for your Bar Mitzvah? Did you have to ... ?

FH: Yes, yes. The parsha ... Do you know what the parsha is? The parsha for Shabbos Zochar, I had to learn and I had to sing it, and then was the Haftorah from the book of Samuel, I had to do. And that was it.

RL: And was there any sort of family gathering or celebration? Did your mother ... ?

FH: Yes, of course.

RL: What did she make?

FH: Cake, everything. People came, congratulations, mazel tov, mazel tov ... the same all over (laughs) ... yes, yes ...

RL: Where there any Zionist groups ... ?

FH: Any?

RL: Any Zionist groups in the town?

FH: Of course.

RL: And did your family? ... were they interested in that?

FH: No. My father and my mother had no time for that. They had to keep a family. The Zionists, they attended once a week or once a month and there was a room called the Gemeinde Haus, the Gemeinde Haus was the congregation's building, and there they

Tape 1: 48 minutes 18 seconds

came together and talk and this ... and plan to go to Israel. That was the whole idea, was to go to Israel, but it was a little bit late before they could go. None of them went.

RL: Did you belong to any Zionist group?

FH: No, to be quite honest, the whole thing was beyond my understanding. You see, there was people like Martin Buber and great philosophers, what was the name, I couldn't follow it. Then I was trained, I was in the lawyer's office where I was trained, I was in a lawyer's, I had no time for all that. What can you do? We really did not know ... we had to go ... to go to Israel, not to go to Israel, we didn't know what would happen to us, you see it was too difficult to grasp, to understand what was lying ahead of us, we did our best to earn a living, because everything, from day to day it became smaller and smaller, the capacity where you could go and earn money.

I was, I had a very good job and my lawyer was very happy with me and satisfied with me, I worked damn hard, day and night, and the secretary, Olga, until one day, in my seat there was a letter, he wouldn't come and say it personally "Sorry you are dismissed, by order of the German, of the Nazi party". So he didn't come out and shake hands with me or nothing, he was frightened of the secretary who was a born Nazi, you see it is most impossible to understand what happened, unless you were amongst it.

RL: How old were you when you left school?

FH: When I left school? Oh, 22, 22, I was 31, yes I was 31.

RL: Just take me through your education, you know ...

FH: Pardon?

RL: Take me through your education, the schools you went to and what you did after school.

FH: Well, I had to go to school until a certain age, then you could pass an examination and you went to the next school. And that was the end of it, and then when we went to the next school, most Jewish boys were told "You can stay here today, but don't come back tomorrow."

RL: Which school was that?

FH: It was an advanced school, you learn certain things, and we are reading books, how shall I say, it is very difficult to explain it. You see you start with elementary school and then you go to the next school and there it stopped, there you got thrown out.

RL: So what did you do after that?

Tape 1: 53 minutes 6 seconds

FH: I went and got a job.

RL: As ... ?

FH: At first, as a, to do window dressing. Little did I understand what I let myself in for, it was alright, first six months, it was alright, then I said to my parents, "I am sorry about this, it is not for me."

They said "You can't, we have signed a contract, you have to stay."

I said, "If they throw me out. Is that alright?"

So I said to the chief "Can I do the window?"

"You want to do the window? Of course."

So I made a hotchpotch of the window, he said "Are you crazy?"

I said, "It is the best I can do."

He said, "No, you will never be one."

And I said, "I hope not." (he laughs) So I said "Goodbye" to them and then I was, I got in touch with a friend, and he said "I have got a job for you." Go and ask ... he looks for a person like you. I said "I am not a lawyer."

He said, "No, but he is a lawyer and you can do the writing and everything."

So I knocked on his door and he said "Sit down, I will dictate and you write." So I wrote, and whatever he dictated I wrote down and he said "Yes, it looks alright. You have to be here 8 o'clock in the morning. And if I need you after 6 o'clock at night I am afraid you have got to stay back." And I liked it, and he liked it, and we became very good friends.

RL: What was his name?

FH: Haberland ... Haberland ...

RL: And how long were you there?

FH: Two years and nine months.

RL: And when did you have to leave?

FH: Pardon?

RL: When did you have to leave? When did he give you the letter?

FH: He didn't give me the letter, the letter came from the Nazis. They found out that I worked there and they wrote a letter to him that he is not allowed to employ me any longer. And I had to leave immediately, there was no time tomorrow or anything. He said "I am very sorry, I can't help it. Shall I start with them?"

"No."

He said, "I will tell you what we will do. You come and take everything home and you will work from home."

Tape 1: 56 minutes 45 seconds

I said "Thank you very much", I said "that would still endanger you and me, let's call it a day and finish." And do you know what I did? I went to the Jewish organisation and said "The time has come that I probably want to leave Germany. I said, but how do I earn a living out there?"

He said, "If you go for two years to Berlin, we train you to be a fitter."

I said "Fine."

My mother said "You a fitter?"

I said "Go on, put a nail in there."

So my mother showed me how to use a hammer and a nail, but I stayed in Berlin for two years.

RL: I think that we are just going to have to just stop here ...

FH: Pardon?

RL: We will have to stop here because the film is about to end and we will continue on the next one.

TAPE 2

This is the interview with Frank Henderson and it is tape 2.

I just want to try and clarify some dates really. First of all, do you know what was the year that you left school completely? What was the year that you left school?

FH: I think it was 1930 to 31.

RL: And did you leave because you had to leave? Was that when you were told to go? So this was before Hitler ...

FH: No, no. That was not the case. In 1930 there was no Hitler.

RL: No, no.

FH: Hitler came in 33, January 33 ...

RL: Right ...

FH: But from that date on we could not go to school any more. We were just informed that our presence wasn't accepted.

RL: So when was that? That was in ... ?

FH: That was after Hitler came into power.

Tape 2: 1 minute 15 seconds

RL: Right, so were you still at school then?

FH: No, no.

RL: You were not at school then, you had already left.

FH: Yes.

RL: I see. And then, the job that you got with the lawyer, when did you have to leave that job? What year was that?

FH: That was thirty, thirty five ... end of, middle of, towards the end of 35, because in 1936 I started to work in Berlin as a trainee, to be a fitter.

RL: Just going back a little bit, and thinking about the rise of Nazism and Hitler coming to power. Did things change in your town during that period?

FH: Horrific change.

RL: How? How did things change?

FH: Friends, we thought, changed from one day to the next, they didn't know us any more. People with whom I worked together, they didn't want to know me any more. Let's see, you can't imagine, people who said, "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" in the street, didn't reply to you. They looked the other way. There were people who said "Look, if you want to talk to me, come to my house, but don't talk to me in the street." They didn't want to be seen that you were keeping contact with them. It was like a lightening, people just didn't want to know you any more. People who worked together, did business together, just, looked the other way.

RL: Where there any ...

FH: And I tell you something, in the, in the AJR, there was a few months ago, a lecture of anything, a service, in the Ulrichs-Kirche in Halle. Now I don't understand the president of the Jewish congregation holding a service in the Ulrichs-Kirche, the Ulrichs-Kirche was something that was hand in hand with Hitler. All the Nazis made a service there. Jews to go to Ulrichs-Kirche was impossible to think of, when the AJR, I have got it here, they stated clearly that the lecture or whatever it was, was taking place in the Ulrichs-Kirche.

RL: Were there any exceptions to this change in attitude? Were there any non Jews who remained friendly?

Tape 2: 5 minutes 17 seconds

FH: Nobody remained, we all tried to get out, but the young ones managed, the middle aged were lucky to help themselves, but people like my parents, they were too old to go. Nobody wanted them.

RL: Yes. But I was asking really about non Jewish people who you had been friendly with, did any ...

FH: They didn't want to know us, no. That is ... you should know that by now.

RL: I just wondered if there were any exceptions.

FH: No, there was no exceptions. If you went through the street and some people carried the Nazi flag with them and you didn't stand still and greet it, they started to hit you. No, it was a terrible period, and I blessed the hour when I left.

RL: How did your father manage with business? Did the business ... ?

FH: No, it was no more business. He was ordered by the Nazis to report at this and this time and they transported him to a place outside Halle where he had to take a spade and a shovel and dig the ground that was all the Jewish men of a certain age had to report, yes ...

RL: When was that?

FH: 1934, 35, later on too, the Jews were ordered to report for work, and with a shovel and a spade they had to dig the ground. I think I have still got letters that my father wrote me, we had to do this and we had to do that. He wasn't, he couldn't earn any living, he was not allowed to do, nobody came anymore and tried to order a suit, they bought nothing.

RL: When did his business stop? When did he stop tailoring? When did that cease?

FH: As far as I know, 35, 37 ... that I can't say, I wasn't in Halle any more.

RL: You had already left?

FH: I had already left for work, to be trained in Berlin.

RL: So he was still working whilst you were at home.

FH: I was working ...

RL: He was working whilst you were living there.

Tape 2: 9 minutes 4 seconds

FH: Yes, yes.

RL: Yes, yes, so tell me about Berlin, how you got on there, what you had to do.

FH: The Jewish organisation, knowing what was in store for them, founded work shop facilities, or shall I say, there was a ground belonging to a person who had on the right side a huge table and on the left side a huge table, and these tables were given to the Jewish people and we reformed these tables to workshops. We put benches in, and on the benches we put a vice in, a vice each and we had let's say twenty pupils, like me, I got a place with the vice, so I could put the metal in and work a little, do what I was told by the engineer in charge, and he told me how to file and hammer everything, and that was about for about 25 people like me, who did everything like that.

And on the other side of the gangway there was a joiner, who did joinery. And they did their job and we did our job, and within two and a half years we were quite skilled and could work where we went. When I came to Britain and I managed to go to Manchester I got a job, in Oldham, in a mill factory, were not the best ones, and the bobbins didn't bob up and down symmetrically, so I had to adjust the machine or when there was a faulty part I had to create a new part. So I did that when I came to Oldham and they were quite happy with me, except for the women, they were not happy with me. I worked from quarter to eight in the morning until half past five in the evening, and that wasn't good enough for the women, because the moment I left their bobbins were out of control, and they were on piece work, and they said "You can't go, we need you here."

And I said, "Yes, but I am a human being and I could do with a bit of rest."

And they said, "Come on, carry on a bit more." So from half past five I was still there at 8 o'clock. They wouldn't let me go, they started crying "I have got family, I have got kids, I have got a this and that."

And then the engineer came and said "Stay a bit longer." And that went on every day.

RL: Did you have ...

FH: Wait a minute ... until the police came. The police came and said "Your name is Hirschfeld?"

I said "Yes".

"You are hereby arrested."

I said "What have I done?"

"You have done nothing, but you are arrested because you are German. You are interned."

I said "Well, tell the ladies."

And the women said, "No way, interned, what has he done."

But the police said, "I am very sorry you have to come."

Tape 2: 14 minutes 9 seconds

So they said “You can go home now, but tomorrow morning you have to come to the police station. You are interned. You cannot do what you like. You have to go home now and tomorrow morning you have to report.”

RL: Can I come onto the internment a little bit later, because we are still in Germany just now.

FH: Yes.

RL: I was going to ask you, did you work in Germany after your training? Did you have any job there?

FH: No, no, no ...

RL: You just did the training in Germany?

FH: We were not allowed ...

RL: In Germany you were not allowed ...

FH: No, no, no, no, no ...

RL: Where were you living?

FH: In Germany.

RL: In Berlin, where did you live there?

FH: In the school.

RL: In the school ...

FH: Yes, we put beds up. There was a part where you could work and there was a part where you could sleep and keep your things. It is still there today.

RL: Whereabouts is it?

FH: Do you know Berlin?

RL: Just say the street

FH: Pankow, in Pankow, it is ... Hermann Strasse.

RL: Who was in charge of it? Who ran it?

Tape 2: 15 minutes 36 seconds

FH: There was in charge Leopold Kuh. He is also in this week's AJR for things.

RL: And how did you find Berlin in comparison to Halle.

FH: Oh, how can you compare it?

RL: What did you think of it?

FH: It is a beautiful, Berlin was always a beautiful town, but we at that time, we had to be very careful about where we go, what we do, not to be a burden to anybody because any Nazi in uniform could grab you and play hell with you. You know, it was very, very terrible at night we stayed at home, we didn't go out, no, no, it was too dangerous.

RL: And during the day?

FH: And during the day we worked, we had a very good engineer, he was retired, I mean retired, he was, he had to be retired, he was the previous engineer from Simmons, and he shown us how to hammer, to fire, to rivet, everything what needs to be a fitter. So he did a good job and we learned what we could, and I earned good money with it. When I came to Britain, I came to Oldham and I worked in a factory, the ordinary work, I got £3 a week, I got with overtime, which every day overtime I got £5 to £6 a week, well, it was good money, wasn't it. And until the police came and chapped me and that was the end of it.

RL: Did you ever get time off whilst you were learning? Did you ever have any time to do other things?

FH: Yes, I went to my uncle and played chess with him. There was nowhere to go. If you think you could, there was a main street in Berlin, called the Kurfürstendamm Jewish people were very careful to go along the Kurfürstendamm you could have been grabbed by the SS or the SR at any moment, it was, you had to be very, very careful, and the best place was to stay at home. You couldn't go to any picture house or anything, it was still, there was a note saying *Juden unerwünscht*, no, or *Juden ist der Eintritt verboten*. So to walk along the street, you might as well stay at home.

RL: Were you ever involved in any incidents?

FH: Me?

RL: Yes ...

FH: No. Thank G-d nothing happened to me. I was there for two and a half years, I was told that if you want to leave Germany and you haven't got a permit, just get a passport. You must have a passport to leave, and when you leave, you leave through

Tape 2: 19 minutes 54 seconds

Luxembourg. So I said "Goodbye" to everybody. I didn't tell anyone what I had in mind. I took the train and went as far as the town of Treia, and next to Treia is the border between Germany and Luxembourg. And once you go over the border, when you are in Luxembourg you are free from the Nazis, or so I thought, but you have to be in the town, in the town near the border, when there is a certain inspector who won't let you past, if you come at the wrong moment he will not let you past. Me, I came at the wrong moment, it was not a joke, I can assure you, ya.

