

IMPORTANT

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Interview Transcript Title Page

Collection title:	AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive
Ref. no:	73

Interviewee Surname:	Brodie
Forename:	Marga
Interviewee Sex:	Female
Interviewee DOB:	12 July 1924
Interviewee POB:	Wettesingen, Germany

Date of Interview:	23 September 2004
Location of Interview:	Salford, Manchester
Name of Interviewer:	Rosalyn Livshin
Total Duration (HH:MM):	3 hours and 23 minutes

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

INTERVIEW: 73

NAME: MARGA BRODIE

DATE: THURSDAY 23RD SEPTMBER 2004

LOCATION: SALFORD, MANCHESTER

INTERVIEWER: ROSALYN LIVSHIN

TAPE 1

RL: This is the interview with Marga Brodie and the interview is taking place in Salford, Manchester, England. The interview is being done on Thursday 23rd September 2004 and I am Rosalyn Livshin.

So, if you can tell me first your name.

MB: Marga Brodie

RL: And what was your name at birth?

MB: Hirschberg. H-I-R-S-C-H-B-E-R-G

RL: And did you have any other names, first names or nicknames?

MB: No.

RL: What was your Hebrew name?

MB: Minke.

RL: And was that after anybody?

MB: I didn't know until recently, as you will see later on the photograph of my great grandmother, and she happened to be called Minken, so I think that must be a sort of abbreviation from this Minken and I presume that I was named after her, because it is an unusual name.

RL: And where were you born?

Tape 1: 1 minute 31 seconds

MB: I was born in Germany, in a place called Wettelingen, it is a little village in Hessen, and I lived there until I was five.

RL: And when were you born?

MB: Sorry?

RL: When were you born?

MB: In '24, 1924.

RL: Your parents. What were their names and where were they from?

MB: My father's name was Sigfried and he came from a little village in Germany, called Zwesten, it was near Kassel. My mother was born in a small town called Eldagsen, near Hanover.

RL: What was her name?

MB: Her name was Goldschmidt.

RL: Can you tell me a little bit first about your father's family. His parents and what you know of that branch.

MB: I don't know an awful lot about my father's family, because unfortunately they died, my grandfather died before I was born. My grandmother died shortly after I was born, but my father came from a large family. There were seven brothers and sisters. And, they all married and left this little village, except one uncle who is buried there and recently somebody came across his tombstone, which was very interesting.

RL: What was his name?

MB: His name was Maurice. And strangely enough, it was such an anti-Semitic village, but, the Beis Olam is in good condition, is in fairly good condition, it has been looked after, and a man, whose name also happened to be Hirschberg but he was no relation, on the internet he came across his family and our family and he went there and he took photographs of this cemetery, and it is still in reasonably good condition, which is very strange as there are no Jewish people left there.

RL: Do you know what your grandfather did for a living there?

MB: My grandfather was a butcher.

Tape 1: 4 minutes 9 seconds

RL: Did any of his children ... ?

MB: No, the one who stayed there was a business man, and I had an uncle there who was a teacher, and all the others moved away.

RL: What did they do for a living?

MB: Mainly in business. I think they were all business people.

RL: Where did they move to?

MB: All over the place. Kassel, Gelsenkirchen, Monchengladbach. I can't remember all the other little villages ...

RL: Can you tell me their names?

MB: Yes. There was Zally and Maurice and David and Adolf and Emil and Zally and an auntie called Zelma and one I think was called Janet. I never knew her, she lived in Frankfurt actually but I never knew her.

RL: What happened to all of these people?

MB: None of them survived. None of them survived.

RL: Did they have families?

MB: Yes, they had family. And, I have got a cousin in America, the son of this Uncle David, and I have got two cousins whom I also don't know, they are much ... different generation altogether, much older, and we never had any contact. They lived in California, actually they went to Singapore during the war, in some transport, and then they went afterwards to Florida, but I have never been in contact with them. I am in contact with the other cousin, but not the ones in Florida.

RL: What is their names?

MB: I don't know.

RL: You don't know?

MB: The one I am in contact with, his name is Ludwig, Ludwig Hirschberg.

RL: And how did he get out.

Tape 1: 6 minutes 46 seconds

MB: He didn't get out. He was in Riga and he was actually funnily enough together with my parents who were also in Riga and he was able to come out and tell me all the gruesome details of how they died and ... and he had a sister, who was also in Riga who also survived and then a few days after the liberation she died of pneumonia, which was very sad, after surviving all that horror. He thank God survived and he got married and has a family in America.

RL: What is his surname? Is it Hirschberg?

MB: Hirschberg. Yes.

RL: Whose son was he?

MB: The son of David Hirschberg.

RL: What kind of upbringing did your father have?

MB: Orthodox upbringing, yes. My father, he went to Yeshiva in Fulda. Fulda had a famous Yeshiva, which was not far from where they lived, and I think he was there for a year and then he went into business, textile business, and later on, when he had to give that up because of anti-Semitism and so on, he trained to be a shochet and he also had a very good voice and he became a Chazzan as well.

RL: The textile business. Did he go into somebody's business and work for them or did he have his own?

MB: No, he had his own business. And he used to travel, with his textiles, and this was a very usual thing in Germany, people travelled around villages selling their ware. And he had, at one time I remember when I was little, he had a horse and a not a coach, in German it was called a kutsche, like a little wagon thing, and he used to sell in villages and also from home he sold, but not a shop.

RL: What did he have?

MB: Textiles.

RL: But at home?

MB: At home we also had textiles, but we had a room. We didn't have a proper shop there.

RL: Did he have any working with him?

Tape 1: 9 minutes 43 seconds

MB: No, no. It wasn't big enough for that.

RL: From Fulda, when he came out of Yeshiva, where did he go to live after Yeshiva?

MB: I don't know, probably at home.

RL: And when did he move?

MB: When he got married?

RL: So how did he meet his wife?

MB: My mother had relatives in the same little village, this Zwesten, and she went to visit her relatives and they met then. As it happens she used to tell me, first of all she fell in love with her future mother in law and she said she would love to marry one of her sons because she loved this grandma, but unfortunately she didn't live very long.

RL: So when did they marry?

MB: After the war. I think. About 1920 I think. My father was in the war.

RL: What happened with your father and the First World War? Was he in the army?

MB: He was in the army, yes.

RL: Do you know anything about that period?

MB: Very little really. He was a sergeant and I know he had a horse, I don't remember for much, the only story I remember him telling us about this horse, because he said horses have a sixth sense. He said, one night he was by himself, and he had to go and find out some sort of information and he was on his horse, and suddenly the horse stopped and it wouldn't go any further, it was very dark, and he couldn't understand why the horse wouldn't go, and he prodded it and it wouldn't go, so he got off the horse and then he noticed that there was a big steep cliff, and he would have gone right over with the horse, but the horse could see it and he couldn't, so he always had this special feeling for horses with their sixth sense. That is all I really know about it because he never liked to talk about the army, and also, with all the worry of the Hitler business, we didn't talk about those things very much.

RL: So tell me a little bit about your mother's family. Her family background.

Tape 1: 12 minutes 17 seconds

MB: My mother's family lived in this place, as I mentioned earlier, Eldagson, also from a big family. And, my father dealt in, my grandfather dealt in cattle, and, they had a huge, huge rambling house, there were so many bedrooms you used to get lost, because they had to have them, because during the summer holidays there was sometimes as

many as ten grandchildren there. And we had the most wonderful, wonderful holidays there, because they had fields, and they had gardens, and they had a river in one of the fields, and we were just able to roam around there. It was very nice. We used to go, get up every morning at 6 o'clock, and we used to go with an uncle to one of the fields and used to pick mushrooms which had popped up during the night, and from there we handed them over to the grandmother and from there we went all together to the local swimming pool, we used to go swimming. And then by the time we came home they had set the table, somehow the sun always used to shine because we always ate our breakfast outside the house, they had a huge trestle table, and we all used to sit there, and I didn't eat the mushrooms because I was scared of getting poisoned! And, and, I have got wonderful memories of my childhood holidays with my grandparents, some of the mothers also used to stay, you know aunties, uncles, used to stay to help with all those kids. And most of all, I remember all those wonderful meals, eating outside on that trestle table. We had an uncle, a married uncle that lived with my grandparents and he was very strict, and it was, you had to eat what you were given, if you didn't eat it for dinner you had to eat it in the evening, if you didn't eat it in the evening you had it the next day, so, but it was fabulous there. we used to roam around on bikes. we used to go down to the river, paddling around, it was very nice, lovely holidays, for two months of the year.

RL: Was there still cattle when you were there?

MB: And my cousins, yes.

RL: But was there still cattle? Did you still have the cattle that he dealt with? Or was that finished? Your grandfather used to deal with cattle.

MB: No, no, no. He used to, my grandfather was in business I should think, until, until about 36 or something, again he had to give that up as well. He also had huge gardens and fields and so on, and he lived from that. That was a lovely, lovely life they had there. We then they sold that, I think, about 38, and they all went to America, meanwhile my grandfather died, but my uncle, aunt and the cousins and my grandmother all went to America in '38.

RL: How many children did your grandparents have?

MB: How many?

Tape 1: 16 minutes 7 seconds

RL: And who were they?

MB: Let's see if I remember them all. There was Jacob and Louis and Philip and I think that's it. And then there was the daughters, the aunties, Minna, Freda, my mother and one uncle who died during the war, I have to say that, he died during the war.

RL: That was the First World War?

MB: That was the First World War, yes.

RL: Yes.

MB: They all married, and they all had children, and they all lived in different places. Except one of them who lived in my grandparents house. The others lived in Berlin and in Hanover and all over.

RL: And what happened to them?

MB: Some of them survived. Two of my uncles went to America. And another uncle and auntie were in Theresienstadt, but they also survived, they came out and they also went to America. But funnily enough, only this week I found out that one of the aunties, by marriage, is still alive, I had lost contact with her, and she is about 100 now, and I lost touch with her and I have got quite a few cousins there.

RL: What part of America?

MB: I don't know. I forgot to ask. I think New York, but I will find out. I have got a cousin in Holland, he knows all the details.

RL: What kind of upbringing did your mother have?

MB: Also an orthodox, what you would call a German orthodox, you know, different from here. Shomer Shabbos, with perhaps, maybe with not quite as many minhagim as they have nowadays, a proper good Jewish home.

RL: What is the difference when you say German orthodox?

MB: Yes, we are much stricter nowadays, in many ways. I mean we had a very orthodox home at home, but things here are much stricter now.

RL: In what kind of areas? Can you give an example of one?

Tape 1: 18 minutes 46 seconds

MB: Yes, I mean, my father would go to a concert and to the cinema and this sort of thing, which the orthodox men here don't. In fact my father loved going to concerts, he was very musical. And the same with my mother's family, this sort of thing, everybody ate kosher, and everybody kept Shabbos and, but somehow, there is a difference. The German, unless you came from Frankfurt or something the Germans minhagim weren't quite as strict as we have them today. But, it was good.

RL: Coming on to your own family, how many children did your parents have?

MB: Two, I had a brother, who was five years younger than I, he was known as Erich, who unfortunately also died in Germany.

RL: And do you remember your family home? Can you describe your family home?

MB: Yes. We lived in a flat in the town and actually we lived right next door to the Shul, which made it very convenient, we could fall out of bed and roll into Shul. What can I tell you about my family? We had a big garden because my mother was a wonderful gardener, she used to get up every morning during the summer months, and the spring months, at six o'clock in the morning and from six to seven she used to garden, and we had a church not far from us, and at seven o'clock the church bells used to ring and that was her cue to stop gardening and get us out of bed, school in Germany starts at eight o'clock so we had to get up. We had a Jewish school until we were ten/eleven, and at eleven we went to high school and our high school was run by the nuns, which was absolutely fantastic, very special, they were very special people. They never tried once to indoctrinate us and so on, but ...

RL: Coming back for the moment to your home was it in an apartment block, was it in a block of ...

MB: No, it was in a big house made into two flats, most people lived in flats, in apartments there.

RL: And was it a ground floor ...

MB: It was a ground floor, yes.

RL: And who lived above you?

MB: Non Jewish people. I don't remember them that well.

Tape 1: 22 minutes 0 second

RL: And how big was the apartment that you had? How many rooms? What did it look like?

MB: How many rooms did we have? We had a lobby, and a kitchen, and a lounge, and a dining room and two bedrooms, and toilet facilities, usual ...

RL: That was all on the ground floor?

MB: All on the ground floor ...

RL: Right.

MB: Yes.

RL: And did you ever have domestic help?

MB: Yes, until, I think, I can't remember exactly, I think 1935, we had to stop having, we weren't allowed to employ non Jewish domestic help.

RL: Did she live in or did she come daily?

MB: No, she came daily. And ...

RL: Do you remember how your home was furnished?

MB: Yes, more or less ... What did we have in our lounge? We had a round table and, what do you call it? In German we used to call it a silbershrank, a display thing. My mother was very, very fond of cut glass, and she collected cut glass bowls and things, we had dozens of them, all in this place there and it was all smashed up on what they call Krystallnacht, every little bit of it. And, then we had a dining room which was very nice, with a big couch in it, so you could drop down on it after you had a big dinner, and two bedrooms, ordinary bedrooms. And kitchen, usual German kitchen with big aga cookers, and, usual.

