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<b>Ref. no:</b>	RV272

<b>Interviewee Surname:</b>	Franks
<b>Forename:</b>	Henny
<b>Interviewee Sex:</b>	Female
<b>Interviewee DOB:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> June 1923
<b>Interviewee POB:</b>	Cologne, Germany

<b>Date of Interview:</b>	14 November 2022
<b>Location of Interview:</b>	London
<b>Name of Interviewer:</b>	Dr. Bea Lewkowicz
<b>Total Duration (HH:MM):</b>	4 hours 10 minutes



## REFUGEE VOICES

**Interview No.** RV272  
**NAME:** Henny Franks  
**DATE:** 14 November 2022  
**LOCATION:** Cologne  
**INTERVIEWER:** Dr. Bea Lewkowicz

**[00:00:00]**

*Today's the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 and we're conducting an interview with Mrs. Henny Franks. And we are in London and my name is Bea Lewkowicz. Can you please tell us your name?*

Pardon?

*What is your name, please?*

My name? My name is Henriette Franks, née Grübaum.

*And where and when were you born, please?*

My birthday is on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 1923.

*And where were you born?*

Pardon?

*Where were you born?*

I was born in Cologne, right by the Rhine.

*And –*

And my mother was really young.

*Henny, you thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed for AJR Refugee Voices.*

Oh, it's pleasure. It's a pleasure.

*Please tell us a little bit about your family background.*

About?

*Your family background.*

I still didn't hear.

*Your family background.*

My family background. I had a mother and father, who were very good to the children. I was brought up to be a good person all our lives. And I remember, it was something funny, I remember when my father made kiddush, my sister was only a little girl and she says, in German of course –

*Tell us.*

She did kiddush, she wanted to do that, also had a little drink. [Laughs] I remember that.

*What do she say in German? Tell us in German. What did she say?*

*Papa, ich will auch.*

*Ich will auch? What, kiddush?*

‘Can I have to drink?’ Yeah. And yes, well, unfortunately, I never went to school. But I was really lucky. I came to my father’s first cousin. They hadn’t seen each other since they were very young in Poland. [00:02:07] But – and he had a brother here in England. And she was married and had two sons, that became very rich, too rich to speak to me. It’s unbelievable. They became very wealthy. And the younger one, the younger one was eleven years at a time when we arrived in Liverpool Street. And my – I think she did the work. I’d got all the papers; I can show you. I had more than one, but I got – I found one just by pulling something out and I never knew I had. I’ve got it for you. It’s more – tells you more about me. And she – I thought she did all the work. She did as well, she must have done. But this paper, it tells you. I only found them yesterday. I just pulled something out from a case. And maybe I did know, but so long ago. But I don’t remember having ever seen them before. Funny that I should see that now when I see you. I – anyway, I came to England to this family who lived in the West End in one of the big block of flats, mansion block, just off Baker Street. Had a very big flat and she had four children of her own. She had a son. He was the only one who got a good education. [00:04:00] And then, she had – she called me ‘My little cousin.’ They were older. And she had a daughter, she was eight years younger than me. I think she was, yeah. And then she had another daughter, and they were all lovely to me. Well, there was a short distance, the older one. She had to blame somebody, but she apologised much later in my life, she apologised. And then, she had another daughter, was the same age as me and we slept in a single bed together. And nobody complained, they were very good to me. I didn’t go to school because I was fifteen and my cousin was also fifteen. So, she didn’t go to school, she worked in a – the girls worked in a dress shop. Oh, one was a dress – the oldest one was a dressmaker. She worked in the West End, a Jewish firm. And one was working in a shop, selling things. And the younger one also was working in a shop, selling dresses. So I was with my aunt, she treated me very nice. And the reason I can appreciate the way she took me, was really nothing, but I can appreciate that little bit extra she did, because my sister wasn’t that lucky. I don’t want you to say that, something just in confidence, I don’t want anybody to know. This is aunt, not my uncle, this one, she was a

cow. But she did all the work, I must say, to bring us children over. It's in the papers. And also, when my mother came, I thought she did it. [00:06:00] It wasn't it, I read it in the paper, it was my brother. But I was just out of the army and my brother, my brother – it's in that paper where my brother went. I'm sure I never saw it before. Nobody, I must say, in my big Grünbaum family, they all had girls. Nobody had room for a boy. But he did come on the Kindertransport, I just saw that in the paper, in April. My sister and I came in February, I told you the date. My brother came in April.

*Did you come together with your sister?*

Yeah, so my parents had to go – I've got a few photographs of the day we went to the airport. Not the airport, went to the station, that my parents had a family photograph taken on the way to the station, when the ship – when my sister and I went to England. And I got that for you.

*We're going to look at it.*

Yeah.

*Henny, just –*

On the way, going to the station they went in somewhere and had a proper photograph taken. But that was the last time I saw my father. [Sighs] That gets me a bit, that makes me shake inside. My mother never knew. She was there when they took him away and the last words he said to her, 'See you in England', but he never made it. It was the French. [Pause] And Michael Newman, I knew him when – I was already a member at the AJR. But he wasn't, he was a young man still working for the – his job with the – what's it called now?

[00:08:04] *HET, Holocaust Education Trust?*

Where he was with the – yeah, the MP. But he came to see us, we were sitting in the garden. We had already moved to the last – where they were before they came here. And he helped

me to get money from France. He did that and we became friends. Well, you know, whenever I see him.

*Yeah.*

And he told me, oh, not all that long ago, in just passing by, that he still goes to Germany visiting somebody, not far, Bayardsgasse, where I had family, cousins. They must have lived in the same house because they had flats.

*Henny, let's now just before we talk about the –*

Hmm?

*Before we talk about the Kindertransport and you coming, let's just go back to Cologne.*

Yeah.

*Tell us a little bit, where did you live? Where – tell us a bit about your parents.*

Yeah.

*Your parents' parents, how did they come to Cologne?*

I came – I was – yeah, I was born in Cologne. And my father must come, oh, I don't know. I think we worked it out, didn't we, when he came? My – I had a wonderful, wonderful grandfather, that's my mother's father. But her mother died just before I was born, so I've got her name. And so, she – my grandfather, oh, had quite a few children. And he still had two young children by his wife, my grandmother, who died. She died in January, and I was born in June. So at least she saw her daughter being pregnant. She must have been about nineteen, and my parents were really happy together. Like I say, my mother never looked for anybody else. [00:10:02] She had a chance of marrying well, but she always thought my father would come back, because it has happened that somebody got remarried and ended up the husband

came back. So, my mother didn't want that, because they were happy together. My grandfather, my mother's father, he was a wonderful, wonderful man. He had a big house, another house, he had two flats, flats. But he had a big flat for himself in that big flat. And he had – he didn't have many grandchildren. But he had – when he got married again, because he had two young children, later he married a younger woman and she had children by him, two or three. But oh, I wanted to put the papers – I wanted to put the pictures in the front. They got them for me not long ... I don't know if you know Max, the Italian one. He's an expert on computers and thing. He works in the Sobell Centre, he helped me to get those big pack of films. My grandfather, going on the way to Auschwitz, with two of his sons from the second wife. And the second wife went to also – not to Auschwitz, she went somewhere else, another one. And I've got the photographs and it's also on my computer. I've got the –

*And there was a photo from...?*

I do the computer but I'm getting fed up with it. I'm on my second one, I am, already.

*And were they deported from Cologne?*

Pardon?

*Your grandfather was deported from Cologne?*

No, no, no. First of all, they had – my grandfather and all the Grünbaums family, they all thought they were being clever and had Polish passports. [00:12:05] And they thought that they wouldn't do anything to them, but they were wrong because Hitler sent them all back to Poland. Even young – even some young children. They went to Lützowstraße, the ones younger than me. There's a story there. So, they all went back. I remember them going to the station in Cologne and I remember all the people go through our street, walking to the station. I can see it now. And all my family with their Polish passports, they all sent them back.

*Just to clarify, was it in 1938 when there was sent to Zbąszyń*



Probably something like that.