The two SS thugs, they guarded the border and they put a rifle against me. I said, "What do you want from me?" I said "I have got a passport. I just want to go to " So they took me to a room, and they said, "Put everything that you have got in your pocket on the table" and I had a photo from a girlfriend. You had a girlfriend, she was a Jewish friend. It was nothing.

Ah he said, "That is not a Jewish girlfriend that is an Aryan Madchen."

I said, "Are you telling me I said, her name and address and things"

"No, no."

And what do you think he did? He put a pistol in my head. "I will count to ten, and if you don't say by ten she is an Aryan, you are dead."

I said "Are you made or what? She is a Jewish girl."

"You heard what I said. One, two ..."

By eight the door opened and the inspector came in and he said "Put it down".

He said "He has got an Aryan madchen there."

He said "Just a minute."

He said "What is she?"

I said "Her name is so and so and she is Jewish."

So he said to that Nazi "You heard what he said. What else do you want? She is Jewish, that is it."

So he said "I can't let you past now because of those two, you have to stay the night in prison."

I said "Why do I have to spend the night in prison? I have done nothing."

"You tried to cross the border without permission."

I said "I need permission to cross the border, I have got my passport."

"You need permission."

So they took a taxi, drove me back to Treia and put me into prison. We were four Jewish boys in a cell in a room about from here to the wall, ... two slept in a bed without blankets or sheets or anything and the other two slept on the floor. And if you had to go to the lavatory there was a bucket in the corner for your use. The food was uneatable. In the four days, I was in prison there for four days, I ate one piece of bread, and drank one cup of water, and after four days I was ordered out downstairs and there was a fellow, "Heil Hitler"

I said "Good afternoon"

Tape 2: 25 minutes 20 seconds

"Are you Jewish?" He said "Sit down. You tell me your life story from the moment you were born until you sit down here." So I told him what I know, and the door opened and a fellow comes in "What are you making such a fuss, tomorrow I hear a report of a transport going to Dachau, put him in." So he left by the next door.

"You heard what he said?"

I said "If I leave the country in a normal way, wouldn't that be better than sending me to Dachau?" I said, "I will be out."

He said "Have you got a passport?"

I said "Yes."

"Right, you go back to Berlin, report to the Gestapo, get your visa for wherever you want to go to, you must have a visa, and then get a train from the station to Holland."

I said "Thank you very much."

"And don't tell them I let you go, just get out of here quietly."

Out of the building, of the prison, I went to the next restaurant to eat whatever there was, I still know today what I eat, I ate what they gave me, from there I went to the station, and just there was a train from Treia to Berlin. Without a ticket, without a ticket I went into the train and at the next station, I don't know what the name of the station was, and he said "Excuse me sir"

I said "I have no ticket."

He said "Have you any money?"

I said "Yes."

"I know what is going on. I know who you are."

I said "How do you know who I am?"

He said "You came out of prison. We saw you."

I said "How could you see me?"

"We saw you from the bridge. That is why I let you stay on."

I said "I just want to go to Berlin."

He said "Do you know what it costs?"

I said "Well, look, that is all I have got."

He said "It will cost you 25 German Marks."

I said "Here is 25 German Marks."

He said "Give me 15 and I will let you pass."

I said "Thank you very much."

I was in Berlin by 6 o'clock, I went to a pub or a bar or whatever and had a sandwich and a drink and things, and then I went to my uncle and said "Can I stay here?"

"Yes, of course you can stay here."

I said "Tomorrow morning I have to go to....."

But at the station I told people that I am going to my uncle."

(He knocks on the table)

I said "That's for me."

"For you? Nobody knows that you are here."

I said "You wait and see."

So he opened the door and there were two Nazis, "Where is he?"

He said "Well he is here."

Tape 2: 29 minutes 45 seconds

"What do you want?"

"You have to report ..."

"Yes I know I have to report, I will be there tomorrow morning."

"NOW!"

I said "Well I can't walk there, I am too tired."

"Come on."

They took me in a car there, and I went to Alexander Platz, if you know Berlin. Those were the Gestapo.

"When are you leaving Berlin?"

I said "As soon as I get my visa I will go."

"Get your visa tomorrow; I don't want to see you in Berlin by tomorrow evening,"

I went to the British embassy and there was an inspector, and he was well known, I told him what happened to me. He said to me "Your passport" He said give me your passport. (He makes a slapping sound). "Gey."

That man, he did so many good things for people, whenever he was on duty there wasn't one who was sent out without a visa, and years and years later, it was in the paper, I don't know what happened to him, if he would be in Berlin I would go and visit him. He was an English passport secretary and everybody on that day, so I went back to Alexander Platz and I said "I have got a visa and I am going today, right."

"What train?"

I said "10.15"

At 10.15 I stood on the platform with my suitcase and there was a fellow observing me. I stepped onto the train, I said goodbye to my family, and at 10.15 the train left, and then we came to the first Dutch city. What was the name? I have forgot the name of the Dutch, and the, all Jewish people out of the train.

So we said "Why should we go out of the train, we are now leaving Germany."

So, they came into the compartments. "Jewish, out."

So we said "Why should we go out?"

"We tell you to go out."

"No" we said, "we will not get out."

"Then the train won't leave."

So we asked "If we go out what will happen?"

"We just want to have a look at your luggage."

"Everything has been checked" we said, "No further questions."

And the train wouldn't leave unless we got out of the train. We had to step out of the train with our suitcase, and then he looked at it, and then he started telling me about my five books of Moses. I said "If G-d forbid you touch that book"

"Throw it away."

I said...Never mind.

Then we stepped back into the train and that fellow stood there, and I stood here on the window watching leaving the German border into the Dutch border, and as soon as the train crossed the Dutch border we shouted "Hurray."

So, then we arrived in, in Vlissingen, Flushing, and in Vlissingen we went out and I was directed to go there to the, there is a port and there is a ship lying which will take us

Tape 2: 35 minutes 20 seconds

across to England, but first we have got and things, so I went on the boat, and the steward said to me "Are you interested in a bit of business?"

And I said "What is it that you want from me?" I said.

"Well if you go back, if you leave your luggage here I will look after it, and you go into town, there is a Jewish agency, tell them who you are and they will give you so many guilden, but I want you to bring back the guilden and I will give you the English money for it."

And I said "How much will you deduct?" I said "You are not doing it because ..."

He said "Well I will take a bit of it, not much."

I said "What can happen to me?"

So I went to the Jewish Agency in Vlissingen and he said "Ah, good evening, are you leaving us?"

"Yes."

"Have you got a passport?"

"Yes."

"Good."

"Here are so and so" I have forgotten how much, and he gave me so and so much money. "Good luck to you. And I went back on the boat and I changed that money, and I had, by leaving there that evening I had three English pounds in my pocket. Ten shillings you could take from Germany and the rest I got from there. Three pounds, I was a rich man. And then we arrived in, in, we arrived in England and there we, I took the train to, to I don't know where. What was the place called? It was the first ... it was not Dover. It was the other one, so I arrived in England, I had a ticket, I was in, I stood on the platform, and I said to myself, who is there to fetch me, there was nobody there. Right, there was nobody there, I was all by myself, on that evening in London, on a London railway station. I stood there and I said "What now?" I said "I can't use my three pounds, then I haven't got it any more, I can't go to a hotel", and in that split second a huge policeman came, he must have been seven foot tall, and he looked at me "Woher kommst du. He was Jewish!

So I said "I come from Germany."

He said "I will take you to the shelter." There was in London east end, there was a shelter.

He said "I will put you into a taxi. " Du gebst den ganef sixpence, no more."

I said "You tell him."

He said "Take him to the shelter. Sixpence, do you understand?"

So I went, I came to the shelter, and I wasn't even in the shelter when a row started.

"Your passport?"

I said "Just a moment, I said, I don't speak English, I am sorry."

I said "Either Yiddish or German."

He said "Geb hier der Passport."

I said "No."

I said "What then?"

He said "Then I give you a bed."

I said "Why can't I keep my passport?"

Tape 2: 40 minutes 2 seconds

He said "No, no, no, here is the regulations, you have to hand in your passport, it goes in here, nobody will touch it."

I said "You have a guarantee for that?"

He said "Ya, ya, ya, you are not the only one."

So he gave me a bed, with another yiddlech came, and said "Lie on the bed if you want, sleep if you want, don't get undressed. If you get undressed you won't find your things tomorrow morning. They are all ganovim." So for the first hour I sat on my bed, looking. And then somebody came and said "You go to sleep, we will watch you. Nothing will happen to you." And nothing did happen to me, but I had nothing to eat for almost 30 hours. It was terrible, I couldn't order anything, I couldn't go anywhere, and finally I asked the man who had got my passport, breakfast, coffee or tea or something. "Yes, you will get, just a minute." So he said "kosher, not kosher."

So I said "Food."

So he said to me "Are you going into town?"

I said "Yes, I need my passport."

He said "Yes you can have your passport."

I said "Can I come back?"

"Yes you can come back if you book now. Where are you going?"

I said "I am going to the Jewish Agency."

So I went to the Jewish, Woburn House. "Ya, come in, sit down." Do you come from Vienna? So she talked and questioned me, and suddenly next to her was a big trolley, and on the trolley was a box, and stacked with £1 notes, there must have been £10,000 in it. The telephone rings and she gets up and walks away. I said "Just a minute, oh no," I said, "That we don't do."

"What's the matter?"

"I am not being left alone by myself," I said, "No way!"

All the people looked around Deutsch. I said "I am sorry I don't speak English. I won't be left alone with all that money here."

"As long as you don't take it, what are you worried about?"

I said "I am not used to that, you can say anything afterwards."

"We don't say anything, no, no, no, no. Stay and sit down."

So finally she came back and said "What is all the shouting about?"

I said "How can you leave me alone with all the money?"

"Well, why not? Did you take any?"

I said "No I didn't."

"There you are, here you are, here is £1, good luck to you. Now what was it you want?"

I said "What can I do here? Stay in London or what?"

He said "I have given you £1, go back to where you have come from, and come back tomorrow morning." So I walked a bit there, and I walked a bit there, I had a bit of something to eat and to drink and by 8 o'clock the day was gone.

The next day she said "Do you want to go to the Kitchener Camp?"

"I will go anywhere you want."

"Well there is a transport going to the Kitchener Camp in Sandwich."

Tape 2: 44 minutes 57 seconds

So I went there and there I met my people who actually should have collected me from the station. I said "You Chazerim you" I said "I went through hell." So, I was number 165 in Kitchener Camp and I was placed into a hut, and that hut was a hut which once was under the control of Lord Kitchener, the camp was a soldier's camp from 1918 and Lord Kitchener, who died left that camp as it is, nobody touched it from 1918 until 1933 or 4, which Anglo Jewry by agreement took over. So my boss, who was in charge of the group from Berlin to which I belonged, said "You take over that hut there. You see that hut?"

I said "Yes."

"This hut, that you go and clean up and make it fit to be a hospital."

I said "With two hands?"

"Yes."

"With any assistance? With any help?"

"I give you another two boys but you be in charge, get ready."

"What do you mean get ready? They are coming tomorrow night, we need it by tomorrow night." That was him, he is in the papers this week, his wife is living somewhere ...

RL: What was his name?

FH: Kuh, Leopold Kuh.

RL: Who was it that was meant to meet you at the station?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Who had arranged to meet you and never came? Who was it?

FH: Leopold Kuh.

RL: So he was meant to meet you?

FH: Ya, ya, ya. When I think about it, it was hopeless.

So I said "I need beddings, I need rooms, Where do I get it from?"

He said "Frank, do I rely on you or not?"

I said "You can rely on me."

"So get ready!"

He said "So you organise it, there are plenty of brooms. You go in the kitchen and you will find a broom there."

I said "I need hot water."

"Go and get it, don't be shy."

So I said to the other two boys who were helping me, I said "We need hot water, we need buckets, we need a broom, we need beddings, we need sheets."

Tape 2: 48 minutes 18 seconds

So it was 5 o'clock, we worked through the night, by the next morning we had a hospital. We had the beds alright, and each one had two blankets and a sheet, and the floor was clean, and the windows were washed, and you couldn't recognise the hut any more. It stood still for ... for, how many, 12, 15, 30 and 30, it stood still for 21 years, you know the dirt which collected, and we came, and he said "Good, very good. Don't let anyone else see it otherwise you will get the whole lot of huts to your disposal."

I said "I am not doing any more huts, thank you."

So the first transport came, with people from the concentration camp. So they were put in the hospital, so within a half an hour I had nine people who were either, with frozen hands or with frozen feet, they came in a terrible state.

So I said "Excuse me gentleman, where is the doctor?"

I said "I am not a doctor."

I said "Kuh's, let's have a doctor."

"What do we need a doctor for? Hot water, we'll bath them"

I said "No, it needs a doctor." I said, "Now, don't be a fool any further"

"Ya, the doctor is coming tomorrow, he is coming from the Jewish Hospital in Rome."

So we looked after the patients as good as possible and the next morning at 10 o'clock a man stood there with the case and everything and he looked at me, and I said "Yes, what is it that you want? Are you ill?"

"No, I am not ill, but I get ill when I see what is going on here."

I said "If you talk like this, you must be the doctor."

"I am" he said "I am Dr Mink."

"Dr Mink, I am pleased to meet you. Here is your room where you can examine in your surgery and so on, I am sorry that my English is not very good."

He said "My English isn't very good either."

So we got on very well and he looked after the patients and I looked after the welfare of the patients. It was, it was a piece of work, dear me, and I stayed in the Kitchener Camp from March until June, June/July ...