RL: How was the place heated?

MB: Sorry?

RL: How was it heated? How was the apartment heated?

MB: Yes, yes. Stoves. There was no central heating in. Coal stoves, we used to light them first thing in the morning, and they kept going, and you had a continuous coffee pot standing on top of them and anyone who came in you served coffee and that was fantastic, big ranges, and most of the pots were cast

Tape 1: 24 minutes 4 seconds

iron, and the ranges had rings, you used to take the rings out with a sort of an iron hook and you could insert the pan into this and also cook inside it, they were marvellous stoves for cooking and baking but they were a lot of work, because they needed a lot of cleaning and a lot of polishing and a lot of lighting and keeping them hot and so on. For the winter we used to get a huge supply of wooden logs which was used in this big aga cooker, and the other things that looked like coal. At the beginning of the winter we used to buy this huge amount of logs, and they were stacked in the back, and they were stacked in a special way to keep dry, and we had to know how to take them out because otherwise the whole thing would collapse.

RL: Did the children use to help in the house?

MB: We had help until as I say 35.

RL: Did the children help?

MB: No, not an awful lot. No, my mother was very capable, and able to do everything. We used to do a lot of preserving and bottling and this sort of thing because we had this big garden, and we had a lot of fruit, and soft fruits and fruit trees and every kind of vegetable, and whenever we had anything in abundance it was preserved in tins and in bottles and so on. Everybody had big cellars and in winter you lived on that. You get your supply for the winter, mostly for instance, we used to get from the farms a ton of potatoes, and they used to keep in the cellar, in a special huge box, and you will put your potatoes in, and all sorts of things. Preserving was a great part of life there, maybe not so much in the large cities like Berlin and Hamburg, but in the smaller towns and villages, everything was preserved.

RL: And what did she preserve?

MB: Everything. From fruit to vegetables, cucumbers to, you name it, jams, absolutely everything. We were able to tin stuff, I remember we used to buy special tins and beans and peas and all that went into the tins and we had to go to a shop and they used to put the lid on and then it was preserved for, it used to keep indefinitely, it was heated up to a certain, I don't remember exactly, but I know it was a lot of work.

For all that, they worked so hard those women, at four o'clock in the afternoon, come what may, my mother washed and changed and sat down and used to embroider or sew or something. No more housework after four o'clock, and it was nice.

Tape 1: 28 minutes 43 seconds

RL: You mentioned how your mother liked gardening, and now you mention sewing, did she have any other interests?

MB: My mother?

RL: Yes.

MB: Well, she was a very, very good needlewoman. She used to do a tremendous amount of, especially crocheting. Beautiful things, big bedspreads, big tablecloths, she was always doing something, she would never sit idle. She used to make our clothes and she, this was the accepted way of life, everybody used to, most people were handy with their needles and ... it was completely different. There wasn't nearly as much running around as we do nowadays. No cars. And she also used to do a lot of sick visiting, if anybody was ill she would cook for people who were ill. Otherwise there was no outside interests. No running around town shmying at the shops like we do nowadays, busy, busy running around. In that respect it was much more of a home life.

RL: How big a community was there there?

MB: Sorry?

RL: How big was the Jewish community there?

MB: I should think they would have been about fifty families, forty/fifty families, not an enormous amount, about fifty families. Big enough to run a Jewish school, we had a Jewish school.

RL: And was there just the one Shul?

MB: Just the one Shul, yes.

RL: Who was the Rabbi?

MB: The Rabbi was somebody called Rabbi Cohen, but I don't know very much about him, I have forgotten.

RL: And this was an Orthodox Shul?

MB: Yes.

RL: Were they all orthodox?

Tape 1: 30 minutes 48 seconds

MB: There were non orthodox families in the town, but they also went to the orthodox Shul. Because that was the only Shul there was.

RL: Was your father active in the Shul?

MB: Not as I can remember. I don't think he belonged to any of the Shul committees and so on, no, not really. My father when he had spare time, he used to like meeting his friends, and he used to play cards.

RL: What did they play?

MB: Something called Skat I don't know exactly what that is. It seemed to be very exciting because he used to get very hot under the collar and that is what he enjoyed. All the men used to enjoy that.

RL: Did he, was he involved in any kind of communal activities?

MB: Apart from in a small way. I mean he was the chazzan in the Shul and the Shul wasn't all that busy. There were very few, it just run by itself, they had a president, but it is a small Shul and a small community and it used to run by itself more or less. What my father did do, he used to get, you know how we get nowadays the meshulachim, in those days they used to have a lot of, they used to call them, poor men, from Poland and Russia. They used to go around collecting money and then go home for Yom Tov, we used to get a lot of those, and my father used to make it his business to bring somebody home on a Friday night and we used to stand at the window to watch whom was our father bringing home tonight. We always used to look forward to one of the poor men coming for dinner. But as far as involvement was concerned, there was very little going on in our town in this respect.

RL: What is your earliest memory as a child?

MB: My earliest memory is when we still lived in this place where I was born, that is a little village, and we had a flood, an enormous flood, and we saw all the cattle being swept down the high street. We lived on a hill and we used to go down with the, watch from the window. That was really one of my earliest memories.

And the girl next door getting married, and it was supposed to be lucky to have a chimney sweep coming to see the bride, I think they used to do that here as well. I remember that, watching out, I must have only been about four and a half/five, and I can see her now, with this chimney sweep standing next to her.

Tape 1: 34 minutes 20 seconds

And in the same village I had an auntie, lived there, and I remember being spoiled by her, very much, because she had one daughter who was much older, and she used to spoil me.

RL: When did you move from that village?

MB: Why did we move?

RL: When, when did you move?

MB: I think we moved when I was approximately five, I don't remember exactly.

RL: And where did you go to?

MB: We went to Worburg it wasn't very far, perhaps 20 minutes by car.

RL: Why did you move?

MB: For business reasons, because it was better for my father.

RL: And was there a bigger community, Jewish community.

MB: No. There was no community. There was just the two of them. There was my auntie and us. You had this in Germany a lot, in little villages, there was just one Jewish family and come Yom Tovim they all used to go to one Shul, we used to walk perhaps two hours to get to the Shuls, from all the different surrounding villages. It was quite usual for just one family to be in a village, usually a business man.

RL: How did they manage with kosher meat?

MB: You could get kosher meat; you used to buy it, also as far as chickens were concerned the shochet used to go around the villages and shecht the chickens. If you wanted beef you had to go to the nearest town and buy it. And then of course, I can't remember the year, but I should imagine it was about 36/37, and shechita was forbidden, so they closed the abattoirs, there was no more, no more kosher meat, but, if you took the life in your hands, the shochetim used to go around and shecht chickens and lambs, you know, quietly, this is what my father used to do, and, but there was no meat as such.

RL: And bread?

MB: Sorry?

Tape 1: 37 minutes 9 seconds

RL: Bread?

MB: No, there was no kosher bread. The two things I never heard of before I came here, one was kosher milk and one was kosher bread. Challahs my mother made, but bread you brought from the baker. I presume, I mean I don't know, I presume they went into it to make sure it was oven baked, like they do in Switzerland, but I can't remember that, because I never heard the expression kosher bread and kosher milk, so I don't know. That is one of the things that I said was so different here. From here they grow up from the age of two with kosher bread, because you know, they have everything the kids but I had never heard it. I know we didn't eat the cakes, but as far as bread was concerned ... yes.

RL: Before the arrival of Hitler, how did you get on with the non Jewish neighbours?

MB: Very well, very well. When I think back on it now, it is quite unbelievable, because we had the most fabulous neighbours, they were all very good friends, and overnight it just changed, absolutely overnight. "Don't talk to me any more, I am not allowed to talk to you." And that was that. You see, we had wonderful neighbours, but they knew we could meet in the house and so on, but it changed overnight very drastically. I suppose they were scared, I don't know.

RL: Was there any exceptions to that?

MB: I didn't come across any. The only exception to that really were the teachers, in our high school, the nuns. They were the exception. They used to fight for us.

RL: So you said the neighbours wouldn't talk to you after that?

MB: No.

RL: Was that the limit of it or did they become hostile to you?

MB: Not hostile. They might have become more hostile after I left, I don't know. They weren't hostile, they were just, "Don't talk to me, I am not allowed to talk to you." But, I can't say we came across, I personally didn't come across any hostility until after Krystallnacht.

RL: Just keeping before that for the moment, tell me a little bit about, first of all, you said you went to a Jewish school first?

Tape 1: 40 minutes 37 seconds

MB: Yes.

RL: How many pupils were there? And who was the headmaster?

MB: We had to, this sounds very funny, we had one classroom and we had one teacher. And he used to teach each section separately, altogether at the same time, he set this work for them and, because there were not all that many children, and different age groups, so, while one lot was writing an essay, one lot was reading, and while one lot was reading, the others were doing math. Actually it was a very good school, considering, how strange the tuition was there, we only had one teacher.

RL: Do you remember who it was?

MB: Yes, it was the same as the Rabbi, Rabbi Cohen was also the teacher. And from there we all went to high schools.

RL: Did you learn Hebrew and secular subjects in the elementary school.

MB: What was that?

RL: Did you learn Hebrew and secular?

MB: We learnt Hebrew, but we didn't learn an awful lot of Hebrew. We learned to read, we learned to translate the shema, but, for me, I started davening, I can't say there was any comparison to what they learn today, no comparison, not in our school. In some of the Beis Yaakov schools in Frankfurt and Berlin they did, but we didn't, it was very elementary. A little bit of history and this sort of thing, but mainly when we went to high

school, I can't remember the year, I think I was two and a half years in high school, and we had to leave there, it was forbidden then for Jewish children to be educated in high school, and then we had to go to a non Jewish school, an elementary school, and that was absolutely horrific. Because, every morning, we had to stand outside the door while they had their assembly, and the other children used to go into their classrooms and sit down, and then we had to come in, because the other children had to start off with heil Hitler, and we weren't allowed to say heil Hitler, not that we wanted to, but then we had to walk in and there was all this speak, here come the dirty Jews, here come the smelly Jews. We were only little, maybe twelve or something and some of them were even younger, when they went to high school, and it was very frightening, every morning we had to go through this rigmarole. One of the teachers once complained about it and she was sacked on the spot, so after that no teacher complained any more. And we had to stick it out.

RL: Which school was this?

Tape 1: 44 minutes 16 seconds

MB: Elementary school in Worburg, I don't know what it was called, I have forgotten.

RL: Why was the high school closed down?

MB: The high school, the Jewish children went. I don't know if it was everywhere, but in our area, they took all the Jewish children out from high school and from, what did they call the boys, the gymnasium. When, I don't remember exactly when. I know that I had another couple of years in the other school and it was pretty horrible, it was a very good school, learning wise, but awful to have to go through this every morning, but we did it.

RL: How did they behave you at playtime?

MB: It varied, it varied. We used to play, when I come to think of it now, I used to play with the other children, well with some of them anyway. They were sort of, I didn't think about it all over the years, its not the sort of thing that I am so particular to remember, so I can't remember exactly, but I do remember this going into the classroom and the fear of it every morning, it was dreadful. Until we sat down, once we sat down it wasn't so bad.

RL: One thing that I have just thought that we didn't mention when we were talking about your family background, was your grandparents, was it your grandmother's 90th birthday?

MB: Yes, my grandmother was over 90, she was in America.

RL: Was that was in America?

MB: That was in America.

RL: I see, she had already left, ah right.

MB: And she was still working in the kitchen. She was still helping my auntie, she was a very special lady.

RL: What memories do you have of the Yom Tovim in Germany? What memories do you have of the different Yom Tavs?

MB: Pretty much like we have here. Came Pesach, everyone was scratching and scrubbing, and then the Sedorim at home.

Tape 1: 46 minutes 50 seconds

RL: Where did the matzos come from?

MB: We had a matzo factory funnily enough, in our little town, who supplied matzos for the whole little area, and we used to go there as children, and we were able to eat the cracked ones and we used to watch them. They were round, they were not square like we have here, bit round ones, and they came in big round parcels, I can see them now in brown paper.

And Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur were the same, all the chagim were pretty much the same, and we always had lots of aunties and uncles staying with us, sometimes we had to sleep at friends because there wasn't enough places for us to sleep. It was always a full house at Yom Tov.

RL: And Sukkos?

MB: Yes, Sukkos the same, we had a little Sukkah, and the Sukkah actually, we used the Sukkah which was attached to the Shul, so after Shul everyone went into the Sukkah for Kiddush, and after we used to use it for eating because we lived right next door, we used to go in through the back, we used to use that. We had, we don't get that here. I don't know what sort of apples they were, a certain small apple, and it was very, very sweet, very pleasant to eat like that. And we made a vegetable from it, and people used to have that for Rosh Hashona, sweet apple. And more or less the minhagim were pretty much the same as we have today.

RL: Was there anything that was different?