*There were expelled, basically?*

Yeah, I don't remember the date. But I know I was there, because I remember them, seeing... And – but most of them went to Auschwitz anyway, from Poland. And all of them. Oh, one, I had – yeah, a young man, he went to Lützowstraße, also went to Auschwitz with his mother. The Bubbeh [Yiddish grandmother], I don't know she died before or not. That was – the Bubbeh was my grandfather's sister. My grandfather had- came to England with two sisters and they all had a lot of children. They all ended up – some of them survived. So, it's – the ones – they must have lived [inaudible]. I remember that's my mother's first cousin. She lived in the Bayardsgasse where she always goes, with mother. She was the oldest sister and her children all went to Auschwitz. But one of them – and they all had the same name as my mother. [00:14:06] They all had the same names. So, Helene Litwas was her married name, Litwas. And she had two daughters. They both were in concentration camp, but the younger one, she survived. And she was seventeen in – she was in, where was it now? It goes out – I know it, but it goes out to my mind. One of the – not those big ones, somewhere else, up east. She went to concentration camp, but mother and daughter survived. And another daughter with her father had to go to Poland, they did not survive. So, they survived. So, they were in this camp and I think the Poles or the Russians, the Poles or the Russians, I think must have been the Russians, I think, must come into the camp and free them. And there was a Jewish officer who fell in love with my cousin. She was only young, about seventeen, and she had – well, she was ill. Had no hair or something, but she was a beautiful girl. And that young Jewish officer fell in love with her. When she – when he got demobbed, he came looking for her. They went back, the mother and daughter went back to Cologne. And so, and he came looking for her. They got married and then moved to – where did they move to? France, I think it was France. I can't remember. [00:16:00] But then that ended up – he had family in America, so they went to America. We didn't know where and when. But my cousin, we were all cousins, first cousins, and the parents were first cousins. And my cousin that came back with her mother to Cologne, her name was Ruth. Her name was Ruth. And she married later, she was – had no children but mine were hers too [laughs]. No, she ended up getting married, Ruth Boser. And Ruth was in the famous – where was it? Famous, where all the

girls went, refugee girls. A famous place in – where was it? In Cricklewood or Willesden. Willesden Green. Children of Willesden Green, she was there. Yeah.

*In a hostel?*

No, not with her husband, because she was –

*Hostel, in a hostel?*

A hostel, she was, yeah. She was and she – and an uncle – that was Ruth, yeah. Now, the one who went to Ausch – not Auschwitz, Riga, Riga with the mother, that was – I've got pictures of her too. That was Rigi, Rigi Litwas when she got married, she was married to Lit – no, the mother was Litwas. No, the maiden name was Litwas.

*Right.*

So, she got married later, I can't remember. Anyway, so –

*Tell us a little –*

So, somebody – oh, no, my cousin, Ruth, and I, we were very close friends until she died. My children were hers too. My sister had no children, so my children had three mothers [laughs]. [00:18:02] I was never jealous. You know, it's very funny. Even when I was in the army, I had cause to be jealous, but I never was. I never realised that I wasn't jealous. I just wasn't jealous. But things come to you later when you learn more. I haven't got a jealous bone in my body, which was a good thing because like I say, my children had three mothers. They used to go around and say they hadn't eaten yet [laughs]. That was my son, he did that. And also, my cousin, they were quite well off. She married a Berliner, came with his parents and they had a business here. And the mother, that came from – no, he came from Poland and the mother came from Berlin. She was another one of those Jewish princesses and to marry a Pole was terrible. But she married, because I think she was about forty. She was nice, she was nice. She had my clothes made by me, my sister and I.

*Henny, tell us a little bit – let's just go back to Cologne. Where did you...?*

To Cologne, yeah.

*Where did you live there? What sort...?*

Cologne, so my grandfather, he was a very good man. A very good man. And like I say, he had, he came with two sisters, that's right.

*But Henny, what are your first memories of growing up in Cologne? What are your first memories?*

That's my first memory, I was born in Cologne. Yes, until I was fifteen, then I went to England.

*So, tell us a little bit about where you lived.*

Oh –

*The house.*

Oh, first, I think my mother and father first moved in in one of the flats where my gra – my grandfather had this big house. He'd got flats there, they had –

*And where was that? Where was his house?*

Thürmchenswall vierundvierzig [house number 44].

**[00:20:00]** *Thürmchenswall vierundvierzig, yes?*

And they had a flat downstairs, that's where I was born and my sister as well. And then, my grandfather had another house on Kleiner Griechenmarkt and we moved in there later.

*And what was it? A flat? Where did you...?*

A flat. It had also flats, there were other people living there. But there was living, also from my father, there was a family, another family who had no children. But we were close but not like she was – my children were with my sister and my cousin.

*And were they...? What...?*

Not so – but they lived in the house. They was cousins of my mother and –

*And was it a Jewish area where you lived?*

It was a Jewish area, yes. There were – had Jewish kosher shops and the butcher shop, the kosher butcher, their children were my best friends. They went to – both – two of them went to the same school as me. But the older one went to the Jawne School. They all – [sighs] it makes me really feel ill. They all went to the concentration – the three children went to the concentration camp; I never saw them again. And the mother and father stayed alive. So, they lived in Belgium, they were taken in Belgium. And because she was my best friend and they lived also in that Jewish area, not far from Bayardsgasse, the Kleiner Griechenmarkt that was the street where they had their shop. They never had anything – they were kosher. And they never had at the shop – so crisp, clean, no meat [laughs]. They had their customers, you know. [00:22:00] And one of the Bubbeks, she was frum and she was a customer there. But we were – she wasn't the same age as – the middle one was same age as me, we were thick friends.

*What were they called?*

Fischer, Fischer was their name.

*The butcher?*

They came from Poland as well. And the children were born – I don't know where the older one was born, but maybe in Germany. They had two more, my friend – the first girl went to the – was – went to the Jawne. Her name was Minna. She could have been – she could have survived but well, it's like my mother. That's another story. Somebody wanted to take my sister to Sweden. My mother said, 'No, the three of them go together.' But somebody wanted – one of my family who had no children, my mother's brother had no children. I was their child [laughs]. She shared my mother's children. And she wanted to take this older girl, Minna. They had no children, they loved children. So, Minna, they met in Belgium and she – so my mother's brother and his wife, they wanted to take Minna. They were hidden in Belgium and they wanted take Minna with them, but the parents said no. So, she went to concentration camp, but the parents were left alive. So, my sister and I, we used to go and visit them. I think I might have a picture of them. We went to visit and stayed with them in Brussels. And then, we went back to... But in Cologne, we had a big family. [00:24:00] So, but this girl, her name was Miriam, the middle one. She was my best friend, that was the kosher butcher. And then, my sister also had friends, all went. But the parents went – the story is – I don't know how true it is, but I don't know, somebody must have told me, I don't remember who, that the three children, the Nazis said, 'We'll take the three children for work', for work but they'll leave the parents alone. And maybe it was true, but then they went to concentration camp. She never saw them again. But I used to know them well and my sister. So, we used to go and visit them, the parents. We were – for them, we were like their parents, you know. And then in Cologne, yes, my parents – my mother, my mother was like me. I must have taken after my mother. She was friends with all the cousins. She was friends with them all. And she used to make – she was also friends with – her husband was the Lewko – no my mother's sister, younger sister, she married the Lewkowitz. And he came to England with a couple of brothers. One was older and one was younger.

*And where did they come from? From Poland?*

From Poland.

*Which city, do you know?*

I don't know anything. All I know is about them. The younger one used to have work with my father, he was a tailor. He was very young, he worked with my father. And he ended up in Spain, he had to run away. [00:26:06] He was young, not married at that time. But he did get married in Spain and then went to America. And then, the older one who married – the older one married the Lewkowitz, they had no children. She was always going to Spain, the wife, but she was friends with my mother. I've got a picture of her and my mother going for a walk. My mother is elegantly dressed in the street. I don't know if I've got it there, but it's on my computer. I gave a lot of pictures to the – who was it now? Not the AJ – not the AJR, somebody. I've got – oh, no, in Germany, I gave a lot of pictures. But I've got them all back but I couldn't find them. I've got a lot of pictures of the – in Cologne, of – from the schools I went to, me talking. But I couldn't find any, but I've got them somewhere. But I've got boxes and boxes. I did look at them, I thought I had found all of them. But I must have put them right up somewhere. I've got millions. My children when they were little [laughs]. Right from three months old and six months old, I've got pictures.

*And you were saying that your father was a tailor?*

My father was an A-one tailor.