RL: What date had you arrived? What date did you come to the country?

FH: What date?

RL: ... did you come to England? What date did you come to England? When did you come?

FH: 4th March 19 ... 39 ... 1939, yes.

RL: So you were actually in Germany during Kristallnacht?

FH: Yes.

RL: You have not told me about that.

Tape 2: 52 minutes 18 seconds

FH: We were in our workshop, in Pankow, and you could see when you stood on the chair, outside, from where we were higher, you could look over Berlin. You saw a fire shine, so we didn't know what it was. What is burning? So our fellow in charge, Mr Kuh, he ran, first he couldn't get through, then after a while he came back, white faced, he said "Berlin is burning on every corner that there is a Jewish We were not clear about that, every synagogue is burning."

"What!"

"Every synagogue and everything, they have attacked even the windows of the Jewish shops." There was nothing, you were not allowed to go near a burning object, you were not allowed to touch anything, or they put water in, it had to burn, so the, the main syn.. Do you know Berlin? Berlin had a beautiful synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse and all the other synagogues and when they tried to burn down the main synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse, with the golden dome, a Nazi was running towards the synagogue and put water on it.

"Are you mad?" he said. "That building, how can you burn down that building? It is the most beautiful building in Berlin." And he just...squashed all the flames and it didn't touch anything, nothing happened to it, except the golden dome had to be taken down, nothing else happened to it, but all the other synagogues burnt down, Fasanenstrasse, Lewetzowstrasse, Leibnitz, all those were burned down. It was absolutely a disgrace. That is it, yes.

RL: Did you witness afterwards the destruction?

FH: Oh yes, we looked. You see, The centre of Berlin is where the Zoo is. The main street is Tauenzien Strasse. All the shops, the windows were smashed, and then there were notices "Don't buy *bei* Jews." And there is, it was just painted on the window Jude. All over Britain ... I mean Germany, was the same thing. Each town, where I came from, in Halle, was the same thing. And then the worst thing, what I got to know is that my parents couldn't go and buy food, the shops were not allowed to serve them, and in food shops, there was a notice "Jews not welcomed". So where do you get food from? It was absolutely beyond belief what happened there, but I was happy and contented in England ...

RL: This tape is about to end so we will break off here and we will continue on.

Tape 2: 57 minutes and 40 seconds

TAPE 3

This is the interview with Frank Henderson and it is tape 3.

I was just going to ask you, you know, you were going to tell me about Kritallnacht and what happened. Where were your brothers at this time? What had happened to them? Where were they?

FH: I will tell you what happened to them, my eldest brother was employed at the Israeli, what was called the Palestinian office in Berlin. My second brother was already arrested and he was in Buchenwald concentration camp. I was in Berlin in the workshop there and my youngest brother was in Holland, kibbutz.

RL: So the brother that was in Buchenwald, what happened to him?

FH: What happened to him? His wife, my sister in law came to Berlin and she, we met, and she said "What am I going to do?" I said "There is only one thing you can do. Go and get the passports." "I have got the passport." "Go to the Palestina office and get a permit, to anywhere, it doesn't matter." So we both went next morning to the Palestine office and they said "No, you have got to go to the consulate." So we went to the consulate of Paraguay in the main street in Berlin. They said "Yes, we will give you things." I said "Now, you have to have the courage, you go to Buchenwald and take the passport and say to the yok at the entrance that you want your husband and you want to leave Germany."

Tape 3: 2 minutes and 38 seconds

"And then they take me?" I said "That risk you have to take. There is nothing we can do" I said "I know that, I know the trait but with more than words you will get him out." So she took the train straight from Berlin straight to Weimar. Buchenwald was next to Weimar So she came and showed the passport and the visa for Paraguay and they released my brother. You wouldn't recognise him. He was absolutely bald, they took all the hair off him, so she went to the station in Weimar and she took the train, she came home and she packed a case and everything, and the baby, yes, the baby, now came the tragedy, next morning we made enquiries, "Yes, if you take the train at this and this time you can go straight to Rochelle in France where you will get hold of a ship to go to Paraguay." So we all went the next morning to the railway station, to say goodbye to him, so we went through the barrier, and what do you think happened. The guard said, "I am sorry, I can't let you pass." "Why not? What happened?" "In your passport the J is missing." "What now?" So we explained to the guard. He said "You can talk until Doomsday, the J is missing, no J, no pass." I said "We have got the tickets already." "That is your business, not mine. I can't let you pass, sorry." So I said "Come outside. We have to go to Alexander Platz to the Gestapo and get a J, what can we do?" "They will keep me." "They won't keep you. They are glad to get rid of you." "I am not going, I am not going." So everybody looked at me, I said "Give me that passport." So I took a taxi, I

said "You had better go home and stay there, you are, there is nothing we can do about it, you can't"

Tape 3: 6 minute 1 second

go today, I have no guarantee that I will get served either way, they might put me in the queue." So, I went to Alexandra Platz, HQ of the Gestapo, there was a row of people, and there came an SS man, and he looked out and he pointed his finger at me, "You, come here. What are you doing here?" I said, "If I can talk to you privately I will explain."

"Privately? Come in here." So he opened the door and when I said what had happened he said "Oh, bloody hell. It's desperate, isn't it." I said "It is and it isn't, all that you need to do is stamp the passport and Bob's your uncle" I said "A little effort, that's all."

"You make it as if it's nothing. If I do that I don't know whether I do right or I break the law." I said "What law?" "Have you been in a solicitor's office?" I said "Yes."

"I can hear that." I said "Look, if there is any charge, I will pay it." "You will pay it?"

I said "Yes." "For what?" "You have to put the J in." "Right" he said "give me that passport." And he put the J in it. And I said "There you are, that is all the effort I need, thank you very much." I said "What do I owe you?" He said "Get out and don't let me see you again. You are not a bad chap, but I don't want to see you, out!" And I walked, went out of his office and there was a long queue of people, and I heard remarks, "You get special liberties, or permission of G-d knows what, who are you." I said, "Just be courteous and say nothing, the less you speak the better it is." So I went back to my uncle and said "Here is your passport with the J in it." And the next morning we went back to the....Bahnhof, ya, and that fellow was still there. I said, "Is that all right now?"

He said "Ya, that's right. That is how we like it." I said "You know what, that costs what you did. That costs new tickets, new railway tickets, new ship tickets, all because, what do you think is doing now with the J, you should be ashamed of yourself." My brother went to Rochelle, and in Rochelle they wouldn't let him on the ship because in the meantime the visa was cancelled (big sigh), so I said "What did you do?" "I went and took a boat to Bolivia." I said "Bolivia?"

Tape 3: 10 minutes 13 seconds

"I had no choice." So he went to Bolivia, and in Bolivia he couldn't make a living, he had to deal with pigs, that was all he could get, he had to get up in the morning and drive a load of pigs to the yard and drive them back at night, and for that he got paid, and then he went, from Bolivia he got permission to come to Buenos Aires, and in Buenos Aires he got a job as a hotel steward, he went from table to table and suggested the meals that you can eat and you cannot eat, and this and that. It was, he said it was hopeless, and it took years until he really got a job where he was employed as a waiter, and then he became a head waiter and that was alright, and then he came to England and visit me and it was very nice, and I said "Everything ok?" And he said "I couldn't make a living here."

I said "Of course you could, you don't need to go back." He said "Yes, I have to go back." This and that and ... That was 1962 and I have never seen him again. He died in 1982.

RL: And where was he living when he died?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Where was he living when he died?

FH: When he died?

RL: Where was he when he died? Was he still in ... ?

FH: In Buenos Aires.

RL: In Buenos Aires.

FH: It wasn't, it wasn't a good life, it was the life of bare existence. He made a living from day to day, very nice, but it was never anything that you could say that he could earn so and so much and save so and so much, whatever he earned he spent.

RL: And your other brothers? What happened ... ?

FH: My other brother was in Australia, and then I have got one in Sweden.

RL: How did he get from Germany to Australia? What was his story?

FH: Oh, well, I came home, no, I was in the British Army and we were already in the north of Germany and there was a period of a week where we were laid off all actions. I still don't know why, so I said to my Major "You don't need me." I was his interpreter.

"No, I don't need you."

I said "Let me have a pass, I want to go to Holland."

Tape 3: 14 minutes 16 seconds

He said "Holland? Why?"

I said "I have got a brother in Amsterdam. I haven't seen him for ..."

"Ahhh" he said "will you be back? You blokes go and don't come back."

I said "Name me one who hasn't come back." I said "I promise you I will be back unless things happen where I have no power." I said "According to my own I will be back by ..."

He said "Here", and he gave me a pass, and I took the train to the, I don't know, and I am within six hours from the border of Germany, I was in Amsterdam, and that was 8 o'clock in the morning, so I knocked on his door, I had to find his address first. Up in the gallery there, and I knocked on his door and my brother opened the door and he saw me in uniform. "Yes."

I said "What do you mean 'yes'? Aren't you inviting me in?"

He said Laughs

I said "It's 8 o'clock, where is the coffee?"

"Coffee? Have you got coffee?"

I said "Yes." I said "Do you have any?"

He said "No, I have nothing." He said.

I said "Now, come off it. What are you doing here?"

"I am waiting to go to work and earn a few guilden. I don't know when I will get a job, I don't know when the wife will come, she is still in Switzerland."

I said "Where are the children?"

"With the wife."

I said "What are you doing here?"

He said "I do nothing. I have to wait until I get a job. I have been registered and everything."

I said "What a geschaft"

I said "What's this?"

"That's my bed."

I said "When your wife comes? One sleeps this way and one sleeps that way?"

I haven't got it ...

So, we started, first I bought another bed, then I bought him two chairs, by 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock, the living room and the kitchen was furnished.

Then I said "Now, let's have something to eat."

"Something to eat? Do you have something?"

I said "No, we are going to buy something, don't be so ..."

So we went shopping. Even a box of matches to light the gas, he had nothing, nothing.

So I said "Well the Swiss told me that I cannot stay." During the war he was in Switzerland. "They have thrown me out, and I have to go back to where I have come from in 19, G-d knows what."

I said "And what do you think you can do now?"

"Well, I hope to get a job."

I said "What do you mean you hope?"

"Well there is a man ..."

I said "Can I talk to him?"

Tape 3: 18 minutes 29 seconds

"No, no ..."

I said "Blow you."

So I said "there was a factory who made belts, fancy belts."

So I stood there and I said "I know something about belts"

So a man looked out of the window and he said "Yes."

I said "I would like to talk to you."

So he came out and I said "This man is looking for a job."

"So."

"If you saw him, he can do all these things."

"You can make a belt?"

I said "If you show him he will know how to do it?"

"hmmm"

So he asked us in, and he asked my brother to put the leather down, and right, and then take the cutting machine and cut, so the man says "With a bit of training I think he can do it. Do you want to start working here?"

I gave him a kick and I said "Of course he will."

I said "You will have to excuse him, he is a bit shy." It was fantastic. So I said "When can he start?"

He said "Can he start tomorrow morning?"

So I said "How much will he get?"

Oh, so, I said, he talked to him in Dutch, I don't understand Dutch. So anyway he got 20, 50 ... it was £2 10 shillings, the equivalent of.

I said to him "There you are. What are you waiting for, lying in bed there all day."

"You have got a chutzpah, you've got."

"No way have I got chutzpah, you've got to make a living."

I said "Come on, let's have something to eat. So we went out and so I said, "You have got a job now, make something of it, if you are very keen." I said "Next week you can earn a bit more. And in the evening you don't need to sit about, maybe you can get somewhere a little job to earn extra money."

"Do you mean to work all day and then in the evening?"

I said "Yes," I said "I do."

"Oh, na."

I went back after 48 hours and I said to my Major "Do you know, as long as we are in the army we are safe," I said "G-d help us when we get discharged, where we get the money from to live." I said everything costs, it's the norm now. He said "Wait till you're, at the moment you're with us."

It was a hard time, and my brother then went, after the war, his application came through and he went to Australia, the first job he got was, he got a big hammer and along the railway coaches he gave it a clap underneath to look if anything is cracked. Do you know how they do it? You take a big hammer, and you knock against the wheel box, and if the wheel box doesn't give a clear sound then something is wrong with the wheel, it is

Tape 3: 23 minutes 9 seconds

cracked and you can't use it. He went up the train and this way and back the train and then the other side. I said "It is not a job for a Jewish boy."

He said "Ya, well."

In the end it was like that he got a shop, and he opened a shop with food, delicatessen. He had to supply delicatessen 600 miles away.

So he rang me, in Manchester and he said "I have got a good job, I am opening a shop, a delicatessen and I have got already orders which are about 600 miles away."

I said "Don't do it."

He said "Why?"

I said "If you have got to drive 600 miles to deliver before you know it has melted." I said "The heat."

Oh, he said "Oh, I never thought about it."

I said "Now you know it."

I will tell you something, my brother was, is a good boy, but to help himself it is very difficult, and then he changed and he became a push start, so he drove in Adelaide and sold the ticket, until one day something went wrong and the inspector said "You can't take your bus, we have no driver."

So he said "And what about me?"

"You are a guard not a driver."

He said "I can drive a bus."

"Oh you can, let me see, go on then."

So he hopped on the bus and he drove.

And he said "Turn the bus round."

And he turned it round, and he said "Ok, you're on." And from that day on he was a bus driver. And he earned quite a good piece of money until he retired, and I said "Thank G-d for that, now you get your pension."

RL: Now I think we had better get back to your story.

FH: Ya.

RL: We have spoken about Krystall Nacht ...

FH: Ya ...

RL: And, how were arrangements made from the place that you were training at for boys to come to England?

FH: Quite simple. There was an application that you had to fill out. And Kuh said "I need 24 boys, there is a camp in England which needs bringing in order, who is willing?" Everybody lifted his hand,

"Twenty four, you, you, you, you, you, you," so I was amongst them. So he said "You have to try to get to England, the sooner the better." So I tried to go through Luxembourg, but didn't succeed, so I went, finally I got through.