MB: What was different is Simchas Torah. Also you had Hakofas, but we organised, the Germans are very organised. There were no kids running around, we used to come to Shul with a little basket and as we were walking around the ladies used to drop sweets, a single sweet, a sweet here and a sweet there, and they used to put them into our basket, very organised, very stately, no dancing. And we just going round with the Sefer Torah, hakofos, then we used to go outside and we would count our sweets, but, that was very, very different. I don't think we had a seudah afterwards either.

RL: And Purim? What would you do on Purim?

MB: Purim we used to dress up. On Purim when things were not too bad there we used to dress up and we used to also go with our little basket, we used to go round to friends, say a little poem and then they used to drop us something in our baskets. When I look at it now and what is happening here in Broughton Park on Purim I just can't believe that it was so, it is so anti Yekkish. No, everything was very organised, very stately.

Tape 1: 51 minutes 0 second

Chanukah was nice, we used to get gifts. Grandmothers and aunties used to send parcels and that was all put out on the table and we used to go out and when we came in, we used to, I think if I remember rightly, we used to say Father Chanukah was here! We looked forward to that. My grandmother used to make her speciality, she used to make her own boiled sweets, and she sent us little presents, nothing very big, handkerchiefs, pencils and the occasional doll if you were very, very lucky. And that was Chanukah. And we played dreidle on Chanukah, but also very, but I remember, I am sure that was only, that was only, I don't know if there was any other house with father Chanukah, how we came to that I do not know!

RL: Was there any Chanukah concerts or plays that the children used to ... ?

MB: No, no ... We did have an occasional get together from the kehillah, you know, just occasionally, I don't know if there was any special reasons for it, if it was Chanukah or Purim or anything like that, I remember, going to, all the children who could play instruments would perform, I used to play piano, and we used to perform, and that was great nachas.

RL: Did you have a piano at home?

MB: I did have a piano at home. I had piano lessons. I hated every minute of it, and when I was able to give it up I never touched a piano again. My mother used to say I would be so sorry, and she was so right, I am so sorry, now I would love to sit down and play the piano, but I can't, I keep saying I am having lessons, but I never did.

RL: What did you do as a child in your spare time? How did you used to occupy yourself?

MB: We used to play. We went to school at eight in the morning, come home at twelve, have dinner, go back again at two, finish school at four, if we wanted we could stay until five to do our homework there, and then we used to come home and play. We used to play outside, it wasn't so much indoor playing, we used to play marbles outside, and we had stilts, we spent a lot of time on our stilts, hula hoops and that sort of thing, but mainly outside. On a Sunday we all had bikes, and on a Sunday we used to go on our bikes, somewhere into the country. We were playing indoors if the weather was bad, you would play by yourself with your dolly or snakes and ladders, but a lot of time was spent

outside, much more time outside, although it was dangerous times for us, but it was much safer, in as much that you could let your children out. Sometimes our mother used to make us sandwiches and we used to go out for hours and she didn't have to worry about us. Now, if you don't see your child for two minutes you worry about them. But, from that respect it was much safer, we used to go into the forests, have a

Tape 1: 55 minutes 30 seconds

picnic, and in the summer we used to go on our bikes in the forest and we used to pick fruits, wild strawberries or bilberries and those sort of thing, and we used to bring them home in a bucket and my mother used to make jam from it, and that is how we used to spend our time.

RL: Were there any youth groups at all?

MB: Yes. It was called Habonim, but it was not like the Habonim here, it was more, it didn't, we weren't indoctrinated with Israel, all we did was, we used to sing a few songs and we used to go out on bikes, but it was under the umbrella of Habonim. And all the orthodox children used to go to it, because there was no politics attached to that sort of thing. It was nice. We used to go on our bikes to a place near the river, what were they called, oh I can't remember, there were some people here who lived outside St Annes, they used to do a lot of charitable work, do you remember?

RL: The Huberts?

MB: The Huberts, yes. They lived, you could go there by bike so it was not all that far, we used to go there, we lived by the river and used to spend a lot of time there. I remember that.

RL: How often did Habonim meet? How often did that ... ?

MB: It wasn't that often, it was just, we called it Habonim, we used to get together, and we used to sit on the floor, and we used to sing Hebrew songs, and maybe someone would tell a story and as I say we used to go on outings on our bike and that was under the auspices of Habonim.

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

MB: Thank you.

TAPE 2

RL: This is the interview with Marga Brodie and it is tape 2.

You were just telling me about your outings with Habonim, and it made me wonder what your family felt towards Zionism and if they had any connection.

MB: It was something we never discussed at home, but we had like everybody else, we had our blue box, and my mother used to put her, whatever she put in, her donation in, before licht bentschen on a Friday, but that is something that most people had, I don't know if you remember them. Yes?

Tape 2: 0 minute 49 seconds

Zionism as such was not a big deal. I had a cousin who was on a moshav somewhere not far from us, he went to Israel. But otherwise it was something we never discussed, funnily enough. I think it was early days in those days, people didn't so much, not in our town anyway, maybe in the bigger towns they had more Zionist, they were more Zionistically inclined, I don't know, I didn't really, even Habonim, we didn't sort of connect with Israel, it was just a Jewish organisation, we had a get together and we sang.

RL: You know you mentioned how your father liked going to concerts. Did you as children go to any performances or any theatres?

MB: Yes, we used to go with our parents, because when they went, because my parents were great opera lovers, and we used to go as children, being terribly bored, but we used to go with them, because most of the operas were Wagner and very boring, but my father was very musical and he would come home after having heard musical works, opera, and he would sit down at his piano and he would play it ad lib, without a note, just sit down and play, and, well we used to go to the pictures quite a lot. Not so much concerts, I don't think we had a lot of concerts. Opera, operettas, which was a great favourite with everybody, because that was more light, and films.

RL: What about reading books?

MB: Yes, I read a lot, and, kids stuff, all my serious reading I did later on in English, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, I used to like all those, all the English classics, I have been through them all. In Germany I read more the kids stuff. I used to love fairy tales.

RL: Did your father get a newspaper?

MB: No, I can't remember. I don't think we certainly never had a newspaper delivered; it is possible that they brought newspapers, but I can't recollect it, I don't think so. They must have had newspapers, but certainly not on a daily basis.

RL: Did you have a radio?

MB: Yes, radio played a big part in our lives because we used to sit and listen to the news, radio played a big part. I even remember my father staying up all night, listening to, what was he called? A famous German boxer and an American boxer, and this big boxing match, and my father stayed up all night with his radio. Radio was a big thing. Shmerling I think he was called, the boxer.

Tape 2: 4 minutes 59 seconds

RL: Was your father interested in sport?

MB: He was interested, but he didn't participate in any sports, no.

RL: Did you play any sports?

MB: We had sports in school. In winter we used to do a lot of tobogganing, in fact, we lived on a hill, and the school was on top of the hill, so every morning, in the winter, we always had a lot of snow in the winter, we used to take our toboggans with us to school and then go on them home down the hill for dinner, but also if it was very snowy and quite cold, we were told to bring our toboggans to school and we used to go from the school, we used to spend an hour, when we were supposed to learn, and we used to go tobogganing with the school. And when we think about it, it was down this steep hill and then up again, we had to walk up, and down again, and we loved every minute of it.

We went swimming in the summer. Also in Germany we had, when the temperature reached a certain, I don't know, maybe something like 85, maybe 84, we used to, in those days we had no lessons after a certain temperature, you know that, and we used to go swimming. I used to like running believe it or not, and now I can't walk. And, I could never jump. Yes, sort of, not football, now I like football, but then I didn't.

RL: Were you still at school when it came to Krystall Nacht? Were you still attending school at that point?

MB: Say that again?

RL: Were you still at school when it got to Krystall Nacht? Were you still at school at that stage?

MB: No, I was finished school then, and I was at the time visiting some friends, and sleeping out, in a little village not far, and we went, this friend with whom I stayed, and we went to another friend's house and this is when it was all taking part, and they had a young son who at that time was about 19/20 and the SS came in to arrest him, and the poor fellow, he was so, he got such a fright, he lost his mind, he went completely berserk and he was never heard of any more after that. And the next day I went home, when it was safe to go out, and we had to walk from one village to the other and I was terrified, we were only about 15 then, and I went home and saw what had happened. I remember that very vividly.

RL: What had happened?

Tape 2: 8 minutes 42 seconds

MB: Well everything was smashed up. Our Shul as it happened had not been burnt down; I think it was too close to other houses for fire. They smashed it, and they tore the Sefer Torah, my father was arrested and sent to Buchenwald concentration camp, and it was very, very frightening, very horrifying, it is the only time in my life I heard my mother cry, and it is something nobody should ever experience, a mother crying. She was crying that my father was arrested, it was awful.

RL: And you say that you had been in another village at the time. Did you know the extent of what was going on?

MB: No, no, we had no idea. We had no idea why they came to this particular house, because it was the only Jewish house in this village and it was just a lot of shouting and screaming and then this poor fellow going berserk and we were too young really to make it all out, what it is all about. It wasn't until the next day when I phoned home and my mother said come home at once, that is when we found out what was what.

RL: What happened from that point?

MB: What happened from that point? Well, my father was arrested, all the Jewish men were arrested and sent to Buchenwald, because he had been in the army he was one of the earlier ones to get released from Buchenwald, and we were notified that they were coming home, and we went to the station and saw these gaunt looking men, and they weren't allowed to get off the train, because they had to go further, to an office, to a place called Paderborn. And we were opening the door to the train and jumping in and my mother shouting, "Get off, get off." And I said, "I want to see my father." And the train went off with me in it. And we had to go to the SS headquarters and everybody had to sit on the floor, there were no chairs, we sat all night on the floor until they did all the, whatever they were writing. Everything had to be taken down in triplicate, I mean they were so precise with everything, I remember once making a claim and they wanted to know what my father earned, and I said how do I know, even I don't, and they said we can find out, and they had income tax returns from, going back to 28/29/30 that was well after the war, and they still had all those income tax returns, that is how they work, the German mentality. Yes that was not a very nice experience. And then from there he came home and I remember my father going into the bath and scrubbing himself, he was sort of trying to get rid of ... I don't know how long he was in Buchenwald, I think about three weeks, all the dirt and all the, and it was then, that my parents said, you have got to get the children out, and they started thinking about us leaving.

RL: Did he speak at all about what had happened to him in Buchenwald?

Tape 2: 13 minutes 26 seconds

MB: He didn't talk an awful lot about it. Not to us. He might have talked to my mother but he didn't talk to us. It was, it wasn't in Auschwitz, there were no extermination chambers there, but it was, 50% of the men didn't come back, and all he could do, talking about it, no toilet facilities and everything had to be done in the open and he could never

get over that, he always felt dirty after that. As I say, he was one of the earlier ones to be released because of his army service, but they didn't take that into account later on.

RL: Now you say that you had already left school by this time, what did you do after you left school?

MB: I used to go to a lady who was a dress maker, to learn a bit of sewing. My mother used to say you never know when you have got to use your hands, you have got to be able to do things. And, that is what I did, I used to help her, to do a bit of sewing and so. It did actually, I learned quite a lot, because when I came here, I came to relatives, and they had so many refugees staying with them I couldn't sleep there, so I slept with a neighbour, who was a non Jewish lady, and then I'm saying, "You know, I can ... ", she had a piece of cloth, that's right. She said, "I don't know what to do with this." And I said, "Do you know I can do sewing, I will make you a coat." And I don't know how I came to say that, so I got a pattern and I made her a coat, I never repeated that. Oh yes, that is what I did.

RL: Did you continue to do that after Krystallnacht?

MB: I suppose I must have done, I suppose so, I can't remember, I think so.

RL: And how did your parents go about trying to get you out?

MB: I had relatives here who lived in Leek in Staffordshire, and this uncle, this man was my mother's cousin, we called him uncle because he was so much older than her, he had a factory in Leek, and he was quite well off.

Oh, here is Gaby, can we just tell him not to come in.

He signed affidavits for all the children. So I still came out, but when it came to my brother's turn they said he had signed for too many and we have to find somebody else. Listen, what is beshert is beshert, but I found a very sweet lady and I asked her if she would sign an affidavit for my brother, and she said, "With pleasure." She said, "I will send him to school, and look after him, and everything." And she died, very suddenly, so we had to cancel that. And my relatives, they had some non Jewish friends, and they said, "We will sign for your parents and for your brother, which they did, but then the war came in between. It was all going through very nicely, and that is how it was.

Tape 2: 17 minutes 25 seconds

There were about eight of us came out and they signed for us all. So then, the Home Office said enough is enough.

RL: Who were the others? Who were the others, besides yourself?

MB: Who else?

RL: Who else ... ?

MB: Cousins, all cousins, yes. They all went to America eventually.

RL: And when did you come over? What was the date?

MB: I don't know, it was 1939.

RL: Do you know the date?

MB: At the beginning of 1939, I don't know the date, Gaby would know it, but I don't.

RL: And how did you get ready to go? What did you have to do before leaving?

MB: It wasn't so much to get ready, we just, we were only allowed to take one suitcase, so that is what I did, I had one suitcase and one holdall and my mother just packed up with everything that was necessary, and that is how I came, on the children's transport.