*What does that mean? Explain it.*

He was excellent, because my uncle, his brother in England, he was very funny. If ever anybody – he was a tailor too. He worked from home; he was an outdoor worker. If anybody asked him something about his work, he always used to call my father Janchen, Jankel my father. He always used to – that's what I was told, the laughing. That he always used to say, 'My Janchen came.' They hadn't seen each other [laughs]. [00:28:00] 'My Janchen came, my Janchen came.' I asked him about him, but he looked and said, 'My Janchen came, my Janchen.' My father was excellent. He made – it was mostly all handmade. But not – but to be able – this was in Germany, be able to have a business and employ people, my father had

to go to – he had to go and do a – he had to do a test, a big test. And my mother told me he had to do a black suit with white cotton, to make sure that it doesn't come through. Because in Germany, you could not have a business if you didn't have the experience to be good. Not like here [laughs].

*And where was the shop? Where was it? In the flat or...? Where was the shop?*

In Cologne?

*Yeah, in Cologne.*

Oh, we lived in Cologne am Kleinen Griechenmarkt, yeah.

*And the shop was in the building or...?*

No, my father had a little flat there, where he had this workshop. And my mother had – oh, my mother also had a business. That's right. My mother had a business also – was it the Griechenmarkt *dreiunddreißig* [house number 33], I think? Selling furniture, my mother had a furniture shop. I think she shared it with her brother, because he lived there.

*And Henny, you are the oldest child?*

I'm her oldest child. Then there's my brother, was fourteen when he came to England and my sister was twelve. But this – and she – we were split up. And I found now, I think I've got it for you there, I did know it but I couldn't swear to it, there was no room for – nobody had a boy, could – had room for a boy. [00:30:04] So I came to my father's first cousin, who had four children and lived in the West End, near Baker Street. And my sister went to my uncle, my father's brother in the East End, Old Montague Street. But she had two sons and she didn't have anywhere for my sister. But downstairs where she lived, also there was three flats in Old Montague Street, and downstairs – they lived upstairs on the first floor. I remember it well. And downstairs was a Jewish family who had a daughter, same age as my sister, they became friends. And so, she shared a bedroom with this girl. They were very nice parents,

people to do this. She was same age; they had their own room and they let my sister share the bed.

*And your brother?*

Shared a bed. My brother, to start with, also – well, they've got it on paper, my brother, a family, a young family wanted to – this isn't fair. A young family, they wanted a girl, they all wanted girls, to do – you know, that's the English Jews. They all wanted girls, there weren't enough to go around. So, this young –

*To help in the house? To –*

You heard of that? Yeah. So, this young couple, he could – the man, the English Jewish man, he could speak German. Anyways, they took my brother. They didn't want – they had a baby; they had a baby. They took him because the brother sort of – they straight away loved my brother. [00:32:00] They really were very good to my brother, but he didn't stay too long. We came – my brother came in April. The war broke out in Novem – oh, September, wasn't it? So that young man spoke German and he was – he had to go in the army. And he was an officer, he had to go in the army. So, the young – well, no, you don't blame them for that, the young woman didn't want that young boy. So, my brother went into a hostel and he was there until my mother came.

*And did your brother and sister, did they go to school?*

My brother, my brother also did war work. He was really clever, my brother was really clever with cars, repairs. And he was a young boy when he was already in charge – what he did is, it was big army trucks or vehicles, big vehicles. And my brother had to test them, whether they were all right to go out. He was a young man.

*So, did you siblings, did they still go to school in England?*

No, that was all in England.



*But did they go to school?*

Because we left, I left when I was fifteen. Yeah, and my brother was –

*Did brother and sister, did they go to school here or not?*

Not my brother, because he was fourteen. But my sister went to the Jewish – what's it called now? Jewish Free School.

*She did?*

She couldn't speak English. Now, I'll tell you what this aunt did. We were very good children. I helped- lived with myself, my father's cousin. She had four of her own. One son and three daughters. Every – a big flat, so everybody did a bit of work, I did as well. We all did the same. She had a big flat, she had three bedrooms. [00:34:01] And what I didn't know, I couldn't – I don't know what I did with the papers. There was – my uncle wasn't even in charge of my sister. It was the government, the British government. I had that all written down, I did know that. And I was – they used to look – they had to pay fifty pounds for each child that came, did you know that? And I wanted to know who paid the fifty – my family didn't have that kind of money. There were three children, you can imagine that everybody went to work. So, they didn't have that. The ones that I lived with, she had four of her own. Everybody went to work and gave some money. We ate well, we lived well. But a lot of money, they didn't have. The father was a machiner. He used to go around different Jewish tailors and did the machining in Germany, we didn't know that. They were good to me. But my aunt, my sister went to Jewish Free School, Jewish Free School in the East End, because she had a younger child. Was a bit younger than – she was eleven, my sister was twelve. And he went to that school to start with. And so, the two of them together. So, my sister was pretty little girl and all the teachers loved her. She was so jealous. She was so jealous. You won't believe what she did, it's unbelievable. She went to the school, and she told a lot of lies, a lot of lies. And I don't remember how we know that. I can't remember how we got to know that. [00:36:03] She told them a lot of lies. My sister was a very bad

child, if she couldn't get her own way – oh, her own sister, she must have told us. And she – her own sister. And she did – she said that this aunt, she described herself, she said that. We were very good friends, she – her sister and husband, who had grown children who had moved away already. And they were well off. That's another tragic thing, what she did.

*So, what...?*

They're all dead, so I can say. Never told anybody before. My mother told me. She – this sister, she had grown up children, moved away, got married. Except one young son, there was a child. They had a big house in Holl – where – what's it now? In London, where that prison was.

*Holloway? Holloway Prison?*

Holloway. They had a shop, dress – my – my uncle worked for them making clothes up and they were selling it. And they were doing very well and they had this big house in ... They gave a guarantor for my parents to come to England. They had somewhere live, they had work. They never believed it, but it's true. My mother didn't know that, my mother told me that later. She was so jealous, she was such a jealous person. What she did is she wrote to my mother. I don't know what language, must have been Yiddish. [00:38:00] She wrote to my mother and she said the papers weren't in order, she should send them back. And that, my mother did, my mother told me later when she came to England. But first of all, my mother, when she came to England, she did live with her. By then, they lived in Hendon, had a house in Hendon. And my mother did live with them, until some other Grünbaums – but their name, Rosen, they married but also, an aunt, Grünbaum aunt.

*But before the war, the permit didn't come through?*

That's what –

*Your parents didn't come?*

No, no, no, no. My parents were smuggled into Belgium and from Belgium, into France, the South of France and that's where my father was taken.

*But just to say about the one story, so your aunt, one of them said a bad thing about your sister to the school?*

She –

*What happened then afterwards?*

The sister, which used to come Friday night, she used to come, the sister used to come... Where was I then? Oh, no, no, there was a big family. But the people that I lived with, they were cousins. They didn't – she didn't speak to them. They weren't that nice, either. That was another thing that happened. And they weren't so nice, but see, my aunt and uncle, they mixed with them. I met them, but the people I lived with didn't. So, I didn't know them too well, only until my mother. My mother, all family she wants to know. And one of them, because they were all – my mother played cards. And she played cards in the synagogue in Edgware. Was it? It was in Edgware, I think. She played cards and the money that they were winning went to Israel in a children's home. [00:40:08] And my mother was the youngest to all the other sister-in-laws. And this sister-in-law, she was really jealous. So jealous, unbelievable. She went to the Jewish school and told them, 'Make my sister black.' Young girl, twelve years old, couldn't even speak English. And the teachers turned right against my sister. My sister left when she was fourteen. Oh, she was – my sister was evacuated with the school. English people, you know, older English or had a daughter ...

*To where? Where?*

They –

*Where was she evacuated?*

Non-Jewish.

*But where was she evacuated to?*

Littlehampton somewhere.

*Right.*

And the whole school was evacuated, her son as well. And my sister was twelve. And those English people, they were so good to my sister. They loved her, they loved her. And they had a married daughter. She used to come and love my sister. So, when my sister was fourteen, she went to school there. And when my sister was fourteen, she had her back, coming to live in the East End. It wasn't war yet. Oh, well, yes, it must have been. Oh, I think they must have moved to Hendon then. I'm not sure, I'm not sure. Anyway, she – my daughter was fourteen, my sister was fourteen and could go to work. She had her back. So, she must have lived – oh, they lived in Hendon, I think, then. And their son already was working already, the older one. He was the one who made the money, and he was her god. [00:42:02] So became very rich and they moved to America. Not the aunt.