Tape 3: 27 minutes 20 seconds

RL: What did you take with you? What were you allowed to bring with you?

FH: Ten shillings, seventeen and sixpence.

RL: And what about belongings?

FH: Oh, you could bring your belongings with you. Oh, yes.

RL: Did anybody have to supervise your packing?

FH: Yes, yes. The, we made a special arrangement. There is a railway station called Berlin Charlottenburg. It is near the staircase at Bahnhof Charlottenburg, the railway station and that station is managed by a guard, and that guard, number 34, he was partly a gentleman, he checked your case, your contents, then he sealed it and then, once it was sealed you had to put it into the waiting room there and before you left at 10.15 there you collect the case, went up on the platform and there the Nazi stood and he said "Errr!"

And I said "It's sealed."

"Oh, ok."

That is how we got out the things, and then they shouted, and again "??????"

"The case is sealed."

Well the guard in Charlottenburg said "Ya, alright."

They couldn't do anything against us, they had to let it pass. We got through. Everything was connected with hidden tricks and dirty business, that is all it was. Yes.

RL: When had you last seen your parents before you left?

FH: The train from Berlin to Holland was 10.15, and I left my parents at half past eight in the morning. They took me to the station, goodbye, goodbye, and that was the end of it.

RL: Were they trying to find a way to leave Germany?

FH: They were trying but they couldn't do anything. They had no money, they had nobody who would give them anything, they had no visa or passport, nothing. It was, my mother was, what am I talking about? Errr, she was born 75, February 25, 25 and 39, my mother was 66, ya, yes she was 66 already, she wasn't fit, she wasn't a strong woman.

RL: Where were they living by then?

FH: They lived in Halle.

RL: They were in Halle, so you had gone back to Halle to pack.

Tape 3: 31 minutes 34 seconds

FH: I went back to Halle to say goodbye and things. And the next morning, I slept that night there, and the next morning they took me to the station. It was an ... when the Lord Mayor invited us back to Halle, I went to the station and I said to my wife "That is where we said goodbye."

She said "You shouldn't come here."

That is how it was. There was nothing anybody could do, we were powerless and we say to our shame we didn't even make an effort to alter it, you see we were so many Jewish people in Germany, in 1930, 1931/32, the Jews never moved a little finger to fight the Nazis. They had there, what I have told you, but they didn't do anything. They didn't fight the Nazis. They were too frightened, or too ashamed, even in the town

to march against them, nothing. And we had to pay the bill, there is nothing else I can say.

RL: Did your parents continue to live in Halle?

FH: My parents lived in Halle until that day that they were called by the Gestapo, the Nazis, and taken away from their flat, and my father was taken to the concentration camp, and from the concentration camp he was transported to Auschwitz, no, to Theresienstadt and from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, so what. And my mother was separated from him with all the other Jewish women she was put into the railway wagon and was transported from Halle to Theresienstadt. She didn't see the others or anything that was ... there was nothing, you couldn't say "I want to see so and so or so" and so, no, no, no, no. Here we are, always on our guard.

RL: Did she die in Theresienstadt?

FH: She died in Theresienstadt. How she died I have no idea. I tried to establish some information, but the secretary of the Jewish congregation in Prague said there is nothing you can do, there is no grave, there is nothing, wherever they died all the graves is now one flat grass floor ... nothing.

RL: So, you came to England, and you told us about your time at Kitchener Camp. But you say you were only there for a few months?

FH: Yes, three and a half months.

RL: And what happened from there?

FH: What happened from there was, I had a friend, who was suspected to be a German girl, which I told you about when the Nazis. She said to me "Come to Manchester because you have got a visa and you can work here." So I said to my friends in Kitchener Camp "I am leaving and going to Manchester." So

Tape 3: 36 minutes 24 seconds

I said, "I am invited." So, the next morning I took the train, it cost me 14 shillings from London to Manchester, today it costs, I don't know what. Anyway, I arrived in Manchester and I walked along the platform, and then outside ... Do you know Manchester? Yes? To Piccadilly, and I looked at the town and I said "What is that?" And I put my case down and I looked at it, I had never seen anything so dirty, so filthy, and I walked back, and finally she came.

"I have been waiting for you at Piccadilly."

I said "This is called Piccadilly?" I said "It looks terrible."

"You will get used to it, come on, don't make a fuss."

So she took me to a house in Alexandra Park. Do you know the park? Alexandra House, Kershaw House. He said, go to room number so and so. I said "Yes, what then?"

He said "Make yourself at home."

And then I was, I was for two days in Kershaw House, and I looked here and I looked there. And then there was a young girl and we started talking about this and that.

"Ya," I said "I don't know what to do here."

She said "Well we have to look, and then you can get a job, and then you can earn money."

I said "Thank you very much."

My friend said "I have to go back, I am on duty."

Everybody was busy, you know, after two days, I could, I have to go, I said "Is there a labour exchange or something?"

"No there isn't a labour exchange, not for you."

So I made enquiries here and made enquiries there, so finally I found somebody who said "Well, if you're looking for a job, do you want to shovel sand?"

I said "I will shovel sand, it doesn't matter."

I said "Will I get paid for it?" I said "I am looking for ..."

"Yes, of course you will get paid for it."

So,..... and this and that, anyway, I worked and I got paid, and after the third day he said "That is enough, thank you, bye."

I said "What now?"

He said "Now! It's nothing now. I don't need you anymore, that is all."

No job, I couldn't speak the language. I thought somebody has to help me to get a job. He said, "You live in Kershaw House, what do you need a job for? Wait, when they get fed up with you, you get a job. They will give you one." So we went to Deansgate, number 42, there was the refugee centre. Do you know about it?

RL: Tell me a bit more?

FH: In Deansgate, number 42, there was Apfelbaum, Apfelbaum, he said "What do you want?" I said "What are you talking about? What is that 'What do I want?' I have been asked to report to you. Yes, you should be working, you shouldn't be here."

Tape 3: 41 minutes 31 seconds

I said "Yes, if I can get a job I will work." I said "I don't understand your attitude."

He said "You Germans, you don't know ..."

I said "Don't start with Germans, I have finished with German."

"Yes, well, I haven't got a job for you."

"Well why did you ask me to come here? I have been walking from Alexandra Road to here." I said "I haven't got the money to pay for a bus"

He said "Oh, I see, here is half a crown."

I said "What is the half a crown for?"

"Then you can pay your bus fare. You have to go back, you have to wait."

I said "You shovel about without reasonable ..."

He said "No, I need somebody to help me"

And at that moment Mrs Barash, Mrs Barash came in.

I said "You're Mrs Barash?" I said "Can I ask you? Can I talk to you?"

She said "Yes."

I said "I can't get straight with Mr Applebaum, I am looking for a job or something, I have to earn my keep and my money."

"Come with me in my office."

I said "I am a fitter."

"A fitter we don't at the moment need. You have to be patient. It is no use in pressing us, we will get you a job in good time. Where are you?"

"Kershaw House."

"Good, stay in Kershaw House until we call for you."

Oy, oy, oy ... anyway, after three days waiting I got a job, filling sand packs in Irlam, I had to go to Irlam.

So I said "How do I get to Irlam?" I said "I don't know the place. I have no idea where to go. I know now where Deansgate is."

"Well, you are not going alone, you are going in a group."

"I see."

"So report at this and this time, there and there."

So we had to report by 8 o'clock at this place. I was there at ten to eight, there was nobody about.

I said "Now I am now getting a bit fed up with this work business."

At five past eight the first five came, "Oh, alright, you are going to Irlam to so and so."

I said "You should have been here by 8 o'clock."

He said "Don't start with the German Punktishkeit."

I said "8 o'clock is 8 o'clock with me."

"Ya, Okay"

Then came a coach and we were driven to Irlam, and you know our boys, one had a shovel in his hand and the other one had a bag and the other one had a dictionary in his hand. So the shovel they (laughs), it was absolutely fantastic. At about 4 o'clock all the sand bags were completed and filled, right, each one got one pound I don't know how much, so, and now, you can go home. So I said "How do we go home?"

"Well you take the ..."

I said "Where is the coach?"

Tape 3: 46 minutes 8 seconds

"That was bringing you here. Home, you are finished now."

I said "How do we pay?"

"Well you have got money."

So we took money to Piccadilly and from Piccadilly we walked to Alexandra Road, so half the money was already gone.

I said to the manager, I said, "I have never been made a fool of like today, I have been working all day for a bus fare, I have never seen anything like this, there is something wrong here."

He said "You are in England, whatever you do, you have to pay, finished."

Anyway the result was that I got a job packing this and packing that and I was told I have to move out of Kershaw House and live next to a Mrs So and So, her husband is a police man. I said "I don't care what he is"

So, the woman said “Well, you are here, it will cost you so and so much, that includes supper and lunch and breakfast.”

So she gave me a cup of tea for breakfast, or coffee, and a sandwich with a slice of bacon.

I said “Thank you very much but I don’t eat bacon, if you don’t mind.”

“Why not?”

I said “I am Jewish.”

“So”

I said “I don’t eat bacon.”

The husband said “Ok, so, you have got more bacon, so....”

So she gave me my lunch, a slice of bread, cut in the middle, clipped over, with a piece of cheese in it. I said “What is this for?”

“That is your lunch.”

I said “Where shall I put the lunch?”

“You can eat it now or with one bite or what?”

I said “Madam, this is no lunch for me. I am supposed to work all day.”

“Well, that is the way we eat here in England.”

So after three days the husband put his uniform on and came in my room.

I said “Excuse me, if you come in my room you knock.”

“I don’t need to knock because you are not staying.”

I said “It might as well be ...” I said “I am not asking why, it is quite alright.”

I packed my things and out. So I didn’t stay, I didn’t go back to Kershaw House, I took my case and I shlepped it to Deansgate.

I said “Mr Appelbaum, I am here, I have nowhere to go, there is nowhere, people take advantage of me”

He said “What do you mean?”

“They have given me ... a ... a ... Would you like to see my lunch? That’s my lunch.”

“Oh dear.”

I said “Yes, oh dear, I want to keep it as a souvenir.”

He said “We will do it different. You can stay here overnight, I will give you a room, and then he got in touch with Cheetham Hill and I was put into, I was put into a kind of a hostel, it wasn’t a hostel, and I was, I got a job as a wine merchant, and Mr Levinson, he

Tape 3: 51 minutes 42 seconds

said, he was a man who was speaking to you but he never looked at you, and he had a habit ... “Can you do this?” (made clicking noise with his tongue as he spoke) That is the way he talked. I said “Mr Levinson, I am sorry but you have to tell me clearly what you want.”

He said “Repair that electric switch.”

I said “Yes, give me a screw driver.”

Ya, I said “You are alright.”

So there was a woman, she looked after the shop, the shop was in Cheetham Hill Road, on the corner of Elizabeth Street, and there I earned a bit of money and I stayed nearby into an empty room, and I thought big deal. And she wanted to marry me, she was pestering me, “If you come to my house I will show you what I’ve got. We will have a good time together.” She wouldn’t leave me alone.

I said "Madam, I have come here to work, is there a job or is there not a job?"

"Yes, of course there is a job. But this is private."

I had to fill wine bottles with kosher wine. And she wouldn't let me lift, it was terrible, I am telling you.

She said "Can you take the basket to this and this and take it to my house. I will come with you."

I said "Ok", so I shlepped that basket to her house, and she was behind me, and she said "Come upstairs"

And I said "No, I do not come upstairs." I said "What is it you want?"

She said "I want you to bring the basket upstairs."

I said "If I go upstairs then you stay downstairs so that we don't misunderstand each other."

So I shlepped the basket up to the first floor and put it down in front of her bedroom.

I said "I am coming down and I don't want to ..."

Miss Shatz, that was her name, Miss Shatz. Yes.

RL: So where were you living at that point?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Where were you living? Where were you sleeping at that point?

FH: In a room not far away from it.

RL: It wasn't a hostel.

FH: Not in the beginning, then it became, it was a Jewish, where they keep things together, and they put me down there, it belonged to the wine shop, and then I moved to the (long pause)..... I can't remember.

You know Manchester don't you?

Tape 3: 55 minutes 40 seconds

RL: Uha ...

FH: Upper Park Road Hostel, that's it, Upper Park Road Hostel, and we were about four or five, yes I think we were five boys who had nowhere to sleep, we were there.

RL: What other boys were in the hostel at the time.

FH: That I don't know, I was put in there because I had nowhere to go, and in the morning I had my breakfast and then I went to work at the wine shop, Levinson Wine Shop. On the corner of Elizabeth Street and Cheetham Hill Road, it was alright ...

RL: Can I just ask you? Going back to the other place, Kershaw House ... How many people were living in Kershaw House when you were there?

FH: Oh, quite a few. The women were mad ... "Will you marry me or will you this." I said "I have no intention." I said "I don't even know you." "Oh, you will get to know me."

RL: So there were men and women living there?

FH: Yes, we were mixed.

RL: Who was in charge of it?

FH: Mr Shick.

RL: And how many would you say were there?

FH: Well, it wasn't, it wasn't definite every day the same. I would say, about twenty, about twenty people.

RL: And did it provide meals?

FH: Yes, yes, they provided meals, we had dinner sometimes, not every day, it depended on the circumstances whether you were employed or not, if you were without a job, or things, it was not so easy, but when I moved to Cheetham Hill I was all right.

RL: And the hostel on Upper Park Road, did that provide meals?

FH: Yes, I had an evening meal and I had breakfast.

RL: And who was in charge of that?

FH: Mrs Weinberg.

Tape 3: 58 minutes 38 seconds

RL: And what age group was in that hostel?

FH: All age groups. We had nowhere to go, don't you understand. It was terrible.