RL: Was the packing supervised? Did somebody supervise the packing?

MB: Did somebody ... ?

RL: Supervise the packing ...

MB: No, no. We weren't allowed to take jewellery, but everybody was too scared to take. I had a friend, who was a few years older than me and she was a bit more sophisticated, and she took all her mother's jewellery, she took all her mother's diamond rings and stuff, and she melted soap, and she put it inside the soap and then she, you know, the soap set again, and she managed to get it through. But, I didn't take anything, I had one little gold ring, which my mother gave me, which I wore, but somebody pinched it off me after the, otherwise I didn't take anything with me, only clothes. And we had to go to a station and there was this train coming, with other children, I was the only one going from our town at that time, and when I think about it now, having children of my own, I

Tape 2: 19 minutes 50 seconds

don't know how the parents did it, I got on the train, and my father bensed me and he said, "Always remember where you come from." And he closed the door. How he did it I don't know, I couldn't even look at them. So I don't know whether they cried or they didn't cry. I cried, but I couldn't look. And I went on this train, and we were very scared because we had all SS guards and they kept marching up and down, marching up and down the train, I think it was specially to scare us. And then we crossed into Holland, and when we crossed into Holland it was just, I can't believe this, you know, we are actually out of Germany. And then from Holland, we went from the Hook of Holland by

boat, to Harwich, from Harwich to London, and in London we went to, I think it was called Reuben House, and somebody had to pick us up there. Everybody had to have somebody pick them up, and I had somebody pick me up, and that's it.

RL: How many children came on that transport?

MB: On that transport, I think quite a lot. There must have been about a hundred children.

RL: And was there anybody looking after you?

MB: Yes, definitely, yes there were people in charge there.

RL: What was the youngest child?

MB: I don't remember. I don't remember anything. I just sat in my seat. I don't think I talked to anyone. I couldn't. I went to the toilet and that was about all. I just didn't move, I remember just, sort of, so, so awful I felt, so so awful. I never for a minute thought that my parents wouldn't come out, it didn't cross my mind, you know. I don't know if I would have come if I would have known it. I would have refused to leave, but even so, if you read my poem, you will read all about it, I have put all my thoughts into that.

RL: Would you like to read it to us?

MB: I should read it?

RL: Yes.

Tape 2: 22 minutes 24 seconds

MB: I hope I can manage without my glasses. It is called, "The Kinder Transport".

His eyes were so big
His face so wide
His body so rigid
With shock and fright.
What was happening to him?
Why was he on this train?
When would he see his dear parents again?
Slowly, he lifted his face to see,
A carriage full of children,
No bigger than he,
Some silently weeping,
Some staring ahead,
Were they all dreaming,

Or were they all dead.
At last a voice,
A lady smiling so sweet,
I am sure you would all like something to eat.
She lifted our spirits,
Gave us new hope,
Perhaps there is someone,
To help us to cope.
There is a rumour
That we will be travelling by sea,
That too, is something new for me.
And so time passes,
I am full of fears,
Will God be able to see my tears.
We get on the boat,
With emotions so deep,
From sheer exhaustion,
We fell asleep.
Next morning,
Nobody wants to get out of bed,
All fearful of what would be lying ahead.
Why did my parents send me, is not clear,
I certainly do not want to be here.
From the boat we transferred onto a train,
And now we are on our travels again.
Our loneliness is painful
It breaks our hearts
We don't know the future
Only that we are apart.
I am told that with kind people I will be
But I don't know them
And they don't know me
I am afraid that in time
I might forget,
All my parents taught me
Everything they said
But I must always remember
What my father whispered to me
Write in your heart dear child forever
That you belong to a Jewish family.

And that was just about it.

Tape 2: 24 minutes 27 seconds

RL: So you say that somebody came to pick you up ...

MB: Yes, a cousin of my mothers, who lived in London at the time. She came to pick me up, I stayed with her one night, and then she put me on the train, I couldn't speak a word of English, but she put me on a train, and said, "You get off at a place called Stoke on Trent." So every two minutes I said to whoever, "Stoke on Trent?" I was so scared, I didn't know how long it would take, anyway finally we get to Stoke on Trent and somebody told me it was Stoke on Trent and that is where I met my cousin. I didn't know him either. And I stayed with them for a couple of months or so, and then more children had come over, and some relative of theirs, so of course they had to find us somewhere else to live. And they had friends in Trentham Gardens, a family called Myers, and I went to this family Myers, and they were absolutely wonderful.

RL: And if you could just tell me your first impressions of England and Stoke and what you thought of the place.

MB: All I know is that I came with plaits and the next day my cousin said to me, "You don't have that in England." And he cut them off. That was my first impression of England.

Yes, I felt safe, I felt safe here, and I felt that something awful had been taken off my shoulders, I know its not the same as being homesick, but the actual feeling was a feeling of safety.

I tried to learn English as quickly as I could because I did not want to speak German at all. I sort of, I blocked it out; I find it difficult now to speak German because I blocked it out. But I remember going in the car, that was before I understood anything here, being in a car with somebody and I saw a big signpost

Tape 2: 27 minutes 4 seconds

Percil and I nearly jumped out of the car, Percil, Percil, I mean Germany, it was something which I could relate to from home. But I was, I always liked it here, I was always happy here.

RL: How did you spend those first few weeks here? What did you do?

MB: Nothing very much. We didn't do very much. We couldn't do very much. Because, I, this uncle he wanted to send us all back to school, none of us wanted to go to school so we didn't go to school, that was something I regret. But we didn't do very much. I went to live with this family in Stoke on Trent. They didn't have any family and I was their little girl so to speak, you know, I helped a bit in the house. I learned to make English cucumber sandwiches, because at 5 o'clock, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon we had tea, and we had cucumber sandwiches. And it was very thin slice of bread, you had to have a very thin slice of bread, you couldn't buy it like that, I was taught how to cut it very thin and put cucumber in, and that was every day at 4 o'clock, regular. They were lovely people, very good to me and then this, eventually, I was there for quite a number

of, two years, and then Mrs Myers was not well, and my cousins, who I had come to, were in Leek, they had meanwhile moved to Leicester and this cousin in Leicester said she has got a cousin in Manchester and she is in a hostel and would I fancy going there, and I said that sounds nice to me. I still wasn't allowed to work because we had no work permits or anything, and so I came to this hostel in Alexander Road, this refugee hostel, and from there somebody got permission for me, the only thing you were allowed to do was domestic, so she fixed me up with a family in Broom Lane, Dr Green.

RL: Now before we move onto that, can we just recap, first of all to your time in Stoke on Trent.

MB: Yes.

RL: What did you do with yourself? You say you were there for two years.

MB: What did I do with myself? I don't know. Very little. We used to go out a lot. We had a lovely time, we used to go out, they had a lot of family, we used to visit family. I spent an awful lot of time in the cinema, because that is where I learned English. Because you see the action and you put the words to it, and that is where I learned English, I could go every day if they would let me. But I didn't, I, I helped Mrs Myers in the house, they had a big house, we did the cooking, and, whatever we did we did together, like a childhood, but not necessarily doing anything. When I think about it now, it was odd, but that is how it was. Much less emphasis was put on careers and this and that, don't forget it was war.

Tape 2: 31 minutes 10 seconds

RL: At first where you in touch with your parents?

MB: There was something called, there was a Red Cross Service, where once in three months you could write to, you could get a letter through, in those days I used to be in touch, it was not very adequate but it was better than nothing. And of course, it was much later that I found out, through a cousin who lived in Switzerland that my parents had been sent to a concentration camp, and afterwards I didn't hear from them any more.

RL: Do you remember when that was? When did that happen?

MB: I would have thought that it must have been perhaps 41/42, something around about then. Yes.

RL: Which camp did they go to?

MB: They went to Riga. And on the day I got married, well not on the day, I got married on the Sunday, but on the Shabbos morning I got a letter from this cousin who lives in America, with every detail of how they died, and on the Sunday morning I had to go and stand under the Chuppah by myself. It wasn't very ... my mother died of typhoid. My

father died very cruelly, I can't explain it, even I can't talk about it, and my brother, who was with them all the time decided as there is nobody left, no mother, no father, he would try and escape, and he got out of the camp, but he only got as far as the first tram, and they caught him and that was the end of him. It's sad.

RL: As you say, leading up to the war you were trying to get them out.

MB: Once the war started there was nothing you could do.

RL: Did they actually have a date for coming over?

MB: They didn't have a date, but they had been in touch with whoever arranged the transportation. They had been in touch with them, and they had their name on the list, and they knew that sooner or later they would get this permission, but then the war came in between. I would have thought another three months and they would have been able to come, because it was all laid down for them, you know, the people who signed for them said they would undertake my brother's education and the mother and father would have a job, and this and that, but it wasn't meant to be.

RL: Who were these people who signed for them?

Tape 2: 34 minutes 34 seconds

MB: I don't remember their name. They were non Jewish people and I don't remember their name.

RL: In Stoke on Trent?

MB: Near Stoke on Trent, yes.

RL: You say, I heard you say before that your parents had a phone.

MB: My parents didn't have a phone.

RL: They didn't have a phone? I thought you said that you phoned

MB: Yes, yes. I phoned to the shop next to our ... that is how we used to be in contact.

RL: So did you phone at all from England?

MB: No. No. Never. No we used to just send this Red Cross letter which went via Switzerland and from Switzerland into Germany and the same going back. And I think you were only allowed, I don't know if it was once every two months or once every three, very rare.

RL: What kind of Jewish community was there in Stoke on Trent?

MB: A very nice Jewish community. One Shul. One Rabbi. But a very, very baal ha batishe nice Jewish community. I liked it there. The people who stayed, their families were in Stoke on Trent, and they used to spend most days in Stoke on Trent, but their home was actually in Trentham Gardens. Have you heard of Trentham Gardens. It is a famous place, it has famous gardens there. It was just outside Stoke on Trent. Yes, nice, very very good people, very nice people.

RL: Did you mix with the youngsters of the Jewish community?

MB: There weren't all that many youngsters. I don't remember many youngsters there. No, I was always together with the old folk. Really, I don't remember, I tell you who used to live there. Do you know Beryl Cohen, Beryl Noyak, her parents lived in Stoke on Trent, her father and her father's brother, they lived in, come from Stoke on Trent, and they both married Manchester girls, they married sisters, I think so, and they lived Stoke on Trent, but I never came across them. But I do know, no, I was always with the old people, because every week we had, this is already a bit more Zionist orientated then, we made something for Israel, I don't know what we were used to do, knitting or something. It was for

Tape 2: 37 minutes 34 seconds

Israel, it was not Israel then, or they sold it and the money went to the JNF or something like that, I know it was something to do with that. No, but I didn't, I can't say I had any special friends there, not until I came to Manchester and started mixing with young people again, it was quite funny.

RL: Yes. Did you go to Shul regularly there? Did you get to Shul in Stoke on Trent?

MB: Yes, sure. Yes, we had a nice Shul there, we had a nice congregation there. I couldn't even tell you what they were called but I know that they were very nice. I was very happy there.

RL: When did you come to Manchester? Do you remember when that was?

MB: When did I come to Manchester? It was during the blitz. If you can pinpoint that. I should think it must have been, maybe about 42, around about then. I have not thought about dates an awful lot. I came to this hostel, this kosher house.

RL: Can you tell me a bit about this hostel?

MB: It was a refugee hostel. It must have been about 30/40 people living there. Somebody was in charge who ran the hostel. And we could either stay there, as long as we wanted, or if you could get a job, get a job. Jobs as such we couldn't get, I don't know what the boys did, because boys couldn't do domestic, so I don't think they did

anything, because it was mixed there. The girls mainly went into domestic. This girl I used to know, she fixed me up with this family here, and I went there.

RL: How long were you in the hostel for?

MB: Not all that long. About three months. We used to go every week, there was in town, opposite where Marks and Spencer is, where the Arndale Centre is, there used to be a refugee committee office, and we used to go every week and collect our half a crown pocket money. And every week we were told how lucky we were to get this half a crown pocket money. And, I used to bring my friend, and we would say, this much we spend on pictures, this we spend on that, we used to go every week, every week we used to go to the pictures, and one evening to the theatre. And I remember once we had, a shilling left of something, and we passed a fruit shop, and they had a pineapple, and it was unheard of, and we said, "Should we buy this pineapple or should we go to the pictures?" And in the end we went to the pictures. That was our pocket money until we started working.

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RL: Did you know anybody in the hostel?

MB: No. But they were all youngsters there and I soon got to know them.

RL: And was this friend in the hostel, this girl who you were friendly with, was she in the hostel?

MB: Yes, she was in the hostel.

RL: What was her name?

MB: Hilda Einstein. Actually related to the famous professor. She eventually went to America, she died a couple of years ago, and she was sort of a little mother to me. She was a few years older, and she had a cousin the same age as me and she took the two of us under her wing, and she was wonderful, it was what we needed, you know somebody who, and felt looked after.

RL: Was there any religious activity at all?

MB: No, no. Not in the hostel. No there was nothing religious there.