*And your sister...?*

Yeah, the younger one. My uncle died; he was in his fifties.

*And your sister stayed with them?*

Pardon?

*Your sister stayed with them then again?*

My sister, yes, stayed with them 'till my mother came. My mother came 1947 and she wanted to know all the Grünbaum family. So, she got friendly with the ones that – the one I knew, didn't speak to. So, she was friends with them. They had houses, they had houses. So, that

gave my mother a flat in a house, Leconfield Road. That was – no, not – no, it was Islington. Poets Road was a synagogue and we lived at the top of Poets Road, just around the corner, Leconfield Road. And she gave us a flat on the first floor. It had two bedrooms, so my brother had a bedroom and then the three of us had a bedroom. And a very large, very large, because it was 1947 already, we had a very large dining room, very large. My sister and I were working, we were going to work in the West End. And when we came home, we started our own business. So, we had the two. So, we had our own customers and we used to come that big room – I'm still friends today, she comes to the Sobell Centre, that girl, the youngest one. They're all dead, except this young girl. She's in our eighties now, I knew her, she was sixteen at the time.

*So, you had a business of seamstress?*

My sister – yeah, there were – that family, they live in Sta – in Wembley. [00:44:04] and they used to come – oh, I met her. I think what happened is I had something wrong with my foot. When I lived still in the West End, I had something wrong and I went to the hospital in Praed Street. And this family, they had a business there, a hairdressing business. They sold stuff to them, they had a business there, a shop. But they sold to hairdressers, the shops and stuff. They were quite well off. And I vaguely remember going, because I didn't remember for a long time how I met her mother. And so, I must have been just out of the army and I became a dressmaker. And my sister and I worked together. And I think I remember now, like I remembered some time ago, I had something wrong with my foot. And I went to the hospital there in Praed Street, I can't remember the name. And I went to – I can see it now- I went into a shop across the road. And a lady was there, who was the owner of the hairdressing shop and we got talking. Me- got talking and she asked me what I did, a Jewish woman. And she asked me and I told her I was a dressmaker. Oh, just what she was looking for. So, she and her two daughters were – we didn't need anybody else, they always had something to – because we still went to work in the West End as well. So, we did – eventually we had some other customers. But mostly those three kept us going. I made their wedding dress for the girl, we made their bar mitzvah – when they had children.

[00:46:08] *And your mother helped as well?*

And today – one day, in the Sobell Centre, one day I was – I must have just come in. And when you come in and where those girls sit, I was standing there talking, just got in there. I didn't look at the person standing next to me. I was just talking to, you know, the people that took my name down. The AJR pays for that. So, because you know how much it cost just to be a member and go. First of all, you've got to pay membership. I don't know how much it is, a lot of money. And just to come through the door today, it's seven pounds. Then they've got to buy their lunch. But now, the people have gone down. Anyway, this is a long time ago now. Oh, before COVID, yeah. Anyway, I'm standing there with a girl taking my name. I'm coming in and somebody was standing next to me. And she was asked her – the name and she said, 'Cynthia', I forget the surname. Cynthia something. I turned around and I said, 'Cynthia!' She was my customer for so – I knew her since she was sixteen. I made her – when she went – her son got bar mitzvah, I made the dresses and the whole family. When she got married, we made the dresses, the whole family [laughs]. And she was happy to see me. She still comes today, English Jew. She came to – I saw her the other day. It was like two people when they're introduced to each other. I said, 'I knew her since she was sixteen.' She's now in her eighties [laughs]. She's a grandmother. It's funny how the world works. [00:48:00] So we're friends when we see each other there. I saw her the other day and not many people go now. Sometimes the Sobell Centre and our Holocaust Survivor Centre, I'm the only one. Anyway, it's getting better now.

*Yeah, people are coming back.*

And I go regular to the – tomorrow I'm going. Like I was saying, I got – I inherited a mink coat, Persian lamb coat. Well, I've given it all away. I had a friend, I promised her that – my cousin was still alive but she was ill in bed. She came in a hospital bed- back to her... They left everything to my children, they had none of their own. My cousins, we were good friends to the end. My daughter looked after her. She took to her bed, this cousin, cousin Ruth. Her father died in an accident in Cologne, so the mother had to go to work. I tell you that, I don't really tell anybody. I don't want you to write it down, just between us. Because my cousin Ruth wouldn't like – well, she's dead now anyway. I would never have said it before. Her mother was not Jewish. But she came – because she got married. Before she got married and

come from a frum family. The Bubbeh was very frum. That was my grandfather's sister. She became – she turned Jewish before they got married. So, when she had children, they were Jewish and she was more Jewish than me. And I tell you about her, I've never told anybody before, because my cousin Ruth wouldn't have liked it, she didn't. [00:50:00] She got married in a big synagogue, she married a Berliner. She got married in Bayswater, the big, beautiful synagogue, she got married in there. And her father died when was a young girl. She went also to the same school as us, in the Lützowstraße and she had a little sister, much younger. So, it's harrowing, what I'm going to tell you. So, she – and this – she became Jewish and she was more Jewish than me. So, the husband died, so she had to take over the business. They sold – they used to go sell to people, go out to the house and sell clothes, bed clothes and things like that. That's – they all did that. And anyway, she, after – oh, when they sent all the Jews back to Poland, she had a Polish passport. She was born in Germany, she was. She had a Polish passport from her husband, and she had two children. Ruth was about eleven and the younger child was about seven, six or seven. And from – so, and then she had to go to work, she had to carry on the business. So, the Bubbeh looked after – and he had a sister, who was divorced and she had a son. She had a son and the son- they all went to the concentration camps, the whole family. The son, I've got pictures of them, of the children and their children and their parents. That's another story, there's always one story come another one. [00:52:02] They all went to Auschwitz or wherever. The Bubbeh and also the original German who became Jewish. I'll tell you about her. She's like the Bible, Ruth in the Bible, where you go, I go. There was a police station, they probably came from around there, she was known. And the police begged her, begged her not to go when they sent them all back to Poland. They begged her, her name was Else. They really – they begged her not to go. 'You're not Jewish, don't go.' She said, 'I am Jewish. I'm Jewish.' And she told the Bubbeh, they all called her the Bubbeh, that was my grandfather's sister, 'Where are – where you...' That's in the Bible, 'Where you go, I go' and she went. She died in a concentration camp with her young child. And Ruth, Ruth, only one child from a family could come to England on the Kindertransport. So, she sent her older child, but the young one she kept and she went to concentration camp. How many Jewish people...? Well, the thing is when somebody – it's like me, I became more British than the Brits [laughs]. So, she became more Jewish than I was.

*So, she could have saved herself but she didn't? She could have saved herself?*

Yes, yeah. Anyway, Ruth came to England. No, she came then, she went to the – she was taken somewhere. She was already – she went to work at- but she didn't – we were good friends straight away. But she, in the end, she went to the – where did I say?

**[00:54:03]** *Hostel? A hostel?*

Yeah, but first she was in a flat somewhere, with other children. Then they move to that place in Willesden, and we had friends there. And my sister made friends with some of the other girls.

*On Walm Lane? Walm Lane, is it? Walm Lane? The hostel in Walm Lane?*

Yes, my brother went into a hostel. Number one, Minster Road.

*Ah, ha. That was where – Kurt was there, as well, Kurt Marx.*

Yeah, but not at the same time. I think my brother was older, I think. How old is Kurt? Yes, we're good friends, Kurt and I, when we see each other. Yeah. And there were some other ones. Hans, have you heard of Hans, what was his name? Was Hans his second name? They said he died, he died. And Kurt told me he's not – he didn't – he's still alive.

*Okay.*

And he is somewhere in some home somewhere. Walters, Hans Walters. I don't know if you've heard about him. Oh, you didn't? He – I met him through a course.

*Okay. Henny, let's – just because we haven't talked about your school in Lützowstraße, in Cologne.*

In Lützowstraße, yes.



*Tell us a little bit about the school and what was the relationship between the Jewish and non-Jewish children?*

No, we didn't mix with the others because we had all our Jewish friends. And my friends were the kosher butcher and no, we all were friends together. But I've got photographs, most of them from the year seven and year six, I think. And most of them went to concentration camp. There was the Jewish doctor.