RL: I think this film is about to end so we will just stop here.

TAPE 4

This is tape 4 and the interview with Frank Henderson.

I just want to ask you a bit more about the Upper Park Road Hostel. You say that Mrs Weinberg was in charge, was she a refugee?

FH: No, no ... I don't know where they came from, but he, he was already employed, they understood German and all that, but I am sorry I can't let you have any particulars.

RL: Were there any activities at all arranged in the hostel? Besides giving people a bed and meals, did anything else happen in the hostel?

FH: No.

RL: Nothing else was organised?

FH: No, no. We came together at night for dinner and we entered the protection and organisation of the hostel and nothing happened to us, and even the laundry was washed, no I can't give you any information there.

RL: What about religious activity? Was there any ... ?

FH: Oh yes, oh yes. Mr Weinberg, he was an Orthodox Jew ... oh yes, and Friday and Saturday was Shabbos, there was nothing to do. You couldn't go out or work of anything.

RL: Did they have a service in the hostel or ... ?

FH: Sometimes, yes, yes. In the morning specially.

RL: So was this an orthodox hostel?

FH: Yes, it was an orthodox hostel. Yes, we lay tefillin in the morning, and ... and you couldn't go where you liked, I mean you had to be at the hostel to be back for dinner, or to go to bed at the proper time.

RL: How did that compare to Kershaw House?

Tape 4: 3 minutes 3 seconds

FH: Absolutely different, very different. A few of my friends who were with me are still here in Manchester. Yes, I met one today, today is Tuesday, isn't it, Saturday night I always meet one who was with me, there was a lecture on a Saturday night, and we meet there "Allo, allo." Like the old days.

And I did his pension, I did his pension a while ago, I have still got the file hanging about.

RL: How did Kershaw House differ?

FH: Kershaw House is come and go, for people who just arrived, who have nowhere to go and no job or anything. But it is finished now, there is not any more, the time has passed ...

RL: So when you were living in the hostel in Upper Park Road, had the war already broken out by then?

FH: Just a minute ... yes, yes, because I worked in Levinson's wine shop until Pesach 1940.

RL: And when the war broke out, did you have to go before a tribunal?

FH: Not right away. It developed, it developed, in February of 1940, March, yes we were, I was told that there was a war on and we couldn't do this and we couldn't do that, and in the beginning of, beginning or, or end of June, I was interned, for three months. July, August, September, until the 26th October.

RL: Right.

FH: But, in the meantime, between that date and October I was in front of a medical inspection and there I was told that a second medical inspection has to take place and I will be informed about the date and times, and in the meantime the police came and arrested me, and I said to them "This morning I got a letter that I have to come in for a medical inspection."

"We will sort that out, don't worry."

And that was the end of that.

And in October, October 26th, I was told, I was in Huyton, near Liverpool, and I was told to report and get dressed, change my uniform. And I said to them "Sergeant Major, what are you talking about?"

He said "When you talk to me you stand to attention."

I said "What for? Should I stand to attention? I am not in the army."

"You are in the army."

I said "Since when."

"Since 9 o'clock."

Tape 4: 8 minutes 15 seconds

I said "Thank you for telling me."

"You are welcome. Get ready, come on!"

So, we went to the store, we got a uniform and everything and by 12 o'clock we took the train from Liverpool, from Liverpool, from Huyton, to Manchester, where I informed my future wife, and from there I went to Bradford, ya, and there was a camp for all of my class.

RL: Now, you haven't told me yet about the internment, before we go on to the British Army, I need to know a bit about the internment.

FH: The internment, that was a joke.

RL: So can you just take me through that, from the day that they came. Also, you had moved ... hadn't you, you had moved from the wine factory you had moved up to Oldham.

FH: Yes, yes ...

RL: Because you told me you were working in the mill. What had made you move up to Oldham?

FH: Well, the factory was in Oldham.

RL: Why did you leave the wine place?

FH: Well, I got the sack ...

RL: Oh.

FH: Pesach, finished, after Pesach he doesn't want me any more. He wanted me to help him to fill the wine bottles for Pesach, oh I see, ahhh, he paid me 35 shillings a week. Ya, but ... What did you just say?

RL: But then you went up to Oldham?

FH: Yes ...

RL: And you had the job there, and it was from there that you were interned ...

FH: We were interned ...

RL: So tell me about internment and what happened from that day.

Tape 4: 10 minutes 33 seconds

FH: That was a joke. We went by train to Whitchurch, Shropshire and from Whitchurch we were marched into a camp site, full of tents, and a British guard every ten yards. So we were marched in and then the gate was closed and there was an officer who said "Consider your self as being interned. You can't get out here."

So we looked to each one, each one, always five people together got a tent.

And the best was "What about food?"

"Yes, wait."

So a corporal or a sergeant came and with a big barrel he said "Here is your food, have a nice dinner, bread you have to fetch from the canteen."

So we looked in that barrel and it was full of salt herrings, so we looked at the sergeant, "Nice herrings, nice fish, make yourself a nice meal."

So we told him "Yes sergeant, we will."

So we had some Jewish boys amongst us, cooks and things, so we made those herrings beautifully, they tasted beautifully, so about 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock, we were allowed in the mess tent and Luttenberg my friend, chief cook, he said "Frank, the herring is marvellous." They were all matjes herrings, they were shmaltz herring, they were washed, they were with onions and everything, so we were sitting down and each one got two herrings and these things, a few potato chips or whatever it was, and two officers came, and they were grinning all over their face "Well, how are the herrings?"

So we had one of our guys, he said "We could assure you that they tasted beautifully, we loved them, can we have some more please?"

"You what?"

"Could we have some more please? Because the barrel is empty. We have eaten the lot."

"You have eaten all the herrings?"

"We have eaten all the herrings."

He looked at his sergeant, "There must be something wrong. Is there any left?"

"One or two are left."

"Yes, they taste nice."

"Well," he said "take those two to the mess, to the officer's mess."

He says "They are beautiful."

Oh, they realised that they had made themselves a fool. Yidden know how to make herrings you know, and we ate every herring that night, but the next day they had to give us a new barrel, yes, it was really something we will never forget. Yes.

RL: How was life organised? How long were you there first of all?

FH: Three months.

RL: Three months, in the same ... in Whitchurch?

FH: In Whitchurch, in that camp, it was called Prees Heath.

RL: And what did you do whilst you were there?

Tape 4: 15 minutes 18 seconds

FH: A good impression. There was nothing else to do. We made music, we sang, and we had six catholic priests over from Germany, I think, and Brainin played, he played the violin a bit, and I sang with him, and the catholic priest came, will he assist in morning service.

So I said "Doing what?" I said "You know we are Jewish?"

He said "Yes." Well he said "Could you sing the Ave Maria?"

I said "Without a rehearsal?"

He said "Yes, as good as you can do it."

"I have got a good idea, why not?"

So we went into their tent. Brainin played the fiddle and I sang.

"Yes, very nice, thank you very much, it really helped us in our service."

And so every day was something else, then of course we had people amongst us, very clever people who would give us a talk, and at night we played cards or something, it was more or less a holiday, it was a beautiful three months, no rain, nothing, we had a lovely time. And the herrings, a mechaye.

RL: Was herring your staple diet?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Did you get herring most of the time?

FH: Yes. They thought they could kill us, we killed them, we really enjoyed the herring.

RL: Was there any religious activity organised in the camp?

FH: No, we did our own morning service and Friday night service. We didn't need anybody. What could they do to us? We had our professors amongst us who gave us a nice talk and Friday night and Shabbos morning we did our own service.

RL: Do you remember any of the people that were interned with you?

FH: Yes, they are all dead ...

RL: Can you remember them by name?

FH: They are all dead ... all dead ...

RL: Can you name any?

FH: Brainin and Halberstadt the butcher and Rottenberg. When I say Halberstadt the butcher, do you know who I mean? In Leicester Road ...

Tape 4: 18 minutes 41 seconds

RL: Yes.

FH: He is dead now but he was, he and Rottenberg were the cooks and they looked after the food, and another two, I have forgotten his name, ya, and we never complained to the officers, they were really disappointed. They couldn't do anything to us.

RL: You mentioned Brainin was there. Were the other members of the Amadeus Quartet?

FH: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. I forgot their names.

RL: Is that where they first started playing?

FH: That's No, I can't say that, I am sorry. I do not know why they four started, but they played and they gave a nice entertainment. You see, you must understand, they didn't have any music in front of them, you see, it was more or less by ear, but they played very nicely.

RL: But they had their musical instruments.

FH: Yes, yes, yes, yes. And then one died, I don't know which one, and that was after they had been released.

RL: Was there any kind of newspaper or camp paper that was produced?

FH: No, no, no, nothing ...

RL: Nothing like that.

FH: No, nothing ...

RL: Nobody wrote a newsletter or anything like that?

FH: No, no, no ...

RL: What about plays? Did you put on any plays?

FH: No, no, there was nothing like that, we entertained ourselves, we played football, we played handball, we played anything, we are running, this ... and then in the middle of the camp was a piece of wood and on that piece of wood was beautiful asphalt, and we had a doctor who came and saw us, and he said "I can assure you if you walk up and down on that road, it is the best medicine I can give you. And we did, we walked, and sometimes we found it a bit boring, but we had no rain, we had no rain and we had a really lovely time.

Tape 4: 21 minutes 47 seconds

RL: Were you allowed visitors?

FH: Where would the visitors come from? It wasn't a prison. It was internment, we didn't do anything, and then we were told that we will be moved to come to the Isle of Man so I played a bit of a game, and the day they moved the whole lot, I played sick.

Why? I wasn't sure if you go on the boat whether it goes straight to the Isle of Man or if it goes to Australia.

So I said "I am sorry, I am ill, and I am staying in my tent."

"You can't stay in your tent."

I said "I can't travel far."

"Well you won't go far."

I said "What do you mean?"

"It won't take long. I will put you into the queue for Huyton with all the food."

So I knew it was Huyton, so I took my little few things that I had and I went into the queue for Huyton, it suits me, it was near Liverpool, and from Huyton ...

RL: What was Huyton like?

FH: Huyton was alright. The food was lousy, but what can you do? And from Huyton we moved into the army.

RL: What were the conditions like in Huyton?

FH: Good, all that you need was a bed, and either a blanket or something, and you were together with ... they were all nice boys, and we behaved ourselves, there was no rowdies or anything.

RL: Was Huyton in buildings?

FH: Yes, yes. Huyton was in buildings, and we talked to the, we stood on the barbed wire and we talked to the people outside, and they agreed that the whole lot was stupid. There was no reason, we were not dangerous. But, there was a fellow called Anderson who said "All interned."

RL: For how long were you in Huyton?

FH: Fourteen days.

RL: And then?

FH: And then the British army. That was the biggest joke, we were absolutely ... first we were dangerous and then they took us into the army, we were not dangerous, and then they gave us a stick to play with which was supposed to be a rifle. It was four years army service which was useless.

Tape 4: 25 minutes 50 seconds

RL: What were you doing?

FH: Building Nissan huts for American troops in Shropshire, near Bradford and then we moved to Stafford, and from Stafford, outside Stafford we built Nissan huts for the American troops.

RL: What unit were you in?

FH: First I was in the Pioneer Corps. Then they called me up to the office and they said "You know, you are not a bad chap, I have been watching you. Would you like to go for a course to become an officer?"

"Pardon?"

I said "You just said I am not a bad chap?"

"No."

I said "Then why did you let me stay for four years in the Pioneer Corps?"

"Well, I only can do what I am allowed to."

I said "No, I don't want to." I said "I will tell you what I would like to." I said "Put me into intelligence and I will translate what the prisoners of war from the other side will say."

"No, that I can't do."

I said "Well, then I will stay in the Pioneer Corps." I said to him, "There is nothing wrong." I said "As far as I am concerned my company is not the same as the general company." I said "We are all mostly educated people."

He said "You are quite right."

"Yes, that is why I am asking you."

I said "No, I don't want to. If you say 'You came in here as a private, you walk out here as a Sub Lieutenant.'"

I said "Thank you very much. You are very kind. I will stay as I am."

"Stubborn ... bye". That was, I don't know what date it was. Four weeks later, we had to parade in the street in Stafford and he came out with a list, with a piece of paper.

"Henderson."

"Ya."

"Go and pack your things."

And I said "And then?"

"You'll see."

So I took my army bag there, and everything, I came down after half an hour. He said

"You are going to Brussels."

"What have I got to do in Brussels?"

"You are going on a course."

I said "Nobody tells me anything."

"You are going on a course."

"Right"

Tape 4: 30 minutes 2 seconds

We were in Antwerp at the time, and in Antwerp what we did was hanging about all day long doing nothing. So they shifted us to Antwerp and the course ... I said "But what is the course."

He said "On your records it says that you want to be a translator."

I said "Yes, that's right."

"Right. You have got to be checked."

So in Brussels they put me on a 14 day course, gave me a motorbike and I was posted to a company, how shall I say, a British? Company and the officer said to me "You can do that?"

I said "Yes."

"Then let's have a conversation."

So he started speaking German, and I have to say things, so after five minutes, I said "I am sorry sir, but your German is not German." I said "I am sorry." I said "Let me say the same as you have just said" so I told him in perfect German.

"But I didn't go to school."

I said "nobody asked you to do that job" I said, "I will do it for you" I said "I can do it in two languages, it makes no difference to me."

"Right" he said "Let's have another go."

I said "I can't see any improvement."

So he said "Wait a minute", so he called in a captain and they talked "He maintains my German is not good enough."

So we talked, so the captain said "I am afraid he is right."

So the end result was, they made me a sergeant and I got a motorbike and I was posted to a, to a campsite where there were loads and loads of German prisoners. So I had to make translations from morning to night, until, until, Doomsday.

RL: When did you go over? When was this?

FH: Do you mean from England?

RL: Yes.