RL: Did they provide meals?

MB: Yes, yes. All kosher meals and so on but as far as religion is concerned, I can't even remember what they did on a Shabbos. I have no idea. Yes, I do know. On a Shabbos morning we used to go, this friend Hilda and her cousin and I, we used to go to Wilbraham Road Shul, we used to walk there, it was not all that far. We used to think Rabbi Carlebach was a God.

And when I came up to this side of Manchester I used to go to, what is that Shul called, it doesn't exist any more, where Myer Freedman used to, you know the Shul, Higher Broughton, that was a very nice Shul, they had a marvellous Rabbi, I have forgotten his name now, Rabbi, I think Rabbi Casper, a marvellous man. Have you heard of him?

RL: Did you have to register with the police?

MB: Did I ... ?

RL: Have to register with the police?

MB: Oh yes, very much so. Very much so. I couldn't move from A to B. If I wanted to sleep out somewhere overnight I would have to register. And we were told you can't go here, you can't go there, you weren't allowed to go to Liverpool,

Tape 2: 44 minutes 14 seconds

we weren't allowed to go into that area. The police kept a very close eye on us. We were very dangerous, aliens. I remember when I was still in Stoke on Trent all the refugees had to register one day en masse, and we were all interviewed and then it was you go to the Isle of Man, you go to Canada and you can stay. No rhyme or reason for it, the same kind of people, some of them were classed as enemy aliens, they were sent to the Isle of Man which was quite ridiculous. They were camps in the Isle of Man. My cousin who sat next to me, who was just as dangerous as me, he had to go to the Isle of Man, and another, he had to go to Canada, but I could stay here, there was absolutely no rhyme or reason for it, they were absolutely terrified of us, we were all spies, they didn't treat us very nicely, I had to go to Salford police to register for something and I was treated very nastily sometimes. They used to say ridiculous things, are you waving your torch at night when the planes go over. I was terrified of them. A lot of it had to do with after the fall of Holland. Because they had the Quislings there in Holland and they suddenly thought that every Jew was a Quisling.

RL: What did you think of Manchester having come from Stoke on Trent, or Trentham Gardens?

MB: I will tell you something, what I thought of Manchester. When I lived in Broom Lane I used to walk down Bury New Road, that far down there used to be the Assize Court, where the prison is now, and there were all Jewish shops, and every Jewish shop used to have a name in, and I used to walk up and down and I used to read the names: Goldberg, Lehman, Jacobs, Cohen, and that was my idea of freedom, because in Germany, people still had businesses and they used to take the names off. And then of course the Jewish businesses were closed. And here were Jews, displaying their names, so openly, this is absolute freedom. I wouldn't like to tell you how many times I walked up and down Bury New Road just to read the names. Strange isn't it how people are affected differently, yes, freedom, absolute freedom, you can display your name and you

don't have to look over your shoulder, you don't have to be afraid, what a wonderful feeling. By that time I was growing up.

RL: You say you came during the blitz.

MB: I came here during the blitz.

RL: What was your experience of that?

MB: Oh. The first blitz, the first time was very bad. It was when I was in Kershaw house and we all sat in the cellar. We weren't particularly scared because it was a big house, a big old house, and we knew we would be safe there. But afterwards when I had moved to the house in Broom Lane we

Tape 2: 48 minutes 24 seconds

sometimes had very heavy air raids and we used to sit under the stairs and I used to find it very claustrophobic, and Mrs Green used to say come on down, the air raid siren, and if I had been sleeping, I would say I am not coming, I am staying here, I am not coming, and one night, they dropped bombs in Broughton Park here, and they were whooshing down from Broughton Park to Broom Lane, I think I was there underneath the stairs before the bomb actually hit the ground. I never used to go into air raid shelters, even if I used to go into town with my friend Hilda, and she lived in Altrincham, and the air raid siren went when we were in the cinema, and we had the option to go to an air raid shelter or stay here, and we always used to stay. I didn't like shelters, I hated shelters. It was scary, I can't say it wasn't scary, very scary, but I didn't, I think we were all very brave in those days. It's true; it was a different mentality, a totally different outlook. If I was in town, if I wanted to walk to Broom Lane, if there was a blitz on, or something, or in a blackout, I used to walk it, I used to walk up Cheetham Hill Road. The town was full of foreign soldiers, of every colour, of every creed, or everything. You didn't look over your shoulder, you didn't have to be scared, nobody attacked you. I mean today I don't go up from here up to Channah's if its dark, it was a different world in that respect. So when I arrived it was scary, when you hear the bombers going over, but you were never scared to look over your shoulder, we had a different mentality altogether. It is like the people in London who sat in the underground singing, you know, the planes were dropping bombs and they were singing, I am not sure if they would be like that today. I don't think so, I think that everything that has been going on in the world and so in, we have a different mentality. A bomb would drop down and it didn't hit, and we would say, "You see Adolf; you see what you have done?" And really, I think today is different, you wouldn't be like that, we had a very refined attitude. It is a very good attitude to have, yes.

RL: How did you g/et on as a domestic with the family in Broom Lane? How did that, how did you get on there?

MB: Well, when I went in to introduce myself, Hilda took me in, Mrs Green said, "You will come and live with us, part of the family," he was a doctor. She said, "Can you answer the phone?"

I said, "Yes, I speak English more or less."

"You answer the phone for the doctor and you help me to dust a little, I have got a cleaning lady and I have got a washer woman."

It sounds wonderful, yeah, life of Reilly. I wasn't there for more than three weeks when she sacked the washer woman, and she said, "I don't know why you can't do the washing." And then she sacked the char woman, and I worked there very hard for a pound a week, and until I put my foot down. She had a daughter who had had a baby, and she said to me I should wash the baby's nappies and I said, "Sorry," I said to her, "If your daughter would to live with my mother, she wouldn't ask her to wash the nappies." I said, "I am not going to do the nappies."

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She was younger than I was; I mean she got married when she was 17. She can wash her own nappies.

And then I got rheumatic fever and I wasn't allowed to do any domestic work so I left there.

That is another story.

RL: How long were with this family?

MB: Hmmm, '45, about two years I should think. I think I was there for about two years.

RL: Until.

MB: Let me see, '45 ... '43, about '43. I came there by '43 I should think, I think so, I really don't know the dates Rosalyn, I am sorry about that.

RL: Was this a Jewish family?

MB: Oh yes.

RL: Yes.

MB: Very much so. They were a very nice family, a lovely family, but I worked my guts out.

RL: Did you get any time off ...

MB: I got rheumatic fever; I don't know where that came from.

RL: Did you get time off during the week?

MB: Yes, I used to. I used to meet my friend. I remember, oh by then, I used to get Wednesday afternoon for my time after, Sunday and Wednesday afternoon. They were very nice, but they couldn't understand refugees. Because, when I heard from this cousin that my parents had been sent to Riga, Mrs Green said, "Oh, you poor thing," she said, "Go to the pictures." What sort of mentality is that? People here didn't understand, really not. I remember once going to, that was before I had this family assigned to me, I spoke to this man, very comfortably off, and I said to him, "Look, if you sign this affidavit for my parents, I mean my father can do everything." I said, "He is a businessman, he is a shochet, he is a chazzan, he can turn his hand to anything, it wouldn't cost you a penny and he would not come to you for anything, not for a penny. If you could

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only sign to help him get out of Germany", and he patted me on my head, I can feel it now when I go like this, and he said, "Child, I have got my own worries." People did not understand, they really did not understand. Perhaps it is hard to understand if you are not, if you don't live, I mean today we can't understand why they didn't understand, because today the whole world is upset and there is so much, so many awful things happening. But in those days in England people were very much sheltered, they were very sheltered, they didn't understand and I don't hold it against them, but it did hurt. They certainly couldn't see the danger. The Americans also didn't, they couldn't get into America, America had a quota and if that that quota for the year was full that was it, they wouldn't take you. They would have taken everybody.

RL: Now this film is about to end, so we will just have to stop here.

MB: Yes.

TAPE 3

RL: This is the interview with Marga Brodie and it is tape 3.

I was just wondering what connection or association you had with other youngsters in Manchester.

MB: Other?

RL: Other youngsters, other young people, in Manchester at this time, you know, during the war. If you got to know any native Mancunians at all or who you mixed with really.

MB: I had a lot of friends but they were mostly other refugees. But to get to know more Mancunians, that was after I met Mrs Green, I had got to know a lady called Ada Fisher, she had in laws who lived opposite the refugee hostel where I stayed and they used to pop

in there and I got to know her there. She lived in Heaton Street which was off Leicester Road. She was marvellous, she had no end of refugees coming and going through her modest little home, and she used to say to me, "Come in whenever you want. Make yourself at home here." Which I did, and Gaby lived as well there, that is where I got to know him. And when I wasn't well in the Greens and I left there, and I didn't know where to go, because I still had no work permit, I kept applying but they wouldn't give me a work permit, so I took a room in Wellington Street, and I went to this Ada Fisher, and I told her, I said, "I am moving to Wellington Street." She said, "Where are you moving to?" So I told her where, and she said, "No way, you are not going there? It is an awful place." I mean awful in that it was very dilapidated, nice

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people, very dilapidated, even in the bedroom, they had a bed in the bedroom and a string across the wall for hanging your hangers on. There was no wardrobe. And she knew of the place, and she said, "No way, you are coming here." I said, "I can't come here, you have got no room." She said, she was divorced and so she was by herself with two children, and she said, "You are coming here, and you are sleeping in my bed with me rather than going there." She had one of those new, big, big double beds, and that is what I did for a little while. And she had her children there, Gaby lived there, and a niece of hers lived there and a second cousin or something, he used to come very often and used to sleep downstairs, and all in a three bedroom house, you can imagine. That is where I moved to, and then my whole life, my meeting of English people broadened; I got to know a lot more people.

RL: Were you still poorly? Were you still ill when you moved to Mrs Fishers?

MB: Yes. Well I was better, but it left me with a legacy because I wasn't properly looked after. That is why I have got heart trouble now, because of the rheumatic fever, I didn't have the nursing I should have, so that is my legacy.

RL: Did you go into hospital with that?

MB: No, I didn't go into hospital. I stayed in bed there. I got up much too early, and I did things much too early, but anyway that is a different story. But that is how I came to Ada Fisher and I stayed there until I got married. And Gaby moved out, when we started to going out together, and he moved out, and ...

RL: Just explain a little bit about Gaby, you know, for the film.

MB: What shall I explain?

RL: Who he was? Where he had come from?

MB: Gaby came from Bratislava, Czechoslovakia and he came over, the Manchester Yeshiva brought him over, and when he started working, he was allowed to work, and he

worked in the office there, he is still there, I always tell him he doesn't believe in changing, I say a good job he might want to change his wife if he, yes, I don't know, that is how we got to know each other, and Ada Fisher was the shadchan, and that is another story.

RL: What did you do whilst you stayed at Ada's?

MB: While I was staying with her I got permission to work, but only in war work, so they sent for me and I had to go to some sort of tribunal to give all my data to see that I am trustworthy, and they said, "We will get you a job in Old Trafford,

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night work." And I didn't fancy that very much, so I went to a doctor, and she said, "No way, you are not doing that, you are not working night work or doing anything like that, I will fix it." So he fixed it, but I still had to do war work, it was the only thing I was allowed to do. And I had to, I worked for a firm called Ward and Goldstone and I became quite high up, I was inspector of aircraft wiring, sounds very very posh, for the Lancaster Bombers, and nowadays sometimes I read, I have got this funny habit, but we get the Daily Telegraph, and I read the obituaries, which I find fascinating, and very often I read about old airmen, or old soldiers dying and like this week somebody died, aged 98, and he was a pilot in the Lancaster, and I must have seen to his wires.

RL: And how did you get on there?

MB: Oh, very well, there were a lot of Jewish people working there; I had a lot of friends there. Not all refugees, some were English girls and English boys and some were refugees. Yes, it was very nice, I enjoyed it.

RL: What kind of hours or days did you work?

MB: What kind of days?

RL: Yes. How many days a week?

MB: A full week, except for Saturdays. Yeah, a full week.

RL: Where was the factory?

MB: Pendleton. And that is when I had to stop taking money from the refugee committee. I was earning and I was able to pay for my keep, I didn't earn an awful lot, but I earned ... and I stayed there until we got married. And we got married as soon as the war finished.

RL: What date?

MB: 14th October 45, and as I said before, we didn't have a photographer, a very nice gentleman came to see Gaby, and he said, "Gaby, I believe you are getting married, you are just two refugee kids, let me pay for the wedding."

And we said, "No, thank you." We said, "We will have what we can afford, we will not have anything else, we will not have anybody paying anything for it."