*And Henny, the – in your school, how many – let's say your class, how many Jewish children were in your class?*

[00:56:00] In my class? Oh, a lot, a lot. A lot, about forty. And there was a doctor used to come look – Dr. Ochs. Well, my cousin, Rigi Litwas, who married the soldier, came to free them, they went to America. And who – where they lived and she had children, and two boys. And went to the doctor, who was a doctor? Dr. Ochs! That used to come to us in Cologne. Jewish doctor used to regularly – we were looked after regular. I have my own teeth, it's my own teeth, because we looked after – we were looked after. And so, that I think there was some other – in the Holocaust Survivor Centre, where were we? I don't know, I think we were in Hendon already. I don't know if he was – I don't remember if it was the AJR that I met Kurt, or whether it was the Holocaust Centre, I don't remember. But he introduced me to the other Jewish boys that came from Cologne.

*You didn't know them?*

I didn't know them, no, they didn't go to my school. Well, I wouldn't have known the boys. My brother was – my brother and Ruth, we all went to Lützowstraße. I think Kurt went to the Jawne.

*Yeah. So which children, which families send to Lützowstraße? And which were...?*

Lützowstraße was like the JFS here today. My grandson went, second to none, the education. When I came to England and my cousin, she was the same age as me, she wasn't as educated as me. They went to English school- because the Jews, they lived in the West End.

[00:58:04] There was no Jewish school in the West End. Only –

*Yes, you have a very good education in the Lützowstraße?*

I had a very good education in the Lützowstraße.

*What subjects?*

I had for eight years.

*Tell us about – what subjects do you remember from school? What do you remember from that school? What did you learn?*

We learned everything, we had Hebrew. And when my brother was bar mitzvah, he had to go also to the rabbi, to the rabbi in Cologne. And then, he had to go to learn. And my parents – and to make sure that my brother gets there, sent me as well. You never know what I learned and I could, but I've forgotten. What is it now that nobody else learns? Rashi, I learned Rashi at Synagogue.

*And where – which synagogue did belong to in Cologne?*

Well, my father belonged – we belonged to two. The Roonstraße, not the Roonstraße, that to me, was a church. The Roonstraße, I was shocked when we went with the school. The Lützowstraße was around the corner. We went in there, but it was like a church [laughs].

*It was a reformed Synagogue?*

Reformed, yes. No, my brother got bar mitzvah in the Glockengasse. He belonged to that. And also, my father belonged to a Shtiebel at Rutgerbergasse-straße [Rothgerberbach].

*Rutgerber?*

Rutgerbertstraße. It was around the corner where we lived, somewhere. Then my father – when he came yom tov [Hebrew high holiday], that's where he went mostly...

*But you went to the rabbi in the Glockengasse for the lessons?*

The children – my brother got bar mitzvahed in the Glockengasse.

*What was the name of the rabbi? Do you remember the name of the rabbi who gave you the lessons?*

No. Oh, no, no, that's too much, no.

[01:00:00] *Okay.*

Yeah, I learnt Rashi. And all I remember is, "omer lo sagt Rashi" [laughs]. That's all I remember.

*Yeah. And tell me, Henny, you were in the Lützowstraße?*

I went for eight years.

*Yes. And there were non-Jewish children there as well? There were non-Jewish?*

No, no.

*But was it a Jewish school?*

Only Jewish children. No, every –

*A Jewish state school?*

The – it was a state school. It was a beautiful school, we learned kosher cooking. We had a kosher kitchen where we learned – it was beautiful. Because my mother went to a Jewish school, but it wasn't there. It was in some – somewhere I don't know, because my mother was only six months old and she had younger sisters. My sister was the third child, she had two older brothers.

*So, Henny, could you feel...? You were in the Lützowstraße...*

Yeah.

*So, after 1933, could you feel you were already...?*

Yes, we –

*Could you feel what was going on?*

Yes, yeah.

*Did you know what was...?*

I had a kindergarten; I remember now I went to the kindergarten in the Lützowstraße.

*And when did you feel things changing for yourself? Did you feel...?*

I've never felt anything. Never felt anything. Nobody did – my mother told me- my mother used to talk to me. My mother told me that in Cologne, where we lived anyway, they knew each other all, the German people wouldn't do smashing the windows. They had to bring them in from Berlin, my mother told me.

*So, she – among the local population you didn't feel any animosity?*

No, no, nothing. No, that was – the Jewish area had kosher shops, like selling bread, baker's shop and they sold other things. [01:02:04] And around the corner, that's where my father went. Around the corner from –

*One second, one second. Yes, you were talking about your – antisemitism and whether you felt any...*

No, no, no.

*You didn't feel any...?*

We didn't have that, no. Oh, the story my mother told me, in England she told me the story, she was walking in Cologne down the street and they lived there a long time. And a Nazi in the black uniform, the SS, came towards her. My mother was really frightened and she walked quickly passed him. And he called, '*Helene, Helene, was ist mit Dir?* what's the matter? Why aren't you ...?' In German, of course. 'Why didn't you say good morning, good afternoon to me?' My mother, they knew each other when they were young. No, they didn't. They had – my mother told me that that had to come from – they had to bring them in from Berlin.

*What about Kristallnacht?*

Kristallnacht, yeah. And we were hiding, we were hiding. My brother and sister were still going to school. They took the Jewish school away, it was a beautiful, modern school. And I'd done – I'd already left. I had my – I was fourteen by that time. I was nearly fifteen, June I was fifteen. And so, Kristallnacht, the children didn't – ours was in the daytime anyway, not at night. A German, my father worked – had to work for him, this German man. He came, took my father home with him. Just you know, Kristallnacht was – like I say, ours was in the day. He came and he lived a long way away. He used to bring my father work at night and collected it at night. [01:04:03] And he took my father home with him where he lived and then –

*To save...?*

To save him. And my father had somebody working for him, a young – a learner. A young man, Jewish man, a youngster. And he lived also in a block of flats somewhere, near the school somewhere. That's very big blocks. He lived – he took us home with him, because we lived in that house. And – but we were left alone, didn't have – never had anything.

*Did you see – did you witness anything on Kristallnacht?*

No, no. I've got a picture of my mother, because I gave most of the pictures, they gave them all back to me. They – oh, in Cologne now, they've got – the Jawne, they made – of the Jawne, they made like a little syna – not a synagogue...

*A museum?*

A museum. So, they've got all the pictures hanging and I've got a picture of me looking, you know, going around and pointing out to somebody. There is my mother and all – I gave them a lot of pictures. And there is also – like- Kurt is also there and the other ones that came to England. They're all there and –

*So, Henny, on Kristallnacht did you see any ...? Did you witness anything on Kristallnacht itself? You personally? Did you see anything happening?*

No, no.

*So, you were somewhere with a family? They took you...?*

No, well only – I still had my – oh, what happened to my Jewish – the butcher. The butcher closed down. No, the butcher closed down, yeah. But that didn't do anything in that street to anybody. Except the Berliners smashed in the windows.

**[01:06:00]** *What, the synagogue? The synagogue?*

No, they smashed the windows. Otherwise, the syna – well, I didn't know that. I didn't know anything until I went there. And the synagogue, I went there, the first time I was invited was by the mayor of Cologne. That was the first time I went back and I took my friend with me. She died, she was 100 years old a couple of years ago. [Laughs] She wasn't well and they had to push her. I suppose – she's supposed to be my carer. [Laughs] They had to push her in the wheelchair. And we were invited by the mayor of Cologne. And on the Shabbat, on Shabbat, oh, we stayed in a wonderful, big hotel in Cologne. You know, where the *Dom* is, we were staying there. They paid for everything and we were staying there. And then the synagogue, in the Roonstraße, they made a big lunch on Shabbat. And the questions from the, like the mayor and some other – oh, they had four mayors. And it was my birthday, ninety – eighty-nine. Now, I've got it. Eighty-nine, I was, on – that was my birthday. And the day of Mayor of Köln gave me a birthday present. I got up and we were all sitting in the synagogue on a long table. And I thanked them very much. And there was something said that there were some more mayors. And I said, 'Oh, goodness knows, how many mayors have you got?' [Laughs] I remember what I said. I said, 'How many mayors have you got here in Cologne?' And I made friends with one of the ladies, young woman. **[01:08:04]** She used to email me on the computer for a time, for some time. And they were all very nice, very nice. And the mayor was – they've got different mayors all the time. But the one at time, they four mayors, I don't know why. And oh, I'll tell you what I saw in Cologne. That was a synagogue there *beim* [at] Heumarkt, there was a cinema. I never knew that cinema, I only knew that one that I told you about. I knew the Roonstraße, the Glockengasse. The Roonstraße, I've only been once.