FH: 31st July 1944. We left Portsmouth by ship around about 6 o'clock and I arrived, just a minute, what is the French place called. I can't do it, it is just, it wasn't Bayeux, it was before Bayeux, there we came out, and I can't remember the name of the place, if it comes back to me ...

RL: It will come later probably.

FH: Ya

But every time we got some German prisoners they talked, and I translated. Then we went further into Germany and then we were in Lubeck. I was translator at the Court. I was sitting at the Court with the Judge and the Prosecutor, and I sent one to his death. It

Tape 4: 35 minutes 59 seconds

wasn't easy to tell him "Sentence to death." And I had two Jewish boys who couldn't speak German, and wouldn't speak Deutsch, only Yiddish, they had pinched a motorbike. So I said to the officer "If I may?"

"Yes you may. What is it?"

"There are two Jewish boys put into the camp and they want to go home to their family. They didn't steal the bike, they borrowed it. And listen, I nearly cried and to tell them to bog off. So I said to the boys "You can't take the motorbike, but you can go home now, and go as quickly as possible to get out of here."

"Viele Dank"

RL: When you came over from England?

FH: Arramanches, Arramanches

RL: How aware were you of what had been happening to the Jews in Europe?

FH: How or where what?

RL: How aware were you of what had been happening to the Jews in Europe during the war?

FH: We got to know this while we were still in England. Oh yes, we knew what was going on. Yes, that was nothing ... when we finally I was at the Court in Lubeck, I had to get some files and things and I was just about to go into the court room and a gentleman in a hat and coat came "Excuse me, excuse me, can I ..."

I said "Yes."

He said "Are you Jewish?"

I said "Yes, What is it you want?"

"I want to talk to you."

I said "I have to go to a court sitting; you will have to come back later."

He said "Just to make sure, can I come back?"

I said "Yes". I said "We are finished about 1 o'clock and I will be coming out at about quarter past one and you can see me then. He had a wife and two children, he escaped from a camp at the Czech border and walked for miles and finally came to Germany. There he got back his factory, making ornaments, vases for flowers, everything. I said "What are you telling me that for?"

He said "My wife and children are there."

I said "What is it you want me to do?"

"Can you give me a certificate or permission."

I said "I can't give you that."

He said "Oh yes you can, if you sign this and this from the government or the court it will pass."

So I said if it will help you, write it out and I will sign it.

"Yes, well I have done it already. Here you are."

Tape 4: 40 minutes 40 seconds

I said "What do you want me to do?"

He said "You sign."

I signed and I did this and this and this.

"Thank you very much."

I forgot all about it. The war was finished. We were in Lubeck and we were sitting there and the door opens, and a fellow is standing there with a hat.

He says "Mr Henderson."

I said "Yes."

"I want to see you."

I said "You want to see me?" I said "excuse me."

He brought a beautiful vase.

He said "You helped me, and with your permission I got my wife out of their clutches and removed back when I got my factory back. I will show you what I am producing."

He said "Do you live in England?"

I said "Yes."

"When are you going back?"

I said "I am going back next week."

"Now, here is my name, my address. When you go home and you become a single person again."

I said "I am not single, I am married."

"Oh marvellous. You will start a business or anything ring me, write to me, I will give you my goods and we can make an export and we will sell them in England."

I said "That is really nice of you." I said "But I don't know." I said "But you forget one thing, I am only a soldier who doesn't get much money, I can't buy your goods, I haven't got the money."

"You order what you like, and it will be forwarded to you, and if you pay me in six months or twelve months it makes no difference."

I said "I can't do that." I said "First I have to get the customers, then I have to get transport. When I come home all that I have got is a soldier's pay for so and so how many months that is all. I have to create my...."

I said "But I will take it and I will see if I find people who are interested in England."

It was a beautiful vase. Really, it was thin like, ahhh, everybody looked at it and said beautiful. How do I get it home? I couldn't get it home. It would have been broken before I got it home, in my shmatte case there. It was impossible.

I said "The best thing is, when you are ready, come to Britain and we will see."

I am very sorry, I have never seen the man again, I could have made a fortune with beautiful ornaments and beautiful things. Beshert is beshert.

RL: How did you get on with the other officers in the British army when you were a translator? How did you get on with them?

FH: Not very good, not very good. They were arrogant, and there is a bye law for the British army. No foreigner is allowed to be in the Royal Navy, Royal Signals, no

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foreigner ... before when Queen Victoria died, another king came, but the other one' now who was it, in 1914, one of the brother's of the king's was not of British origin. She was not allowed, I don't know how it was, I can't remember exactly how it was. He did not come under King's Orders. I thought you knew that.

RL: What did it mean for you though, I mean ... How did you?

FH: I was, I was posted by demand for translator in the Royal Signals, and I was in Plon, that is a town not far from Hamburg, and I was translating for the officer, and there was a telephone call, "Who is doing your translating?"

"You are not allowed to have him."

He said "He is nothing doing wrong, he is a good man! I am very satisfied."

"Yes, but army regulation. No foreigner, yes. He said "then you send me another one."

So, a check came. I thought you knew that, you won't see anybody in the Royal Navy or the Royal Signals of foreign origin. Strictly no, so I had to pack my things and go back, it was closer to another one, and that is how I came to be at court.

RL: And when did you come back to England?

FH: Ahh, when did you come back? I can't say for sure, 1946, yes beginning of 46, that's right, the beginning of 46, and I was posted to the prisoner of war camp in Manchester opposite the biscuit factory in Crumpsall, ya.

RL: And what were you doing?

FH: I had 320 German prisoners, so I did translation and looked after them and ...

RL: How long did you do that for?

FH: Until May 1946.

RL: You mentioned that you were already married. You have not told me anything about how you met your wife, or how all that came about.

FH: As far as it concerns me?

RL: How did you meet her?

FH: Well, when I was stationed in the Kershaw House, we were sitting on the same table, and we had a cup of tea, and we talked and I said to her "Would you like to come with me and have a cup of tea in town" because she had to go there and I had to go to Cheetham Hill.

She said "Yes."

Tape 4: 50 minutes 35 seconds

“The only trouble is” I said “I don’t have the money to go by bus, I have to walk.”
”Oh” she said “I can’t walk as far as that.”

“Sorry, thank you.”

That was the first time. So we met again a fortnight later.

I said “Where are you off to?”

“The same, I am going back.”

I said “Today I have the bus fair.”

So we went to, what’s it called, the tea, you don’t know the area, the tea house ...

RL: Lyons?

FH: Yes, Lyons Corner House, at Lyons Corner House we had a cup of tea, I could spare tuppence, so we had for two pennies each a cup of tea, and that is how it started, and we met again and we met again ...

RL: Where was she from?

FH: Wien, Vienna.

RL: And her name?

FH: So ...

RL: What was her name?

FH: Roth, Dorothea Roth.

RL: And when did you marry?

FH: 27th November 1940. I said to her “I am going to marry you, but I have nothing.”
And she said “And I am going to marry you and I have nothing.”

I said “I am going back to the army.”

“Yes I know.”

So, I got her a job in town, in Salisbury’s, she worked there and she got a married allowance and we lived in Cheetham Hill Road, in, and every so often she came over to Bradford while I was still there, and then I moved abroad and she couldn’t come.

RL: Where did you marry?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Where did you marry?

Tape 4: 53 minutes 32 seconds

FH: That is a problem in itself. I went to Rabbi Altman have you heard about him. He said "Yes, I will marry you, but I can't do it in the Great Synagogue, I have got a facility in my front room for a chupah and I will get the Yeshiva boys to make a minyan and we will make a wedding in my front room."

I had nobody, so, we got married in the afternoon and we had a cup of tea and cake, and that was our marriage. And after 56 years she died ...

RL: Did you go away after you were married? Did you manage to have a little holiday or anything?

FH: I was in the army.

RL: You went straight back to the army?

FH: I had three days leave. There was nothing there when it happened. So then I got seven days leave after so many months, and in 1946 in May, the officer gave me all my papers and said "Goodbye we don't want to see you any more." And I came home and that was the best joke, I rang the firm where I worked in 1940 and he said "When did you come home?"

I said "This morning."

He said "This morning, it is Sunday today."

I said "Yes, and tomorrow is Monday."

I said to her "I want to call back in the next week."

"Next week! You will be here tomorrow morning!"

I said "I only came home today."

"Good, you are home now."

So I said "Right"

So at quarter to eight I was back in the factory, from one day army to the next day.

RL: And how long did you stay there?

FH: How long? Not long? Because the wife needed money and we had three children and there was nothing I could do, I asked my boss, I need more money. I said "I am sorry, it is not enough." I said "I will do anything you want but I need more money."

"No" I said "My wife wants to buy a chicken for Shabbos.

"Well ... the others earn ... "

I said "I am not interested, I will work any hours you want."

"I can't give you more than six pounds ten shillings."

I said "okay"

So I came home and the wife said "We have to buy this, we have to buy clothing, we have to buy that, blah, blah, blah, blah."

I said "You need 7 shillings bus fare everyday."

"Ya"

So after five weeks I said to the boss I said to the boss "I am sorry, I am leaving you."

Tape 4: 57 minutes 44 seconds

“What?”

I said “Yes, £6 10 shillings is not enough.”

He said “Henderson blah blah blah ...”

So I took my tools and said “Goodbye”

And my wife said “You said ‘goodbye’ and ...”

I said “And ... I will look for another job.”

She said “But in the meantime we have no wages.”

I said “Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait ... I still have got some things ...”

So, to make it short, on Monday morning, I walked to town. And I met a friend, “Where are you going?”

“I am going to look for a job.”

“What job?”

I said “Any job, as long as it brings me money.”

He said “Come with me.”

I said “Eric, now look, we are ...”

“Come with me.”

So he turned round, we went to his office in Market Street and ?????, and there was a room like this and in the middle stood a suitcase.

“Open the suitcase.”

It was full of toys. “I give you all the book, go and sell. If you don’t sell, you are not good enough.”

I said “Where can I go?”

“Wherever you want, go and sell.”

“Is there anybody else doing it?”

“No, you are the only one, it is up to you to keep it.”

I said “And what will I get?”

“I will give you 7 ½ %. So if you sell £100, £7 10sh is yours. And because it is you and we know each other I will pay you in advance.”

I took the suitcase and I went home, I said to the wife “I have got a job.”

“Oh, aye, yes ...”

“I am a traveller.”

She said “Where are you travelling?”

“Don’t forget we are here”

“Oh, yes, marvellous.”

“Wait and see.”

I explained to her and she said, “You are not a traveller.”

In the afternoon I went to Radcliffe, just to try out, because Manchester he did himself.

I sold a little bit in Radcliffe and apart from, I sold around about for £36, £36, I sold for £36. The next morning I went to Leeds, I came home, and sold for £80. The next day I sold to Bradford also for £80, but, every time I came home at half past ten at night, the wife was ... I said “I can’t, I do my best ...” And from July, the end of June until Christmas I sold for £10,000.

RL: Now ...

FH: I worked bloomin hard.

RL: So, this tape is about to end so we will just stop here.

FH: Pardon?

TAPE 5

RL: This is the interview with Frank Henderson and it is tape 5.

So you were saying how up to Christmas you actually sold ...

FH: Up to Christmas ...

RL: What happened after Christmas?

FH: The firm changed their minds and said we can't give you any more 7 ½%, we will reduce it now to 5%. I said I don't agree to that, How is that?"

"Well, we are the boss. You have done very good."

I said "Well then leave it at that."

"No, we can't afford."

I said "Ok, I will see what I can do."

So, I got hold of a second firm, and I said to them "With your 5%, just to inform you that I have a second firm who is interested to business with me."

He said "I thought we were friends?"

I said "Yes, well, you thought wrong. You cut it from 7½% to 5%. Then I found out that the firm, is playing poker every night, and within three months from that date the firm went mechullah, bankrupt. I said "No wonder you wanted 5%." So there I stood, so a friend of mine said "Don't worry about it, go on your own account." Go and get an order book and do this and that. So I started on my own, and slowly but surely I built up a firm, and I sold toys, and I sold leather goods, and one of the firms who sold me leather goods rang me that I should come out, they have got a proposition. So I hopped in the car and went out to the firm and they said "Yes, we have got a wall of cases standing here, they are slightly faulty, do you want them?"

I said, "Let's have a look."

So I looked at them, a few, not much wrong with them, most I could repair myself.

I said "Yes, how much?"

"Ten shillings."

I said "No, that's too dear, sorry." I said "I will give you five bob for it."

"No, five bob."

So we settled on seven shillings. So I bought 600 cases for seven shillings each. They came and I started unloading them in front of my office on Heywood Street, and while I was unloading them a car stopped behind me and a fellow got out. "What are you doing with those cases?"

I said "Who are you?"

Tape 5: 4 minutes 17 seconds

“Well, we sell them.”

I said “Good.” I said “Can I offer you any?”

“You can offer it ...”

“Yes, we will take some.”

So before I even started unloading them properly I had sold about 100 cases. So from then on I got the appetite for luggage and the 600 cases were sold within a fortnight. And from then on, step by step by step, and then I was standing in Market Street, it was raining, I said “Do I take a taxi or ?” And in front of me was a traffic warden, and she had a leather shoulder bag, no she had all her books and things in her hand and was sheltering from the rain.

I said “Have you not got a bag or anything?”

She said “Who are you?”

I said “Well, I make the bags. You should have a bag.”

“I should, but I haven't.”

They are too greedy.

So I went home, I said to my friend “A piece of leather.” So we sewed up a bag, front and back and sides, that is all, finished, and a lock, so I took my car and went to the superintendent who was doing the buying. I said “I am sorry to trouble you.”

He said “Yes.”

I said “Your traffic warden doesn't know what to do with his books etc. It is all getting wet.”

He said “So.”

I said “Look, I have made a bag.”

“Oh, have you!”