So he was earning a bit, and I was saving up a little bit, and we paid for our wedding. There was a caterer called Mrs Peat, have you heard of her? Yes. And Mrs Peat was wonderful, she catered for all the Jewish functions, and we came to her, and we said, "Look, this is what we have got, this is our money, what can you do for that?" So she worked it out, and she said, "I can make you a

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very nice reception, and for an extra sixpence we can have ice cream." And we worked it out and we had enough for an extra sixpence and we all had ice cream. And my wedding dress I borrowed from Mrs Dresdner and my veil was very posh, I knew a lady in Altrincham, an English lady, who was very high society, and she had been, I don't know what they call that, she was, she had come out in Buckingham Palace, I don't know what they call it, when they became a certain age, they used to come to Buckingham Palace for a ball and they used to wear veils, and she lent me her veil. She was very good looking, but she did lend it to me and it was beautiful. But we managed, we did everything, but we forgot the photographer. So we never had a decent photograph.

RL: Who were the unterfuhrers?

MB: The brother for me, the brother of this Ada Fisher, called Louis Kessler, and for Gaby, Reb Gedalia Rabinowitz, yes, Reb Lippa's father, because Gaby used to eat there on a Shabbos. In Yeshiva they had no facilities for eating, so they used to eat out, the boys, and he ate there every Shabbos until he got married, and they were the unterfuhrers. And we got married in the Great Shul, and they had a grotty old hall. We only had a reception there, a very nice reception with blintzes and sandwiches and ice cream. There were quite a few people there. But we had no family there. Gaby had a brother, thank God that was something, and my cousin was here, all the others were strangers. Very few people knew me, but they all knew Gaby because from the Yeshiva and from ... A nice young man, and a nice lady, you know how they talk with speeches and somebody, I don't know if this rings a bell with you, before your time, many, many years ago, we used to have, but you must have seen this name somewhere, he was the president of the Shul, called Lawrence Marks. I am sure that name must ring a bell, yes? Well this Lawrence Marks was also a friend of Dr Green and he knew me, and he stood up and said, "I think it is high time that somebody stood up and spoke about the Kallah." Thank goodness somebody knew me and talked about me! And that's it. And then we did, we did carry on from there, we did everything else ourselves, we never came onto anybody.

RL: Where did you go to live after you were married?

MB: Well, that is another story. We suddenly realised we had to have somewhere to live when we were married, about two weeks before we got married, so there was a man called Mr Fox, the man from Cassell-Fox, and Gaby knew of him, and he had property, and he went to him, and he said, "Mr Fox," and he told them the story, we are getting married, and we have got nobody to do anything and we need a flat, and can you suggest something for us, and he bought, there and then he went out, and he bought a little house that was for sale on Woodlands Road, and he made it into two flats, and we had

Tape 3:13 minutes 37 seconds

the downstairs flat, and he said, "The upstairs flat, if any of your friends need a flat you can find somebody for that." Which we did, and they paid 15 shillings and we paid £1 for the flat. Yes, it was a good flat, it was very nice of him. But it was really funny, suddenly we are getting married in two weeks time and we have got nowhere t/o live. And from there we moved later on, after a couple of years to Bank Road, and from Bank Road we moved to Stanley Road.

RL: Did you, before marriage, did you go to any of, what did you do in your spare time besides the cinema? Did you mix in any groups? Did you ...

MB: I always used to go to Torah V`Avoda, we never went to B'nai Akiva, no, Torah V`Avoda I used to go.

RL: Tell me about that.

MB: There is not so much to tell, we used to mainly meet on a Shabbos afternoon. Rabbi Casper used to give a drosha, and we used to get together, but otherwise, I used to get together a lot with my friends, just socially.

RL: Where was Torah V`Avoda held?

MB: In Crumpsall Shul Hall. We used to go.

RL: And how many did it attract?

MB: How many ...

RL: How many went to it?

MB: I don't know, 30/40, quite a lot of people.

RL: Were they mainly refugees or were they English?

MB: Not necessarily, no. It was quite a mixture of people; I don't remember who they are. But that was my, really the only group meetings I used to go to.

RL: How did you make friends? Where did your friends come from? You know, you said you went out with friends.

MB: Yes, most of them were refugees. A lot of them were still friends which I made in Kershaw House, we used to go out together a lot. And, yes, some of them were English as well, but we always felt more comfortable somehow with friends whom you had made earlier on. We used to spend a lot of time walking and rambling and going out and, and generally being together.

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RL: Do you remember the end of the war?

MB: The end of the war I remember very well, yes.

It didn't seem possible, that we were all in the same predicament; we all dreaded what we were going to find out. And we all found out, I think of all my friends who I had here, not one of them, their parents were alive any more after the war, I can't think of one of them. And then, sort of, after the war they all dispersed, a lot of them went to America, and then people started to go to Israel, and my brother in law, and in the meantime we did find out that Gaby's sister had survived, and she had been in Auschwitz, and she survived and she went to Switzerland to a hostel, and from there she was going to go illegal, on one of those illegal boats to Israel, and we put our foot down and told her she must not, you have been spared, so many of the boats went down, you are not going, you are coming to us, so she came to us. And, she was quite, I think she was about six years younger than Gaby, I didn't know her, and I thought, "Oh, she won't like me." I thought she won't like me, I am German and she is Czech and there is such a dividing wall there, and she won't like me, and on the way to the station to meet her, we went into Lewis's and I brought some tea towels, and when we came home, we met her on the station and we took her home, and all I could talk about was tea towels, because I felt, I didn't know what to talk to her about. Here is a girl, she has come out of Auschwitz, she has seen the most horrific things, everything I could say was trivial, so all I could talk about was tea towels. For years and years afterwards we laughed. And we gave her to eat, and it was time to go to bed, and before she went to bed I put a hot water bottle in her bed, and when she went into bed and she found the hot water bottle she said, "That sister in law, I am going to love her." And we had a very, very close relationship. I mean very close, we were more like sisters than sisters in law. All from a little thing like a hot water bottle. She needed spoiling, and I didn't know what to do, but it worked out beautifully, and she stayed with us for a number of years, at least three years if not more, and then she went to Israel. Meanwhile, my brother in law had gone already, so he was there, so he looked after her.

RL: So she was married? Your brother in law, that is Gaby's brother?

MB: Yes, Gaby's brother. He got married. He lived in Thackstead that was a refugee, that was a Moshav, in the west of England or something, and they trained him there, in

agriculture mainly, and he went to Lavi, he was one of the early pioneers of Lavi. All his life he couldn't straighten up properly, because when he worked in Lavi, they cleared the boulders and the rocks and everything from the fields, it was just rocky, and that is what he was doing for years, and it affected him, and he was always walking like that, because he was one of the early pioneers. Until their children started to grow up and they didn't like the idea

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of their children being in a children's home, he wanted them at home. So that when he started, together with another few people from Lavi, they started the Moshav, Mesurat Yitzchak, which is an offshoot of Lavi, but that is a Moshav and they could have the children at home.

RL: Whilst Gaby's sister stayed with you did she do anything?

MB: Yes, she learned dress making here. And, but when she went to Israel she became a gannenet, a kindergarten headmistress and she ran her own kindergarten there. For many years, she was very, very good at it as well. And, then she married, and had a family there, but unfortunately about two years ago she died. It was very scary to have somebody in the house, who means so much, I was so frightened, was I doing the right things by her. But thank God we did.

RL: Did she ever speak about anything?

MB: Never, never, she would never talk about anything, she said, "Don't ask me." She could never talk about that. And even 20/30 years later we couldn't get her to talk about it. Her husband also, her husband was in a camp, and he lost a leg, and they sort of talked about what happened, but she wouldn't talk about it. He wouldn't, I mean, he was entitled to an operation for his leg, and he wouldn't take a penny, he said they can't compensate me for anything, and he wouldn't take it and they never talked about things there. In a way we were sorry because we would have liked to have talked about it but she would never, but they remembered the parents and so on, they wouldn't ...

You get two types of people who came out, there was either those who couldn't talk about it or there were those who don't stop talking about it.

RL: So, you were married, and you were living first of all in this downstairs flat. When did children start coming?

MB: Our children were born in Bank Road, we had moved already by then.

RL: And what did you have?

MB: Two boys.

RL: When were they born and what were their names?

MB: Yehuda was born in 1950 and Anthony was born in 1953. And, they are both married, and they have got children, and they have got grandchildren.

Tape 3: 24 minutes 35 seconds

RL: First of all, let's just take them through the years. First of all, while you were living there, which Shul did you belong to? Where did you go to daven?

MB: When we lived in Woodlands Road in the flat I used to go to Central. When we used to live in Bank Road it was too far to walk with the little children to Stenecourt, we used to go to Middleton Road, and then we started going to Stenecourt. So I really, we had this thing with Gaby for 60 years, but I haven't been there for 60 years. I think mine was only about 50.

RL: You mentioned that Gaby was working, he went to the Yeshiva, and then he got a job as secretary of the Yeshiva. What other jobs did he have as well? Because we have not talked about that.

MB: Well, Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur he used to daven in various Shuls, where there was a vacancy, he was always finding himself something to do.

RL: When did he start with Stenecourt?

MB: Sixty years ago, work it out.

RL: 1944.

MB: Yes.

RL: And what was he doing there?

MB: What was he doing? They had a minister called Mr Shine, I don't know his first name, Yankel I think. And this Yankel Shine was a friend of Gaby's and this Yankel Shine had to go to London for something, and he asked Gaby if he would stand in for him just to daven for him, and Gaby was very familiar with the davening and he loved davening so he went there. So that was the first Shabbos. The second Shabbos he phoned and he said he was still in London and he should carry on, and then he phoned him and he said he had decided to take a job in London and ask them if you can stay on. So he asked them and they said you are a bit too young for us really, but alright you can do the davening and the lehning, and then one day, Rabbi Altman, and one day there was a Bar Mitzvah and Rabbi Altman was supposed to speak at this Bar Mitzvah, and he hadn't turned up and Mrs Altman came running up to Shul, "I am very sorry my husband can't come." He had flu or something, a high temperature, he couldn't come. Well there was absolutely chaos because the people had a Bar Mitzvah and they can't have a Bar

Mitzvah without somebody making a speech, it had not been heard of, and so Gaby says, I can speak, so the woman says, no ways, we have got no speaker but it is better than you, what can you say? He said, ask the father. And the father said well it is better than nothing. And

Tape 3: 27 minutes 48 seconds

he gave a drosha and from there it sort of materialised. So they decided eventually to have him as a part time, and he is still part time!

RL: That was in the Great Synagogue?

MB: No, that was in Stenecourt. Yes, that was in Stenecourt. Gaby used to go sometimes to the Great Synagogue and daven there, but this was in Stenecourt.

RL: So he was part time there and part time in the Yeshiva?

MB: No, the Yeshiva was full time.

RL: The Yeshiva was full time.

MB: Yes.

RL: So did you give up work?

MB: I gave up work. I was talking to Florence the other day about it. It is a strange thing, it wasn't done, when we got married we didn't work, we ran the home. Florence said, "Why didn't you work? Why didn't my mummy work?" It was just one of those things, all my friends, all got married, English girls, and we just didn't, it was silly really when you think about it, we needed money desperately, but that is how it was, we didn't work. When I think about it now it was foolish, I always, always fancied being somebody's private secretary, I never did get asked again. I am very good at organising and I could have made a very good private secretary, but that is how it was.

RL: So which schools did your children go to?

MB: Broughton Jewish and Anthony went to King David and then Yehuda went to Bury, Bury Grammar. And then they left and they both went to Yeshivas.

RL: Which Yeshivas.

MB: Manchester Yeshiva, first of all was Manchester Yeshiva. Yehuda stayed in Manchester Yeshiva for about five years and Anthony went to Israel, and he went to, I have forgotten what it is called, some Yeshiva there.

RL: Was that usual at the time for boys to go from school to Yeshiva?

MB: Not as usual as it is now. But as far as our children were concerned there was no option there, but to go to Yeshiva. They wanted to go to Yeshiva as well, but it wasn't as, as usual as it is now, that you take it, either girls or

Tape 3: 30 minutes 45 seconds

boys go to Yeshiva, no, no, it is much better today. In those days, as far as ours were concerned, that is how Gaby was brought up as well, to go to Yeshiva.

RL: Did they belong to any youth groups as children?

MB: Agudah. They went to Agudah.

RL: Where did they meet and what did they do?

MB: Not very much. They used to meet on a Shabbos, another shiur, another story, not an awful lot. They didn't go to B'nai Akiva. There was very little choice then; it was either B'nai Akiva or Agudah.

RL: What made you decide between?

MB: It wasn't what we decided. I think it was sort of the boys they mixed with, they went where their friends went.

RL: And then after Yeshiva what did they go on to do?

MB: After Yeshiva, I don't know, I have forgotten what they did. Yehuda took an MA, in law, and when he qualified he said right, That's it, I am not carrying on with it, and he got himself a job in the Beis Din, why he didn't want to carry on, he said I am not interested in other peoples misdemeanours so now at the Beis Din all he is doing is one get after the other, you see, all misdemeanours.

RL: What is his position in the Beis Din? What is his official position?

MB: Administrator.

Anthony, when he came back he went to a college here, to take some A levels and then he got his job, with the firm he is still with, in insurance. Except by now they have been taken over six times and they keep changing their name, I don't even remember any more who he is working for, he is still with the same firm.

RL: Do you think that religiously things have changed over the years. If you look at your own lives, have things changed over the years at all, in terms of observance, or the type of observance.