*With school?*

With the school we went in there. I was shocked.

*From the look of it? When you – so when you thought it was like a church, that was when you went with the school?*

The church, I went in the *Dom*. No, nothing with the school. That was a – with the school, we went to the Roonstraße synagogue. The school was around the corner. On the way home, I had to pass the synagogue.

*And did you have friends who would go to Roonstraße synagogue?*

No, no, my friend was older than me. She – my friend here, the one that died...

*No, I meant before the war, did you go...?*

Oh, my – oh, my friend. No, they went to – what happened? They – no, before I went my friend from the Lützowstraße, the butcher's children, three of them, the oldest one I said went to the Jawne. The other two went to the Lützowstraße. They went to – put themselves on a train and went into Belgium or Holland. I think it was Holland, it was Holland. They went to Holland. Put themselves on a train and went to Holland and my parents wasn't going to have that. They said, 'No, you're going to England.'

*So just to come back, Henny...*

So...

**[01:10:00]** *So what happened to you between Kristallnacht and...?*

Nothing. Oh, we were – nothing happened. We were hiding on – the house, like I say, belonged to my grandfather and had flats. And up in the loft, they had – my mother's sister lived there and they had a shop there, with her husband. And with her husband and they had one child, Henny, same as me. And they had – up in the loft, they had the birds. What are they called now, the birds?

*Pigeons?*



Pigeons. That was in the family. Am Thürmchenswall where my grandfather lived, they also had – they called it – must have been *Kölsch* [dialect spoken in Cologne] – *Duuves* [pigeons].

*Duuves?*

*Duuves.* Nobody knew that word in Germany, so it must have been a Cologne word.

*Those pigeons were called Duuves?*

*Duuves,* they used to call them. That was where they had the pigeons. And we went in there and were hiding in there, in the roof. In the roof they had these pigeons. And David, my – he survived.

*But your father was with a frie – was somewhere else?*

No, no, my father – no, that was 1935. My father went to Holland by himself. And he said he'll get a job and somewhere to live, and my mother should come with the children. We first cried then, but we knew it was going to happen. So, my father went to Holland, it was about 1935. I think I did go- must have be – I don't remember, it was early, I was a child.

[01:12:02] And then eventually, my mother had her father and all her family. So, he phoned her or wrote her a letter, and said that he's got a job. And he's got somewhere to live, a flat, she should come with the children. That was Holland. So, my mother [laughs], she had her father and they didn't do anything. So, she said, 'Papa, I don't want to go.' She doesn't want to go. She said in Yiddish, they used to speak a lot of Yiddish, my grandfather, because we could understand it too. So, my grandfather said, 'Don't go, tell him to come back.' My father was away a year. And in that year, I got very ill. What I got was, I've don't know if you've ever heard – in English it's called St. Vitus Dance [Sydenham's chorea- a neurological disorder]. Have you ever heard that?

*No.*

No, nobody... I'll tell you how I got it. In that year, I was really ill. I went to school, not in the Lützowstraße to start with. To start with I went where the Jawne was, the Moriah.

*Yes.*

That's how old I was. I went to the Moriah School, and I got very ill. And I was ill nearly a year, no school. I was in bed. What happened to me, I was going home from school by myself. So, no – and I'd just learned to read. And I'm looking, I'm looking in the window. I stand in the window on the way home and we always were very frightened of the gypsies. Were very frightened of the gypsies, they had a really bad name. [01:14:02] And they did take children. Well, I don't know, that's what they said. So, I was very frightened. So, the gypsy came out of the shop. I had a beautiful, red hair and it was all curls around. My mother did that every morning before I went to school, she did all these curls. And there was a reason why I had those curls. Family from America came, because they had – my grandfather had two more sisters who went to America. So, they came years later. And one of them had these curls and my mother copied her [laughs]. And she came out, this gypsy, came out, put her hand out to me. 'What beautiful hair – *was für schöne Haare!*' And I was so frightened, I start running and I didn't stop running. That's the illness. I didn't stop. I was in bed for nearly a year. And then, I went to the Lützowstraße, I missed out on a year.

*What was it called? Can you say the name in English, the disease? What was it called, what you had, in German or English?*

In English it was – I don't remember the German name. What did I say just now? St. Vitus Dance. They knew about that business, that illness here. And that's what they're called, St. Vitus Dance.

*And what were the symptoms?*

I didn't stop running. I couldn't stop, I was running, my legs were going like that all the time. I was in bed; I remember being in bed.

*So, it was something to do with your nerves? The nerves or...?*

It must have been something like that. But eventually, no, my father was away and my mother had help. [01:16:02] When I went into the – they brought a big thing in for me to have a bath. They had to – two of them had to carry me. I remember them carrying me.

*You couldn't walk?*

I was about seven years old.

*You couldn't walk?*

No, I couldn't walk, only the legs were going. I couldn't stand up, no. I had that; I think – I'll tell you what my parents – my mother did. They used to believe in funny things, but it worked for me. She had a woman come, some of these women that do these things. And do you know? I remember it, how old was I? Seven. I remember it. She had like a – she had something and had something in it, some fluid. I don't know what it was, had something fluid. My mother told me, 'Sit on the end of the bed' like this. Put my head down and she poured something down my hair and into the bowl. And in the bowl, I haven't seen that myself, but my mother – in the bowl came a figure of a woman. Would you believe that? And I was better, they got rid of the...

*Some sort of...*

Yeah, no, it's funny but it worked.

*Like a dybbuk [in Jewish folklore, a disembodied human spirit that, because of former sins, wanders restlessly until it finds a haven in the body of a living person]? A dybbuk?*

A dybbuk.

*Yeah?*

Yeah.

*Something like that, they relieved –*

A dybbuk.

*There was something in you?*

I don't think of these things.

*Interesting.*

It's – yeah, I can – do you know? I can see myself in bed with my head down. But –

*A Jewish woman? A Jewish woman?*

A dybbuk, yeah.

*It's a dybbuk, yeah.*

I tell people, not that, but I tell people something from years ago. I always say, 'But I can't remember what I had for dinner last night' and everybody laughing.

**[01:18:08]** *But there was a lot of superstition. I mean, you know...*

Yeah. I remember my father not being there. My father wasn't there at the time and then then my father came back. I think if he would have stayed in Holland, none of us would have been there – here today. Because those three children, my friends, they all went to con – three children went to concentration camp, the parents, I told you.

*So, he came back and lived there and...?*

Yes, even – well, they died eventually.

*Yeah. So, tell us what happened to you between Kristallnacht and Kindertransport in that time.*

After Kristallnacht, I think my parents – I think my parents used to be in touch with – my father used to be in touch with his brother. Because I remember, I remember there was a photograph of their son, a little boy. And always used to look at it, and always used to talk about his brother. I think they were in touch. And I do remember my – talking about ... But I used to – what I learned from my parents, I used to see my mother sitting on the table. I had – oh, my grandfather, my father's father was still alive. Polish, you know what happened in Poland. They lived in Łódź. My mother used to write a letter and used to put money in. You could send ten marks, used to put – and used to send to his father. That was already...

**[01:20:00]** And when my mother's father was sent to Poland, he went to see his father. And my mother straight away, I'll tell you something else, what we learned from our parents, their young sister went to work. Anyway, my mother sent money to her father but to the address from the – so they were arguing over that. They'd been sent to both of them, because he couldn't take any money, my grandfather. My grandfather had an open house in Cologne. He had a big flat in his own big house. Well, it's flats. I remember on the top flat lived some English – some German people, a family. And when it came to Christmas- it's so vivid in my mind- when he came, because they had a beautiful Christmas tree and we children used to go up to have a look at it. They lived there for years.