I said “That poor woman without, all your traffic wardens need a bag where to put it in.”

He said “Well, if you say so.”

I said “I say so and I am sure I am right.”

“When can we have them?”

I said “How many do you want?”

“I will take 300.”

I said “Seven days.”

He said “Good, here is the order.”

He didn't even ask how much it was.

So I told him it was so and so much.

“Oh, ok” he said.

I came home and we are sitting down for dinner and the telephone rings. It was the superintendent of the Birmingham Police. “The bag you offered my colleague in Manchester, can you let me have some?”

I said “Sure.”

That was in 1970 and I am still supplying, I am still supplying, yes, I am still supplying the case and they are very happy and content and repeat, so you see ...

RL: Did you have people working for you?

Tape 5: 8 minutes 20 seconds

FH: Yes.

RL: How many people?

FH: None, they are not in my house, they are all around the country. No, I can't do that ...

RL: Did you ever have them making up in a factory? Making up in one place?

FH: Yes, it didn't work, they would come, they don't come, so I made a different, I have got firms who work for me.

RL: And you give them orders?

FH: I get the orders, I give him the orders, I draw it up or anything and within fourteen days I have got the goods.

RL: Are you still doing that now?

FH: Yes ...

RL: You are still doing that now.

FH: Yes ...

RL: Yes .. Did you .. Has your business got a name?

FH: Henderson and Company.

RL: And on the family side, you said you have three children, when were they born?

FH: My son was born 1st February 1942.

RL: Who was that?

FH: My daughter was born 10th June 1943. My third daughter, she was born 20th June 1944. That is the lot.

RL: And their names?

FH: George Lesley Henderson, Ruth Hannah Martha Henderson and number three is Judith Eileen Abbey

RL: Where did they go to school?

Tape 5: 10 minutes 48 seconds

FH: In Manchester.

RL: Which ones?

FH: Jewish School ... Temple School, Prestwich Girls School, Scholes Lane, on the corner there.

Voice in background: Jewish Day School?

FH: Pardon?

Voice in background: Jewish Day School was it?

FH: Yes, I think so.

RL: Where were you living? Where did you live from the point of being married onwards.

FH: I lived in Albert Avenue, Prestwich.

RL: For how long?

FH: 1940 ... 1940 ... just a minute ... 1953, until 1981.

RL: Where did you live before that?

FH: In Chiselhurst Street. I must tell you a little story. I was in the army and when we got married the wife, I got her an empty house, an empty house in which formerly the Manchester Communal Rabbi lived, and the Rebbetzen promised me that if I take the house there would be no termination until the war was over, so the wife was safe in that house, so I could go back to the army and nothing would happen. So we lived in that house and one day a few months before the war had finished I was informed by the Rebbetzin, by the agent, "I am very sorry, the house has been sold, you have to move."

So I said "I do not have to move, it was agreed that we would stay until ..."

"Yes, but that has been altered and I am very sorry." The agent said "You have to leave Mr Henderson."

So the wife wrote me a letter, I was near Hamburg and I said to my major "I have to go home for a week, my wife is on the street with three kids." I said "They gave her a notice and she doesn't know where to go." I said "I can't have that."

I said "I will be back in seven days, I promise you."

So I hopped over and went to Estate Agents, they laughed at me, everybody looks for a house Mr Henderson, I am very sorry, you can't have one. There aren't any houses. So I said "Well I need a house for my wife and three kids."

Tape 5: 14 minutes 50 seconds

"Yes, but you can't get one."

I said "Where do they live?"

"They have to go into a shelter."

I said "You are the clerk here." This was at the town hall.

"I am very sorry, we have no houses to give. Look at the queue here, they all want a house." So I stood outside Albert Square and I looked at that town hall business and I said "Wait a minute, there must be a help." So I walked in again to the town hall, past the receptionist who was shouting at me, the more he was shouting the more I ran upstairs, and there was a door opened "What is going on here?"

I said "I don't know who you are."

He said "I am the Lord Mayor."

I said "I have just to come for you." I said "Can I come in for a minute?"

He said "Sure, come in."

I said "I am on seven days leave because my wife has to leave the house and she is on the street with three children, and I am not going back sir unless my wife has got a settled house."

"Ah, he said, you are a Jewish boy, aren't you?"

I said "Yes. But that has nothing to do with it."

"Oh yes, yes, yes. That has got something to do with it. Do you know Cheetham Hill?"

I said "I know Cheetham Hill."

"Go back to the housing department and tell the clerk he shall give you a house in Cheetham Hill."

I said "Would it not be better if you would ring him?"

"Ah well, you know the game ..."

I said "I think so."

So he lifted up the receiver and he said "Lord Mayor speaking. I have sent a soldier over, give him a house in Cheetham Hill in Chiselhurst Street. All right. Ya, ya. I said Alright? Ya."

So I went back, he said "You have got a bloody chutzpah."

I said "I don't care what you think of me, can I have the keys please?"

He had to give me the keys and let us know. The rent is so and so much.

I said "Don't worry about the rent. You will get the money."

So, I went back, and I said to the wife "Put your coat on. Come on."

So we walked up to Chiselhurst Street that is round the corner to Green Hill Picture House if you know where that is. Esmond Road, ya. The only thing which was wrong with the house, it had gas, no electricity. I said "Right, it is better than nothing, I can't say no. We have to take it." So I said "Get ready, we are moving in, finished." And I had another three days leave and before you know what was what we were settled in that house and paid our rent and made enquiries about electricity supply. So I said "Leave it

until I come home, what can we do?" So I came back to the army and my major said to me "Well?"

I said "There is nothing to say well."

"Well, did you get a house?"

I said "Yes."

Tape 5: 19 minutes 16 seconds

"You didn't!"

I said "I got a house, yes."

"Where?"

"In Manchester. There was a Jewish department."

He said "If I catch you telling any of the boys that you got a house I kill you."

I said "Well, what is it?"

"You don't know what you've got! There aren't any houses. Nobody builds any houses. Nothing. You've got a house, you are lucky."

Well, that was it.

And then in 1953 we moved to Albert Avenue, there, finished.

RL: And where did you go in 1981?

FH: Ah, I, in 1981 was every, our neighbour on the left, and our neighbour opposite us, they were a transporter, big wagons and those big wagons were always parked opposite our house, on the left side and on the right side, I didn't like that. The smell from the diesel, so I told him, I said "Can't you park it somewhere else?"

"I am sorry but I will park it where I like."

Then there is only one solution, so we had a, we had a doctor, he said "I am going to quit Prestwich Hospital and I am moving to London. I said "What will happen to the house?"

"I am going to sell it."

I said "How much?"

"To you, oh, £2,000."

I said "No, it's too dear, no."

"Well, how much?"

I said "I will give you £1,500 for it."

"Make it £1,600"

I said "Shake hands on it."

So I bought that house for £1,600, I had £20 repair on it.

RL: Where was it?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Where was it?

FH: Albert Avenue.

RL: Ah, that was the Albert Avenue, right, right ...

FH: And we lived there for 30 years ...

RL: And where did you move after that?

Tape 5: 22 minutes 26 seconds

FH: Now ...

RL: Here, you came here? Moor End?

FH: Yes.

RL: Right, okay. And what did your children do after school?

FH: Pardon?

RL: When they left school ...

FH: Ruth went to Lewis's to assist ... they all got a job.

RL: Judy ...

FH: They all got a job ...

RL: What kind of work?

FH: Clerical work.

RL: And George?

FH: George was a special case. I asked my son "What would you like to do when you are leaving school?"

"I don't know!"

"Now come on you must have some idea."

"I don't know."

So one day I had the good fortune to meet an old friend of mine called Halberstadt. Do you know him?

So I said "Jonas, I have got to ask you a question."

"Nu."

"Could you do with an apprentice?"

"What do you mean 'could I do with an apprentice?'"

I said "Yes, it is always a question."

He said "Is it your son?"

I said "Exactly."

“Well, your son I will take.

“Good, I will send him down there tomorrow. Okay?”

“Ask him?”

“No,” I said “I will talk to him.”

So I told my son “You are starting tomorrow to be a kosher butcher.”

I said “Do your best.”

Tape 5: 24 minutes 46 seconds

So he started, and four weeks later I meet Halberstadt, he said “Frank, he will never make a kosher butcher. You are wasting your time. I will employ him for this and for that, but he is not a kosher butcher.”

I said “Wait.”

“No, no. I will give him another two weeks and then I will send him home.”

So my son comes home and I said “George, let’s have a talk man to man.”

I said “If you pull your weight and you do a proper job in Halberstadt and you stop playing about I promise you when the time of your apprenticeship is over I will buy you a shop and put you up in business.”

“You would?”

I said “Your mother is my witness.”

“Oh, that is different, oh, ok.”

So after two weeks I met Halberstadt, and he said “You are a magician Henderson.”

I said “Why am I a magician?”

“Your son, it’s magic, everything goes, everything works, everything is marvellous, no complaints, nothing.”

I said “Are you finishing the two weeks?”

“No, no, no, no, no. I am quite happy with him. He will make a kosher butcher.”

I said “Will you see to it?”

“Of course.”

So the four years have finished and he is the left hand of Halberstadt, anything what’s going on, and then my son comes to me and he said “It is going alright.” And at that very moment the telephone rings and Dayan, what’s his name from the Beth Din rings, Mr Henderson, I would like you to call here, I want to talk to you. So I got in the car and went to the Beth Din. I said “What is so important that I must come.” Mr Henderson, “You have a son in Halberstadt.”

“That I know.”

“Well, we are very happy with him, no complaints, Halberstadt is happy with him, so we want to make you a proposition. There is a shop in Bury and that shop is turning treife goods.I want your son to take over, to pay the man and throw him out.”

“Ah” I said “And then?”

“Then he can open a butcher shop there.”

I said “Can he?”

“Yes, why not?”

“He can’t, you haven’t given him the ... what do you call it ... the certificate yet, and without that ...”

“Oh, he will get it.”

I said, "Dayan ... " what's his name ... ?

RL: Golditch?

FH: Golditch. I said "On an empty promise I can do nothing. If I have got it in my hand, that is a different matter, but just on your word, G-d forbid something happens to

Tape 5: 29 minutes 16 seconds

you ..."

"So you want the

Mr Margolies, write out the things for George Henderson."

"Right will be done"

So I said "I will call this afternoon."

He said "Yes, call this afternoon."

The next day George has to tell his boss that he is leaving.

"That is your father, isn't it."

"Well ..."

I said "The time has come that George has to be on his own. What is wrong with that?"

I said "He won't take any business away from you. He goes to Bury."

"You and I have finished, never talk to me again, bye."

We were ".....Wouldn't talk to me any more, I am a very bad fellow."

So I said "Be reasonable."

So George opened a business there. Then after a while the business wasn't so good, he went to Bury New Road, and he has been there since. Yes ...

RL: Did you belong to any clubs or organisations in Manchester?

FH: I didn't belong to any organisations. In winter, at Christmas, we parade, all soldiers at Heathlands, there is a military parade, I take part in that.

RL: Is that part of AJEX?

FH: AJEX, that's right.

RL: Are you a member of that?

FH: No, I am not a member, no, no, it is too much.

RL: Which synagogue did you join?

FH: Crumpsall, I am a member there and I am a member of the choir there.

RL: You sing in the choir?

FH: Yes, I have to earn a living (laughs).

RL: Were you involved in any other thing in the Shul?

FH: No.

RL: Just the choir.

Tape 5: 32 minutes 16 seconds

FH: That's enough.

RL: That's enough. Right. Are you involved in anything else?

FH: No.

RL: In the community or in the wider community?

FH: Well, I help people to get, people who were from Austria or Germany to get their pension.

RL: How did you start doing that?

FH: How? Well, I was employed in a lawyer's office in Germany so I know all the tricks and things, so one day in 1965 a woman came, a woman said to me "You know I am really in a mess, I am now ready, I want my restitution and things and I have the forms to fill out, it is impossible. It is double dutch to me."

I said "If I can help you, come and see me."

"What do you know?"

"Well, let me have a look at your forms, maybe I can help you."

She came at 2 o'clock and at 4 o'clock she left and she said "Here is £5 for your effort."

Marvellous, if I had known that would exist. I said "You get it all wrong with them. I am not taking £5, I want £10." I said "I worked for you for 2 hours, all this work." I said "Pay up, you will get your pension" I said "You can tell all your people."

And then I got to know that the children's allowance that the women, that the Jewish refugees can apply for children's allowance for so and so much. So I wrote an article in the AJR paper, the telephone didn't stop ringing. And the wife complained and now you've had it. So from 1965 to tomorrow afternoon I must have helped about 500 people to get what is their right by law, and that's it.

RL: Have you been involved in any very difficult cases?

FH: Oh yes, I had to go to, I had to go to Germany to court for some people. I will tell you a case, there was, how shall I say, there was a man and a woman, just a minute, put it in the right perspective. The man died, the father died, there was a woman who came one night to our house, in Albert Avenue. She stood in front of the house crying.

I said "What's the matter?"

She said “Look at that Mr Henderson, you are the only one who can help me.”

The German Court has ordered her by law to pay back the money her husband received from Germany under false pretences that means the parents were of Polish origin and they had no right to claim from Germany. Would I take the case on? I said “Yes, why not?” So she was sitting there, I couldn’t sleep that night, I got up in the night and I wrote down what came into my mind. The next morning I posted a letter to Hamburg Court,

Tape 5: 37 minutes 20 seconds

proceedings of so and so and so, and I wrote to them that “we are quite willing to pay back the money provided on the other hand you give back the life of the parents who had the business for which you have taken them by sending them to Auschwitz.” Back came a letter from the President of the Court, directly to Mr Henderson. “Mr Henderson, be reasonable, we are dealing with a law, the law says you cannot pay to people ...”

So I said “Herr President, you are right that the law says, Ya.” I said “Where does the law say that you killed people in Auschwitz?”