MB: How do you mean?

RL: In terms of your own lives, has the observance of religion changed, explain how.

Tape 3: 34 minutes 16 seconds

MB: Oh yes, yes, definitely, take for instance, take our Shul, and this is general, I remember when I started going to Stenecourt, it came Sukkos, there were two lulavim in the Shul, the minister had one and the Chazzan had one, nobody else. You take today and everybody has got a lulav, because you can't round, we have to have two circuits because everybody goes round with a lulav and esrog. I think there were two people with woollen taleisim, the Rabbi and the chazzan. Today, I don't think we have a single member who wears a silk Tallis any more, and as far as davening is concerned, the women used to go, the ladies, they couldn't daven, it was out of the question, they used to listen and they used to talk, and today they go to Jewish schools, and they learn to daven, and they daven and they realise you are not supposed to talk. From that point of view everybody is much more ... also, as far as kashrus is concerned, people are much more kashrus conscious today, because it is out in the open, we talk about it, we have shiurim, we have, it is a bit different. There are still a lot of people who don't keep kashrus, because I heard this week, that tesco's shares go down in, their food supply is so much less at Pesach because people buy pesachdik but buy treif for the rest of the year, you know, and, unfortunately there are still a lot of people who have not changed, but by and large the whole concept has changed.

RL: Has your own personal religious observance changed over the years?

MB: I think so, I hope so, I really, really hope so, because that is what I pray for every year, to go a little bit higher. Yes, you daven with more fervour, you think before you do things, you think before you speak, kashrus as well we be more observant but, we are much more aware today of what to do and what not to do. I really hope that it has improved and really hope that it keeps on improving.

RL: You mentioned, shiurim, did you always go to shiurim?

MB: Whenever possible, yes.

RL: Were there shiurim when you were younger?

MB: Whenever possible I used to go to shiurim.

RL: Who used to give?

MB: I don't remember really. For many years I used to go to Rebbe Balkind's shiur. He used to give a lady's shiur for many years. I still go every Tuesday to a shiur which the late Mrs Royd started off about 25 years ago and it is still going strong. And, on a Tuesday morning I go there.

Tape 3: 38 minutes 0 second

RL: Where is that?

MB: In the sem. In Leicester Road. It was given by Rabbi Goldberg and Rabbi Dunner. Two excellent shiurim. Yes, whenever possible.

RL: When you were first married were there shiurim?

MB: No, no. When I was first married there was really very little for women. It came much later. The first lady's shiurim I went to was tehilim by Rabbi, by Mr Feingold. He lived here. I think he was the first one I can think of who started to speak to ladies specifically. After then afterwards there were plenty of shiurim. Which was also a big improvement, women were very much neglected in that respect.

RL: Before you got married did you have lessons, did you have kallah lessons with anybody?

MB: Kallah lessons, yes.

RL: And who taught you.

MB: A lady called Mrs Segal. She is not alive any more.

RL: Was she just ...

MB: Yes, she was just a, she was a friend as well, you know, she taught me. And afterwards I used to speak to quite a lot of kallahs, you know, and I found out later on that some of the ladies in town are much more professional than I was, so I handed them over.

RL: So you used to teach kallahs.

MB: Yes, in the beginning, and I used to take the kallahs to the mikveh, one of them I even went in the water with her because she was so scared. I used to enjoy it but I found when I was talking to some of the professional teachers that they had a much more professional way about them than I did, so I handed it over, I thought it was better.

RL: Have you been involved in any other organisations or committees at all?

MB: Well, I have always, for about forty years I have worked for Meals On Wheels, and for about forty years I have worked for the ladies committee of Stenecourt.

Tape 3: 40 minutes 45 seconds

RL: First of all, Meals-On-Wheels, how did you start? How did you get involved with that?

MB: There was a lady called Betty Zendle, who had worked for the kitchen, nearly as long as Dolly, I met her one day, just when we moved here, and she said, "You have moved nearer." The kitchen was in those days in Levy House, she said, "You know it is not very far, you should come in on a Monday and deliver meals."

I said, "Right, I'll come." And for many years I used to go out delivering, and one Monday morning I came for my meals to take out, and the lady who was cooking, was called Lily Weisbart, and nobody had turned up, and she says to me, "I am desperate Marga, will you come and help me, just for today. I don't expect you to, just for today," and I thought, right, just for today.

Then she said, "Come again next Monday, because I don't think anybody is coming." And I came again the next Monday, and I have been coming every Monday since. But it was different in those days, we started much later, and we had less ... First of all nobody was allowed to come in before 12 o'clock to take meals out. Now they come at 9 o'clock, because we did everything on a Monday morning. That is how I started, and I love it.

RL: And what is your job there? What do you do?

MB: Well when I, mixing mince meat and rolling mince meat balls which I could do in my sleep. Making chicken soup, anything, whatever, whatever needed doing.

RL: What time do you go?

MB: Now?

RL: Yes.

MB: Now I go at quarter to seven, but I go home much earlier, in those days, when I first started I used to go home at 2 o'clock in the afternoon because we also had to wash up all the dishes, now everything is disposable we don't have that business of dishes, and I go home early, now I can't stand so long in any case, but then I used to go home at 2 o'clock, from about 9 o'clock until 2. Now I go home at 10 o'clock, from quarter to seven until ten. We are much more organised now.

RL: How many meals are delivered?

MB: About 240 or something a week. It varies: 240, 230, 250, it varies, how many people are sick, and, it just varies.

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RL: So you go in on a Monday?

MB: Only on a Monday.

RL: And they send out meals?

MB: They send out meals on a Thursday which they cook on a Wednesday, because it's fish and it had to be fried and they do that on a Wednesday, I only go on a Monday.

RL: And you say also you have been involved with the Stenecourt ladies?

MB: Yes, yes.

RL: When did you start with that involvement?

MB: Quite early on, when I first started going. But it was different. We had a very nice committee but we didn't do an awful lot. For instance, if we had a function, it was always sandwiches. Later on we used to start cooking meals, you know we had a dinner, we had a this, and it came to Simchas Torah and we made fish and, we didn't do that on the other committees, it was all sandwiches.

RL: What was the job of the committee? What was there ...

MB: Just to look after ... in the early days it was just to look after the functions which we had. Not kiddushim. Simchas Torah, or sometimes we had a card evening. But later on when we started our new committee under the chairmanship of Muriel, it was fundraising, we raised a lot of money, we made a lot of money for Stenecourt, and I used to do, I still do it, I haven't done it this year because I haven't been well, but I used to run the hundred club. I made a lot of money for them on the hundred club, thousands of pounds. But our function was raising money, before we had the hall we needed that money, and we were very happy to every so often hand over our £1,500 or £1,200 or whatever it made. We used to have coffee mornings, we used to have luncheons, we used to have dinners, all sorts of things, do you remember? No? Hat parades, fashion shows, that was all fund raising.

RL: And kiddushim, who used to do that? What about kiddushim?

MB: Kiddushim we always used to do, and on occasion we also used to fund raise. If it was a really big Kiddush, the whole lot, with the fruit and the herring then we used to ask for £100 and if it was a little Kiddush we used to ask for £50 and it all went into a kitty.

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RL: So besides these two major organisations that you were involved in, were you involved in anything else?

MB: Yes, I was involved in quite a few things, but that is not, the reason I belonged to a committee, called Bayis Lepletos. We made money for an orphanage, and we also used to do a lot of fundraising for that, and I used to do the pushkies as well, but a lot of our

ladies are not able to do it anymore or some are not here any more, so we still raise money somehow we get a thousand pounds, a couple of thousand pounds which we send to Yerushalayim, to the orphanage.

RL: When did you start with that? How long have you been doing that?

MB: When did I start?

RL: How long have you been involved?

MB: A long time. About 45 years 50 years. There were one or two other fund raising things. I can't remember what they were called.

RL: How did you get involved with that one? How did that start?

MB: Through the late Rebbetzin Segal, she was involved with it, and she asked me if I would be interested, we used to do a lot of, I was very friendly with her, you know, Faygie's mother. We did all sorts of things, in those days if a poor kallah got married we used to make the food for the reception or for the dinner and I used to do that together with her and a few other ladies, and I was still quite young, I was more or less newly married, but it was good fun, we used to make potato salads in such big dishes, we used to use our hands, all sorts of things. I raised money for other things but I don't want to go into all that.

RL: How do you feel? How would you describe yourself in terms of nationality?

MB: English. British.

RL: Do you feel different ... ?

MB: Somebody once said to me you have not got an English passport you have got a British one so I feel British.

RL: Do you feel different to the British in any way?

MB: Yes. I think I am, perhaps sort of an English mentality, I certainly haven't got a German mentality. I have a Jewish mentality, an Israeli mentality, not an Israeli

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mentality, that is different again, but I think I am very, very much, a British mentality.

RL: What does that mean?

MB: I don't know. I don't really know. It means I am not as they call it in Yiddish a Yekke, I have not got this regimented German mentality, I am easy going, like the British

people are. I like to think that I have a British mentality, but even that is changing as it is not the same Britain that I came to all those years ago, it is completely different, it is very sad, I get very upset when I see what has happened to this country, because really was a very, very nice country. But I can't say that now.

RL: How do you feel it has changed?

MB: It has changed in every way, I don't really know, there is no respect, there is no morals, no respect, there is no ...

When I first came here, even later on when my children were young, we used to go to Wales on holiday and we used to stay in a flat, and we used to come there to the flat, and the flat door was open, and they left it, and they had all the silver standing there, there was a certain trust and honesty and so on, today you can't do that, today I have to bring my handbag into here because I don't know who is going to walk into my back kitchen. And, there is a big change in this country. And also, it is not the same neighbourliness, everybody was a good neighbour, you don't get that either any more, I feel very sad about that. Because I am sort of, very, very attached to this country.

RL: How accepted did you feel, do you feel here?

MB: That is a difficult question to answer. I think I am still a refugee in that respect. Mrs Ada Fisher, she has a daughter, she was a little girl when I came, and she used to call all the neighbours, "Come and have a look at our refugee!" No, I think you remain a refugee, you are not 100% accepted, definitely not. But at one time it used to bother me, but it doesn't bother me any more, because I feel I have accepted this country as my ...

RL: How did this non acceptance show itself? How did that present itself?

MB: In different ways. Before I was married I was walking with my friend, down George Street one day and a woman came out of her house, a Jewish woman, and she said, "I want you a minute," we didn't know her then, she said, "You are refugee girls, you come here only because you want to marry our boys. I have got a daughter and I can't get her married." We were very sorry and said we

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would look for a shidduch for her, but we never did. It was that sort of attitude we came across, quite often, all sorts of peculiarities, we weren't 100% accepted.

RL: Has that changed over the time? Over the years?

MB: I mean, we are, for all, I have not got a German mentality, but somehow when people come from the continent they are slightly different, yes, they are different from the Poles, different from the Russians, we have still got that continental something, which sets us aside a little bit. You know that? Can feel that, I think so, we have slightly

different values at one time that used to bother me, I don't think about it any more, I am past that.

RL: How, what are your feelings towards Israel?

MB: My feelings for Israel are very strong. I am only sorry that I do not live there. I feel now that anti-Semitism is growing as well and it is growing here in leaps and bounds. I remember when I first came here somebody saying to me, "Oh we are all right now, whatever happened in Europe could never happen here." And I thought to myself, "You foolish man, there is no such thing as could never happen." And you can see, I am not saying it has reached a stage where we have concentration camps, but there is a lot of anti-Semitism in England and in Europe and in Europe even stronger, and that frightens me, not for myself but for my children and my grandchildren, that frightens me, and that is why I am sorry we don't all live in Israel.

For me the first time I went to Israel was in 1962, and I said to Gaby, "You go back, sell the house, give up your job. I'll stay here with the children and get the children settled in school, find somewhere to live, find somewhere to work, you go back and then ... " Gaby said, "No, we won't do that, we will all go back together, and we will all come here together." We arranged, and still, and then the kids started school, and then there were O levels, and then there were A levels, there was always something else, and we are still going. There is always a different category.

RL: Have you been back many times?

MB: Yes. We used to go every year, but I haven't been for four years, because I haven't been able to travel, and I miss it very much. Unfortunately, the family there is also shrinking, my brother in law died, my sister in law died and I miss seeing my nieces and nephews there. They can't come so often because they are working and some are in the army, yes I do, I do miss that greatly and I miss being with them.

RL: This film is just about to end so we will stop here.

TAPE 4

MB: Right, I will go and see what Gaby is doing.

RL: This is the interview with Margo Brodie and it is tape four.

I was just wondering, as a young married couple, and as an older married couple, who your social circle has been? Who your friends have been?

MB: As a young married couple most of our friends were foreign friends. A lot of them were also young married with whom Gaby went to Yeshiva. Our closest friends were connected with the Yeshiva, and most of them were married to English girls and our very close friends for many, many years, and some went to America, and some went to Israel,

and you know how it is, and later on, we were connected with people from the Shul and so on, machutonim, yes ...

RL: Who did your children marry?