*So, they had good relationships between...?*

We never had any troubles. Well, there were some shops that sold milk, when – oh, when you couldn't get food, they used to bring it to us at night. Never had any trouble whatsoever. But after Kristallnacht, my parents not been in touch with their bother and February we went with the Kin – I don't know how my mother got us on the Kindertransport, because we had somewhere to go. See, they came to collect us in Liverpool Street. When we arrived, the aunt came, the two aunts. One took me home and the one that took my sister home. So, and that

came late because the boy, he was eleven, the youngest one, he – they still had to wait for him to come home from school. [01:22:01] So she was a bit late. So, everybody was nearly gone and my sister and I, we were left by ourselves. So then, I saw these two ladies coming up. I thought my name was Greentree [laughs]. I made sure I would know what my name would be in English. Grünbaum, Greentree [laughs]. So, I was – we were the last ones. I saw these two ladies coming, I went up to them and I said, ‘Are you coming for the Greentree children?’ [Laughs] They said, ‘No, we’re coming for the Grünbaum children.’

*You were prepared for it in English?*

That was that.

*Yeah. So, tell us a little bit, when did you first hear about the fact that you were going away?*

When I first came here –

*No, did they tell you, your parents? Did they sit you down and explain that you’re going to go to England?*

Well, we thought our parents would be coming as well. Never thought for a moment I wouldn’t see them anymore. But they came to Liverpool Street to pick us up. I went to the West End, my sister went to the East End. My brother came in April.

*Later. Henny, just to go back, tell us a little bit about the journey of the Kindertransport. You said –*

On the Kindertransport?

*You said your parents took a photo on the way to the train.*

Oh, yes. Yeah, on the way to going to the station, the Kindertransport [inaudible], they – my parents had the family photo taken. And we went on – I think did we have ...? I get a bit mixed up now. Yeah, I think, I don't exactly remember that, going on the train.

*No?*

Going on the train, I don't know. Because I got mixed up with somebody else, what happened to somebody else.

**[01:24:03]** *How did you get to the station? Did you – was it the main train station in Cologne?*

Oh, we were in walking distance to the train.

*Was it the main train station?*

The main one, yeah. We were in walking distance.

*And how many of you? You were with your sister together?*

We were in walking distance of the *Dom* and the station was *beim Dom*.

*Yeah, you were near? And were – you were together with your sister?*

I was with my sister together, we came together. But when we came to England we were separated.

*Yeah, and who were the other children on the train? Did you know other children, your friends, anyone?*

Oh, we were – no. Oh, yes, the Kindertransport, there was a lot of people. Yes, oh, yes.

*Yes, did you know any of the other children?*

Then we came to the – well, we all came to the – where was I going to? I've forgotten already in a minute. We went to the station here.

*Liverpool Street?*

Liverpool Street Station, we came. Oh, it was a load of children. Yeah.

*But on the train ...*

On the train.

*How many children were in your group? Was it – how was it organised? Were you with other children together?*

We were, yes, yes. I remember now, we were together. And there also was people, mothers and fathers. Oh, I do remember something that's just come into my mind, I remember that the children came – what happened was, there was a young, little girl was on the train. I think they must have to gone on the train straight away, because there was a little girl in the train. And the mother and father were on – outside. And the father, he just couldn't stand it. He couldn't do it. Little girl was on the train and he was outside shouting, "*Mein Püppchen.*" 'My dolly, my doll' in German, "*Mein Püppchen.*" [01:26:06] He was shouting, '*Mein Püppchen, mein...*' And he got her out. He got her out of the train. She went to a concentration camp, but she stayed – she came back. She came to talk to us. She was already older, she was older than me. No, she was a little girl, she was a little girl. Now, she came to the Holocaust Centre or the AJR, I don't remember which, must have been the AJR. She came and she told us that – she told us the story as well, that the father... But I don't remember whether I know it from her or whether it happened when I was there. That, I don't remember. He was shouting and took – I must have been – it must have been from Cologne. He was shouting and took her out. And she went to Aus – but she survived, not her parents. But she did and she came and she told us that story as well.



*Are there any other memories? Were there any adults with you? Any adults?*

No. Oh, I think – I don't remember, I don't remember. I know that the bus from Kurt with their teacher, he – I think mine was the first bus. Maybe he was on that. Oh, I came with the children. Of course, there was a lot of children, I came with the school.

*The Jawne?*

I came with the Jawne School, that's right.

*With one of the Jawne transports?*

My mother got us in with the Jawne because – on the Kindertransport. Yeah.

*Okay, not on the same transport as Kurt?*

The same transport, yes.

*You were both on the same train?*

Yeah.

*Because I think the younger had three or four – they were – they didn't go all in one go, did they?*

[01:28:06] No, no. My brother came later. My brother came April.

*But you were in the same train as Kurt?*

Yes. Oh, no, I don't know if I was in the same train as Kurt.

*But other Jawne children?*

It's with the Jawne school I came. And the teacher, the Jewish one, in Cologne there is – there used to be Hitler-Platz, Adolf-Hitler-Platz. They took that away and it's called now the name of that teacher, that –

*Yeah, Klibansky.*

Klibansky. It's now Klibansky-Platz in Cologne. Not far from where my grandfather lived.

*So Klibansky was on your train?*

Apparently, I don't know, I was a child. But apparently, he went with every – he had to leave his own children and wife at home. And he went back each time and then ...

*Yeah. And what was your feeling when you left, Henny? Do you remember, what were you feeling?*

Well, we were excited. We didn't feel bad, because we thought our parents would be coming. They would have done, if she hadn't done what she did.

*Your aunt?*

She said the papers weren't in order. What a thing to do. I bet her husband didn't – she practically killed her own husband. What she used to do, my sister told me because she was with them all the time, she used to say – my uncle, she said, was a very intelligent, good man. And she – funnily, the younger son is the image of him [laughs]. And she used to say to him, she used to point her hand at up and said, in Yiddish, they used to speak Yiddish, 'You keep quiet, you don't know anything.' [01:30:00] That's what she used to say to her husband, she kept him down there. And what she did, she used to play cards. Well off, they weren't, because my uncle, like I said, I told you, he used to say, 'My Janchen came', they just about made a living. Until the older son, he was already eighteen and he brought the money home,

and eventually became very rich. He opened up a workshop, wholesale. And so, the thing was my mother told me, it's so stupid, I won't even tell you. So anyway, the other family, oh, what she did is, she did that as well. She couldn't bear to see that everybody – my mother was a likable person. And she wanted to see all my father's family, even the one that my side wasn't speaking to. And she got friends with them, we got friends with them. And they had houses and they gave us a flat. So, I came out of the army, I was out and I came out with coupons to buy furniture and for everything. So, this family, they gave us the flat in Poet – no, Leconfield Road. And [inaudible] it was also with Jewish people. It wasn't in Stoke Newington, it was Islington near the Angel. And so, this family, they came with my mother and they bought – I had the coupons. They bought the furniture; they bought the furniture. And I don't know where my mother had the money. [01:32:04] I think the children, we saved up and we were working because – see, also I remember, I was in the army. I had no money, I earned nothing. And my sister was already working. And she started work in a Jewish tailor shop, tailor. And like everywhere, they lost money. And the man who owned it, he was very good to my sister, but she got her number, her got her number. And my sister needed a new coat. My sister was growing. I went to work and I paid for my sister shoes, I remember that. Anyway, the people she worked for, he was very, very nice and his family were. And they had – it was a tailor and he got her number. My sister needed a coat and she didn't buy my sister a coat. And what was it? And oh, what they told her – oh, I've got a picture of the two English women, that were my sister's mothers. Where she was working, there was two women that took her under their wing. And I knew them as well. And one day the teacher said, 'You need a new coat.' I bought my sister shoes, I remember that. I was working, what was it I earned? Tuppence. Never mind, they got me a job in the city to sew on buttons. But I learned very quick, it's in my blood being a tailor. My sister was as well.

*But you also said – sorry, Henny, to interrupt you. You also said that after you left school –*

Pardon?

*You did a training in Cologne, a dress making trainer?*

[01:34:02] Yes, I learnt – that was later. I went to work where my sister was working, Jewish people.

*No, but in Cologne. You said after you left school...*

Oh, yes. My – yeah, my mother took me to some Jewish –

*Like an apprenticeship?*

And she was – yes, for learning. Yeah, I was only fourteen.

*So, you learnt tailoring?*

I didn't – yeah, I didn't get paid. My mother just wanted me not to just sit there. She wanted me to learn something, so that's what I did. I learnt.