“That is a different matter.”

I said “No, that is the cause of the whole matter.” I said “You had no right to touch that man’s life, neither the woman’s life.” I said “You took that.” I said “If you give back the life that you took, we will pay back the money they received for restitution.”

“We can’t, how can we?”

I said “Then the whole matter is settled.”

“No, we are going to have a meeting here in Hamburg Court.”

I said “You do that. We will be there, at your expense.”

“What do you mean?”

“If we have to come in front of Hamburg Court it will be at the expense of Hamburg Law.”

“Mr Henderson, you are very tough.”

“I am very sorry, right is right, and wrong is wrong. You are a Judge, I don’t need to tell you. You have no right with what you are doing.”

“Oh well Mr Henderson, I will send you an invitation for the case.”

So, I got a demand to appear in front of things. I said “I will tell you different”

So I know a lawyer in Hamburg, so I said “Jack, will you represent me?”

“Sure.”

I said “Under one condition.”

He said “Yes?”

“You will stand in front of the Judge and say “Life back from so and so and so and so. Money back in return. No life, no money.”

“Henderson ...”

I said “Yes, if you don’t want to do it, I will come, I will do it myself.”

“On your responsibility.”

I said “Of course on my responsibility.”

“Well it has never been like that.”

I said “What the bloody right have the Germans got to touch lives.

So the case starts. “Who is representing Henderson?”

“Ah, yes.”

“Is Mr Henderson not here?”

“No, he couldn’t come.”

“Couldn’t he?”

“No.”

“So, what are we going to do with the case?”

Tape 5: 41 minutes 10 seconds

He said “There is a short way to do it. On the instruction of Mr Henderson we will pay back the money provided you return back the life of Mr and Mrs so and so, and the business.”

“Well we can return the business, we cannot return the life.”

“Well, he can’t return the money.”

So, in Germany you have got three Judges sitting on the bench, not just one, so all three were pushing together. “Case dismissed.”

So he comes on the telephone “Frank.”

I said “Yes, what is it?”

“You lost the case.”

“Don’t be silly I said.”

“Ya, you lost the case with me, I won’t be able to do that again.”

I said “What is it?”

He said “You won.”

I said “I won, I didn’t expect anything else.”

And she was happy ...

RL: When did you first revisit Germany?

FH: Ah, I got an invitation from the Lord Mayor of Halle. I will have to look it up, I have been there in 1992 and I have been there again ...

RL: How did you feel going back?

FH: How did I feel? I didn’t talk to any Germans. I only, I went, I visited Germany, I didn’t visit the Germans, and I, any German who approached me, I said “Pardon, I don’t speak German.” To me they are dead. It is all very well to say it was my father or my grandfather but not me, it is a very difficult decision, because he is alive after all. “Am I responsible for what my father did?”

“Ya, well it is a very difficult question.”

RL: What made you decide to go back to accept the invitation?

FH: There was a general invitation from the Lord Mayor. He, we, we had a meeting at the cemetery and a meeting at the synagogue, what was left of the synagogue. We were about eighty or ninety people from all over the world came. Ya, it was, it was very nice, but we didn’t talk to Germans, we had dinner in a restaurant and there were several Germans trying to talk to us, we just looked at them as though they were coming out from

another world. There was no conversation or anything. No, no, no, no ... and then I had to help somebody and I went again with that person, I was older and not in front of the Court and we just settled the matter and went back home. That is how it is, that is how it was.

RL: How would you class yourself in terms as nationality?

Tape 5: 45 minutes 48 seconds

FH: What was that?"

RL: How would you describe yourself in terms of nationality?

FH: Ah, well, after all these years I am more British than some other British people. I mean, I pay my taxes, I do my duty, I help people, it is all done under being a British subject. I have been in front of a court here and they deal with the matter. There was once I applied for naturalisation and I had to appear in front of three judges, and one of them said "Mr Henderson, you have been interned."

"Yes."

"Tell me why were you interned?"

I said "In all fairness sir, would you please tell me why I was interned?"

He said "Thank you very much Mr Henderson, granted."

He knew, bloody stupid, but you can't say that we live back 100 years or anything, no, that is finished, you see if there would be a war on and I would have to be called to put on a uniform again, I would. I have no obligation to Germany, nothing. And I don't think that any one of my compatriots ... they are all happy here.

RL: Do you feel different to the British in any way?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Do you feel different to the British in any way?

FH: Not any more, not any more ... no.

RL: Did you used to?

FH: Yes, yes ... of course, naturally ...

RL: In what way?

FH: The way they eat, the way they go on holidays. If, you see, when you go on a Sunday to Southport, you sit down there, or somewhere else, and people talk to you ... out of the blue, "Lovely day, isn't it." (laughs) so I like that. And then you go into a restaurant or you eat out, I said "Make it with this or that" and they say "Sure" and they oblige you with food. No, no, no, no, no, I wouldn't change it now for anything.

RL: Do you think you have any kind of German Jewish identity?

FH: I don't think so, no. You see the best is, when I go to Shul on a Shabbos, although I am in the choir, I will be called up. Why? More or less, I am the only Levy in the Shul ... ah, Henderson, yes. So people know me, to go somewhere else, no ... no, no, no ... that is, that is a bit too late for anything, at my age, being 88, I don't think that the

Tape 5: 51 minutes 20 seconds

Germans could impress me with anything. I have got a school teacher, in South Manchester, not in South Manchester, in South Halle, who writes to me quite often, and, I accept his little ... thank you very much, I don't go into conversation, he would love that he should come over but, when Fackenheim was here, we all went to Germany and he spoke for about 15 minutes and that school teacher then replied in German. So I said to him, "Would it not be possible to reply in English?"

"Mr Henderson, why not speak in German?"

I said "That was a long time ago. I said it is not for us any more." I said "If you want us to cooperate, we are all British subjects. And I said and I would ask you to respect that." So Fackenheim said, "Frank, leave him alone." Ya.

RL: Is there anything at all that you miss about the way of life that you remember in Germany compared to the way of life here.

FH: I don't miss anything, no ... no, no, no ... What is there in Germany? Berlin is a nice town, there is no doubt about it ... no ...

RL: I am thinking in terms of culture or customs, things that maybe happened there but don't happen here, that sort of thing ...

FH: We have taken the culture from Germany. All the big and great poets and musicians are physicians and chemists all have left. There is no Einstein any more. Do you know what happened to Einstein? Do you know who I am talking about?

RL: Yes ... yes ...

FH: Einstein came from Germany to England and stood on the platform, at Oxford, he was on the way to America, with all his knowledge the British ignored him. Can you tell me why? No ... and that is the same thing ...

RL: Have your experiences affected you in terms of your religious belief? You know, what happened, has it affected your religious feeling?

FH: What do you mean?

RL: What happened during the war? What happened to your parents? You know ... did it affect you religiously in any way.

FH: No, no, no, no, no, no ... Who am I? Am I such a wise man to criticise? Beshert is beshert, what can you do? It could have been better. What can you do? That was G-d's will, terrible as it is, but heaven knows why, that I can't, that I cannot answer ...

RL: Has your level of observance altered from Germany to England?

Tape 5: 56 minutes 10 seconds

FH: Pardon.

RL: Has your level of observance altered from Germany to England?

FH: No ... no, no, no, no, no ... When I was a boy of 11 years old I went every Friday night to Shul, so far, that the Rabbi gave me a present for attending Shul. I am going to Shul here, so what is the difference? No difference.

RL: Have you visited Israel?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Have you visited Israel?

FH: Oh yes, more than once, yes, very nice. My daughter got married in Israel.

RL: This tape is about to end so I think we will just finish off on the next tape, ok.

TAPE 6

This is the interview with Frank Henderson and it is tape 6.

So, I was just asking you about Israel. How do you feel towards Israel?

FH: I feel, I am very proud for Israel. I wish I could live in Israel, but if I live in Israel I have no family. The kids are all in England. At my age it won't work.

RL: How secure do you feel in England?

FH: You what?

RL: How secure, how safe, do you feel in England?

FH: Absolutely. What have I got to worry about? In case an idiot comes and kills me?

RL: Have you ever experienced any anti-semitism here?

FH: No ... I don't think so ... I don't think so ... except in the army, a few remarks, but we just answered back. No, I wouldn't say so. No ...

RL: And you know you mentioned the AJR, when did you join the AJR?

FH: Long, long ago ... About ten, twenty years ago.

Tape 6: 2 minutes 18 seconds

RL: And do you attend any of their meetings?

FH: Here, in Manchester, yet, yes I go to the meetings, yes. I can't go to London.

RL: No ...

FH: I have, some of the stories in the AJR, in the paper, that man is a genius. [What is his name ... he is fantastic, where he takes it from is fantastic, so I, I usually keep all the papers, I have got about twenty left ... yes ... yes ...

RL: Over the years, who made up your social circle who did you feel most comfortable being friendly with, what kind of person?

FH: I have good friends, and we come together ...

RL: Are they refugees also or are they English born?

FH: They are English born and they are refugees, and some are from Poland and other places ...

RL: mmm

FH: That is finished that we select who is who, and we are very happy when we come together, we talk and we have a drink, and we go together and we go to meetings and things. No, no, no, no ... all that you forget. Of course there are things when people want to be amongst them, at a Bar Mitzvah and or anything, that is a different matter, and if necessary I hop in my car and go to Birmingham to see my family. It makes no difference to me.

RL: How did you find you were received by the English Jewish community? How do you feel? How did you get on in your early days?

FH: You what?

RL: How were you received by the English Jewish community? How did you get on with them your early married years.

FH: Very awkward, very awkward. They made a point of letting me know, who I am, where I came from, I am afraid it wasn't very nice but we got over it. Now, everything is ...

RL: How long did it take to become accepted?

Tape 6: 5 minutes 44 seconds

FH: How ... it just went together, it happened. We need to talk and things, at weddings, on a Yom Tov, in Shul, we talked, we came together. [Laughter]

RL: Would you say in the early years it was difficult?

FH: Naturally, naturally, you see we were strangers to them, and I don't blame them, they were very careful. Can we invite him? Can we not invite him? And so on, so ... we bought a bunch of flowers, and went there and in half an hour you were warm.

RL: Who did your children marry and what grandchildren do you have?

FH: My children married, English, my one daughter married a boy from Glasgow, in Israel, and the other one married a Manchester girl, and the other one made a mess of it, married a guy, what can you do, they got divorced now, that happens in all families. Not in every family but it happens in most families ..

RL: What grandchildren do you have?

FH: Ahhhh, hohoho! help me. I have got, from George I have got two grandchildren. And the girl has got now, one child and is expecting her second child. The boy is not married. And then comes Ruth in London. She has got two, two children and they have got, Peter has got four kids, that is my grandson, so that is 4 great grandchildren, I must have about 15 great grandchildren, and I have got 2,4 about seven grandchildren ... no, it takes too long, that and that is ... We will add to them by 8 September, another one

RL: Where are your children living? George is in Manchester ...

FH: George was Manchester, and Judy is in Manchester and Ruth is in London.

RL: And your grandchildren?

FH: In London and in Bedford, Tony is in London, yes, that is about it ...

RL: Were your children ever interested in your experiences? In your story ...

FH: No, no, they were not. They know where I come from and they know what is what but they have got their own life to live and their own what is going on in their own families. I can't expect them to be interested. And I will tell you something, quite honestly, I hope they don't bother their children with it, they don't need to know that. Do you want to tell me that your grandparents were poisoned and burned in Auschwitz? It is not a nice thing to discuss altogether. That is how it is.

RL: Is there anything else that you would like to add? Anything that you might have missed out?

Tape 6: 11 minutes 10 seconds

FH: I don't think we have missed anything out. I have told you all my adventures.

RL: Is there any message that you would like to finish with?

FH: Pardon?

RL: Any message that you would like to finish with?

FH: Message ... Let us hope it will never happen again. Ya ... that we shall never forget it ever, Ya ...

RL: Thank you.

FH: That's it, yes?

RL: So who are they?

FH: My parents.

RL: And their names?

FH: Yaakov Rene Hirschfeld, Hermine Rose.

RL: And where was it taken?

FH: In Halle.

RL: And when?

FH: It was taken in 1935

Rolf Hirschfeld, Friedrich Hirschfeld, Ludwig Hirschfeld.

RL: Taken?

FH: Taken in the park of the town of Halle an der Saale in the year 1920, just a minute, in 1938

In remembrance of the Bar Mitzvah of Friedrich Hirschfeld on the 23rd March 1929. presented at a ceremony by Rabbiner Dr Albert Karlburg.

RL: And the book is? What is it?

FH: It is a Chumash, that is the five books of Moses.

Tape 6: 14 minutes 32 seconds

This is my German passport showing the J and this is to show the passport with my photo and signature and particulars of my person, valid in, all over Europe and, that is it ...

RL: Do you remember what was on this page? This was your entry VISA.

FH: It only shows permission granted to travel and to enter foreign countries ...

RL: And to enter United Kingdom ...

FH: And in particular United Kingdom.

This is to show that my brother and I who were, whom I visited in 19 ... errr, I am sorry, can you do it again.

This is to show myself in uniform being on leave and visiting my brother in Amsterdam in the year 1944.

RL: And your brother's name?

FH: My brother's name is Joachim Wolfgang Hirschfeld, and I am Sergeant Frank Henderson.

This is our wedding photo, of Dorothy and Frank Henderson. On 27th November 1940 in Manchester.

This is a photo of the wedding of George and Sharon in 1970 in Manchester.

This is a photo of Eric and Ruth at the wedding in 1973.

RL: And the surname? Their surnames?

FH: ... just a minute ... Finestone.

These are the photos of Warren and Charlotte Henderson taken in the year 2000.

RL: And the place?

FH: Manchester ... Prestwich

This is the family of Ruth and Eric Finestone, taken approximately in the year 2000 in London.