MB: My children married ... Anthony is married to Florence Steinberg who has got an English background and Yehuda is married to Channah Wiesenfeld, who has got a Czech background. Her mother is half Czechoslovakian and half Hungarian, and ...

RL: How did they meet their respective spouses?

MB: How did they?

RL: How did they meet?

MB: Yehuda's was a shidduch. He was introduced to Channah by somebody to whom we are eternally grateful. And Florence and Anthony met in the library when they were both studying, in Crumpsall, down Cheetham Hill Road, at Crumpsall Library.

RL: The two families knew each other though?

MB: Yes, we have always been friends with the Steinbergs. It was very easy and the Wiesenfelds we got to know afterwards.

RL: And what children do the two families have?

MB: Well, they have got, they have both got nice families, and some of them are married already.

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Yehuda has got three married children, married sons, two are in Israel at the moment, one in the Kollel and one in the Yeshiva and the other one is in London and Anthony has got two married, they are both in London. None of the married children are here, which is a pity.

RL: And how many unmarried on both sides?

MB: They have both got another three unmarried, and hopefully, we will still be around when it is their turn.

RL: Have you got great grandchildren?

MB: Yes. Don't ask me how many because I am not counting. Yes, gorgeous great grandchildren, they are just beginning to get to know us, which is nice.

RL: But they all live out of town?

MB: Yes. Yom tov time they come. Which is not really enough. But we talk on the phone, that is, I talk, they just nod their heads from what their mummys tell me. They are very little; the eldest one is four going on for five. But the others are only about two, one, two, they are lovely.

RL: Do you think you're ...

MB: As far as we are concerned it is a very, very big bonus, first of all that we were spared to come out, and then to have the zechus to live and see great grandchildren, which is a very big bonus, it is something which we never, certainly my husband and I, will never take for granted, I feel very emotional about that, I am sure everybody else feels the same.

RL: Do you think that your experiences affected the way you brought up your children at all?

MB: The way we what?

RL: Did your experiences, you know being a refugee and losing your parents, did that affect the way that you brought up your family?

MB: Yes, yes. I was over protective, which is not good, I was forever worrying, and I turned them into worriers too.

And a funny incident happened when Yehuda was about seven, he just started, he had gone from Latham House, to Broughton Jewish to big school, and they had a school play on, and he came home and he said, "Everybody's got a part in

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the play except me." I said, "Why did they leave you out." But he was very unhappy, they left me out, I am not the sort of person to go to school and run to the teachers, so when I took him to school the next morning I spoke to one of the teachers and I said, "Can you explain to me how can you leave one child out of the school play if everybody else has got something to do, even if they are only in the choir."

She said, "Because he has a terrible foreign accent." Which evidently he had, but I didn't notice that.

I said, "But excuse me, the headmaster is German, Miss Dahl is German, Miss Etbach is German, they've all, Rabbi Silbiger is German." I said, "They've got terrible accents." What sort of, this is not Eton College, but they couldn't find him a speaking part. You have got to find him a part. The next day when he came home, happy now, he has got the best part, he is a scene shifter, he hasn't got to talk, he has got to move the scenes and every time when he moves the scenes he can talk a bow and the audience will clap. I

thought that was hilarious. He has got a foreign accent. All those kids were foreign, all the teachers were foreign, all the parents were foreign. It sorted itself out, he got over it.

RL: Do you think your experiences have affected you psychologically in any way?

MB: Do you mean for myself or for my family?

RL: For yourself.

MB: No, I can't say I am psychologically disturbed in any way. I don't have nightmares. I tell you what, it took me, I should think it took me about eight years I was in the country before I could say the word mother. If you would have said to me, "Say mother," my brain just went completely. I could say father, but I could not say mother, it took me at least eight years before I could even say the word, and that is a psychological thing, it took me, even to this day, over 60 years ago, over 70 years ago, I find it difficult to talk about my mother, without tears coming to my eyes, so in that case it has got a psychological effect. It does have, it must have a psychological affect. Also my kids used to say when they were little, you never tell us very much about, about your background, I found it difficult, nowadays it is better, but that is also a well known symptom, all the Israeli doctors used to say, in 50 years time, 60 years time, people will open up. That is why you get a lot of books now and plays, because it takes that long to open up, maybe you have to reach a certain age or I don't know what it is, but that was very hard, very, very hard.

RL: Did your experiences affect your religious beliefs in any way?

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MB: No, no. Not in any way. I can say that in all honesty. It didn't. I am prepared to accept what the Almighty sends. We were lucky as well, worse things could happen so easily, but we worked on it together, not to let anything affect us religious wise. Thank God for that.

RL: How do you feel towards Germany and the Germans?

MB: How do I feel? Not very friendly, I wouldn't go back, not for all the tea in China. I mean, people have gone back to their home towns, and this, no I wouldn't go back for anything. We were in Switzerland some years ago and some Germans came and sat next to us and I just picked myself up and I moved. I couldn't bare to listen to their voices, I hate the German language. The only thing I like in German, and I think I must have inherited this from my mother, she adored poetry, good poetry, like Goethe, Schiller, and I love German poetry. I don't like English poetry, but I love German poetry, that is the only thing I can read in poetry, otherwise I can't read, I can't ... My husband says I speak English with an German accent, and German with an English accent, and it is quite true, my German is atrocious, because I don't want to, I am very intent, I do not want to speak this language, that is how it is, I feel very bitter towards them, I can't understand people,

Jewish people who go and live back in Germany, it is beyond me, it is not necessary. Some people make all sorts of excuses, for parnossa, I would rather starve.

RL: Do you receive any reparations?

MB: I get a pension, a small pension. Which also came about very strange, I was talking to Mr Henderson, I don't know if you know him, George's father, he had a lot to do with reparation. He was talking to me one day and he said, "Do you get this and you get that." I said, "No."

And he said to me, "Do you get a pension?"

I said, "No, why should I get a pension, I didn't pay any stamps or anything?"

He said, "Were you ever ill?"

I said, "Yes, I had my appendix out."

He said, "Well, who paid for all that?"

I said, "I don't know, we belonged to a, my father belonged to, what's it called in German, krankenkasse"

He said, "That's it, if he paid kranke.. then you are entitled to a pension, only a small one, but you are entitled to it." And he got it through for me. And I was in two minds at the time, should I, shouldn't I, and I said why not, if I am entitled to it I will have it, so I get a small pension.

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RL: Have you ever spoken to your children about your background and your experiences.

MB: Well, of late, a little bit more. But when they were younger I never did, I couldn't, I burst into tears every time I spoke, I didn't tell them very much, which I regret, but lately I have spoken more about it.

RL: Did they show an interest?

MB: Yes, well naturally they want to know, what is what and who is who, and all I talked about is how I hate the Germans, like we do, I told them that, and I do, I do hate them. I don't care how much time there is between, since the war, sometimes if I meet somebody who is German, even if they are younger, I think, I wonder what your grandfather did to my grandfather, you know, I can't just push that under a stone.

RL: Did you have any connection with any refugee society or organisation?

MB: I don't think there is such a thing as refugee societies. There is this Kinder Transport thing, which they meet occasionally, I have been to one, here in Manchester they had something. I didn't go to the London one. But otherwise I don't think there is any particular thing. It has been too long already.

RL: There is the AJR.

MB: Which one is that?

RL: The Association of Jewish Refugees.

MB: I have got no connections with them. They are not like the 45 societies, you know, they cling together, it is a different thing, I don't think by and large, there is not much connections with refugees.

RL: Do you have, how do you, have you experienced anti-Semitism whilst you have been in England? How safe do you feel here?

MB: Not directly. I, in fact, I was quite surprised at myself, some years ago, there was a crowd, a couple of chassidische boys were walking down the road, and a car stopped, and they started calling him names, because he had peyos, Jew boy, Jew boy, and I went across, and I said, "What did you call him?" And I said to the kids, "Now you run home, and I will stand here." I said, "What did you call him?" I said, "I must be mad." But I stared them out and they drove off. I was terribly, terribly shaken, because I didn't expect to have it here. Otherwise I

Tape 4: 17 minutes 52 seconds

haven't come across it, not openly. I once had a gardener and he said something, "You people, you live in big houses." I said, "We live in big houses because my husband works very hard, he doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, he doesn't gamble, he doesn't go to bingo, I said whatever we have we put into our daily lives and into our children. And you don't have to come here again. Thank you very much." I didn't have him any more after that. Well, you come across that sort of thing, it isn't really terrible, but otherwise I can't say. But it's there, I know it's there. From the BBC and from the government, I know that it is there, at one time it used to be hidden, but now it is not so hidden any more.

RL: What do you think you would have done or become if you had stayed in Germany if Hitler hadn't come into power and life had gone on? Did you have any ambitions for yourself?

MB: I think at that stage I hadn't, I didn't have any special ambition, I can't say that I, you see in general women didn't go in very much for professions. I can't say that in all my circles I never came across a lady doctor, a lady solicitor, a lady accountant or something, that was unheard of. What sort of ambition did you have? You got married and you had children. It is a different life now you see. Today the world is open to women. I had a lot of cousins who were older, the only one who had a profession, I had one who was an interpreter, she spoke fluent French and Spanish and various languages. Others were ordinary German housewives.

RL: Do your daughters in law work?

MB: Yes, they both work. Channah works in an office and Florence teaches. Today if I were to go out now in England I would do the same, I would certainly not sit at home, because, it is ridiculous not going to work, it is what was in fashion at the time.

RL: What jobs, or what do your grandchildren do?

MB: My grandchildren? One is in business in London. One is studying. One is a solicitor. And the others are in Yeshiva, most of them. In sem and in Yeshiva. What they will do after they come out of Yeshiva I don't know, they don't know either, that is the truth. They will find a niche.

RL: Is there anything that we might have missed that you would like to say?

MB: No. Afterwards, when you have gone home I probably will remember things I should have said. Not really, not that I can think of. No, I think we have covered everything.

Tape 4: 22 minutes 12 seconds

RL: Is there any kind of message you would like to give?

MB: Pardon.

RL: Is there any kind of message you would like to give to your children or grandchildren?

MB: No, the only message I can give to my grandchildren is to carry on in the way they are now. They are all going, Boruch Hashem, the right derech and that is how I want them to go, and that is the best message I can give them. That they should be in good health and go the right derech, and Boruch Hashem that is what they are doing so far. I can't think if there is anything. I haven't got any big message to give to the world. I am very good at making speeches, but only in the bathroom or somewhere where I am by myself. I have put the world to rights many a time. But nobody listens to me.

RL: Well thank you very much.

MB: I think between me and Mrs Thatcher we could have done a lot.

RL: Thank you.

MB: Those are my great grandparents, parents, on my maternal side. That is Feist and Minken Goldschmidt, her maiden name was Wallach, and this photograph would have been taken around about 1880 or thereabouts.

RL: And the place?

MB: Sorry?

RL: Where?

MB: In Germany, I think they lived somewhere in Hessen, but I am not sure, I think they lived in Hessen somewhere.

This photograph is of my grandparents, my maternal grandparents, the occasion is their golden wedding, their names are Joseph and Paulina Goldschmidt and their wedding took place in Eldagsen in Germany. Where they were born I don't know but they lived there all their married life.

RL: Did we say the year?

MB: It was 1931.

Tape 4: 24 minutes 51 seconds

It is not quite clear, it is faded, but these are my parents, Sigfried and Meta Hirschberg, the year would be 1917, it is their engagement photograph, it was taken in Eldagsen in Germany.

That is me together with my mother and brother, in our garden in Worbürg in Germany, and I should think around about 1934 or 35.

That is me together with my brother Erich, taken in Worbürg Germany in approximately 1930.

That is me again when I came to England with my long Germanic plaits, which my cousin cut off the next day because he thought I looked too Germanic in them.

RL: And the year?

MB: 1939, the beginning of 39.

My parents Sigfried and Meta Hirschberg and my brother Erich. I would like to explain about this photograph. As you can see, both parents have to be, their left ears are displayed, that was a decree that the Germans had at one stage, that you had to have a special photograph with your left ear showing. The photograph of my brother was found in Riga among a load of rubble and rubbish which a cousin of mine found and then sent it on to me. The photograph of my parents was taken in 1938, my brother's I wouldn't know, probably also around that time.

A wedding photograph of Gaby and me, together with my brother in law, Gaby's brother, and our bridesmaid, Marita Fisher, and the year is 1945, October 1945.

RL: And the place?

MB: Manchester, in Manchester, The Great Synagogue in Manchester.

Our wedding invitation. Again, our wedding was in the Great Synagogue, Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester, on 14th October 1945.

This is the occasion of my husband Gaby's 70th birthday in 1994, surrounded by his family. Behind Gaby is Anthony and behind me is Yehuda. With their families at their sides, each one of them.

RL: And it was taken in?

Tape 4: 28 minutes 40 seconds

MB: It was taken in Manchester. In Florence's garden.

This picture was taken on the occasion of Gaby's 60th anniversary of being the minister in Stenecourt. It was taken at the Stenecourt Gala Dinner and he is surrounded by all his children and grandchildren.

RL: The date?

MB: 2004, was it four or five?