*So, what did you learn?*

Well, it wasn't much. I went – I was only fifteen when I went and she had two other girls that got paid. I was fourteen years old.

*And what did you learn?*

I think I did some sewing by hand, not – she was really like an old-fashioned – she had two machines. That's all she had. It's just three of us. I think she did buy me a bar of chocolate. It wasn't the money, my mother want – didn't want her child sitting there doing nothing.

*You did something?*

My younger siblings still went to school.

*And that's what you did before you left?*

They took the Jews away, I told you. Yeah, and when I came here, I was fifteen. When I – by the time I was sixteen, I went to school, I could speak English. And then she got me a job in the city, I had to take a train. And I met my brother in the street. My brother was in the hostel and they got him a job at the – to be a farrier. That wasn't in my brother's blood at all, in the city. And I came across my brother in the street. But we were always together later, he went in that place –

*But did you know that...?*

Where Kurt was. But not at the same – of course, they couldn't remember.

**[01:36:02]** *But did you know that your brother had come as well? You knew he was...?*

Oh, yes, yes, yes. Well, we were – met. But I think it must have been – I remember seeing – meeting my brother in the street.

*And Henny, do you remember the journey on the boat at all? Do you have any memories from the train or the boat?*

No, I don't know when he came, I didn't know.

*No, you, your own.*

Oh, me? I remember, yes. I remember being on the – we came at night, night. Because it was afternoon we went to the station, because on the way my parents had the photo taken. And when we went on the train, it was at nighttime. And so –

*Do you remember crossing...?*

And in the morning – we arrived in the afternoon.

*Do you remember crossing the border to Holland?*

Vaguely, very vaguely, I remember. I remember sitting. There was like – I remember sitting down, not lying down, because it was nighttime. I remember sitting.

*And the boat? The boat? The boat journey?*

The boat, it's very vague, it's very vague. Yeah, I remember climbing on and off. I remember climbing – I remember arriving in – like I say, we made coffee and tea in the big hall. Oh –

*Where was that? In Holland?*

Oh, no, in Holland. No, I remember in Holland when we stopped, soon as we came across, I remember two women came and brought us – they're very famous those two women. They talk to them, even now they talk about them, the women. The two women came and brought us a drink and coffee outside and handed it in. [01:38:04] When we arrived, apparently one of the women, she came the day before. There was another train load. She came a day before and she was at the station. And she said, 'What's going on here?' She made inquiries, 'What is it?' and they told her what it was. So, she got some women together and she came and she brought all the following – and she brought us to eat. And we got –

*Chocolate?*

Drink, yeah, I remember that. But I don't remember everything, because it was nighttime.

*Yes, and then –*

But this was in the morning. We got on the boat, didn't leave 'till the morning and we arrived in the afternoon.

*And what were your first impressions, Henny, of getting off the boat? Do you remember what...?*

No, well, we knew where we were going. We knew what was going to happen. We knew we were going, but we didn't expect never to see our father again. And we had – I'll tell you about my parents as well. Perhaps I said my father had his own workshop. A lot of people from Vienna used to pass by and some were looking for jobs. So, my father took one in and took – he said, you know how it is, tailors' children can't have the coats [laughs]. So, my father didn't have the time to make for us. So, he took this Jewish man in, he said, 'You can make for my children.' I had – I remember for years I had a beautiful bottle-green coat made for me. And he made for my brother a couple of suits because my brother came later. He made some suits, and you know they used to wear those up to there? [Laughs]

*Yeah.*

My brother told me how much shape there was with those trousers.

*[01:40:07] Speaking of – what did you bring, Henny? What could you take as your luggage, do you remember?*

Oh, we had luggage. We had luggage. My mother had dresses made for us. And like I say, the man-made coats for me and my sister, we had good clothes and shoes. We did, no, we had good clothes.

*Henny, we were – we had just a disruption. We were talking about the clothes you could bring with you on the Kindertransport.*

Oh yes.

*You said you bought some dresses and coats, and did you wear them in England?*

Oh, yes, for a long time. Yes, a long time.

*Because –*

Don't forget, I had nobody to buy me anything. I had to work. I'll tell you about my sister, what we used to do, what my parents taught us to do. My sister was – when she could speak English and she left school, she got a job. And she worked there practically forever, a lovely Jewish man. Oh, I think – no, anyway, she saved up. Then my mother, in the meantime, my mother was in Switzerland and she had no money, no income at all. My sister was about seventeen by the time. My sister sent my mother money to Switzerland. [01:42:00] Oh, how she – it was wartime. The way she could- did it was my mother was born in Poland, so through the Polish embassy you could send money. So, she – but it had to be five pounds and my sister didn't have five pounds. So, she borrowed money some months. She borrowed money to save up five pounds and send it to my mother in Switzerland. My mother said she was the queen, to have money to buy herself food. She was in Switzerland in a hotel, Hotel, what was it? Hotel Bristol or something like that.

*When was that? When?*

One year, my mother had already died and my sister and I went to went to Switzerland on holiday. And we found our hotel and we stood in front of it, and we were both crying our eyes out.

*Yeah. And maybe just tell me now a little bit, you mentioned your parents, what happened to them. But once the children, the three of you, left on the Kindertransport...*

Yeah.

*Then what happened to your parents?*

Yeah. Well, I went to the family, which their children became – the oldest one gave me a bit of trouble. She was a bit nutty. I'm being funny, she was quite sane, but it was ridiculous why she was nasty to me. Called me German. Years later, she apologised. But she went in the army.



*What did she do to you or what happened?*

Now, she had a friend, Jewish friend, that lived in the West End of Jewish ... And she had a friend came, a man, young man, a very young man. Came from, what is it? Country, I forget the name of the country, can see the country. One of the Nazi countries up east. Just a friend. So, the girl friend from here, born here, she went away somewhere on holiday. And she said to my cousin, 'Will you look after the young man while I'm away?' She thought he wanted to marry her and he went back to his country when the war broke out. [01:44:02] It was up – on the map I could show you. At the end of the – it's the end of something. I can't remember the name.

*Don't worry.*

Yeah, anyway, she thought he was going to marry her. She was only about twenty-two, so I don't know what she was worrying about. Anyway, so my fault, that's why... I don't know, do you know Yiddish?

*Yeah.*

I was a kapore-hindl [Yiddish: "atonement chicken" and refers to the ritual done during the High Holidays of "transferring" your sins onto a chicken who then gets slaughtered and punished instead of you].

*Kapore-hindl?*

You know what that means?

*Yeah, translate it for us. It's interesting. What would you – how would you translate it?*

I was somebody she could let bad temper on. The fellow, the young fella had no idea that she felt that way. He wasn't here long; the war broke out and he went back home.

*Kapore-hindl. Yeah. So, she didn't get – you didn't get on with her?*

She thought he wanted to marry her. He had no idea that she thought that, there was no point in thinking it.

*But you say she called you German? She called you...?*

So yeah, she called me German. And then also, I remember that my aunt bought me – she had she had some flat heeled shoes that she bought. And my – I went to work, I earned my own money. And she bought my cousin, my aunt, I called her Auntie, she bought me the same shoes. She went ballistic, she went nuts. But years later, many years later, she was my best friend... She apologised. At least better than never.

*But your situation, was your situation better than your sister's?*

Mine was yeah, because the others were very good to me. [01:46:00] And this cousin of my father and her husband, were very good to me. I was just like her own.

*So, you felt...?*

I'll tell you what she did. To me, it meant a lot. It was nothing but it was, to me, I appreciate it more today than I did at the time. She lived near Regent's Park, they didn't always live there. There was the Jewish West End as well. So, they lived in a block of flats, a mansion block, big flat. And it was near Baker Street, by the Regent's Park. She took me to the park, she bought me an ice cream. It's nothing much but it meant a lot. It meant everything in the world, according to what my sister had. This aunt, she was cards – playing cards. And my uncle was – had a bad heart. And she – you know, in the East End they lived in the Old Montague Street and they all had steps going up. And nobody must know and she used to *schlep* him up into these houses, with her friends with all the stairs. And my husband – my uncle was fifty-two and he died. It was her fault. And it was the fault of my father when [inaudible]. How should my mother know when she wrote to her. She was – she wasn't even

– they had two daugh – two sons, two daughter-in-laws. She tried to make trouble between the two, but she didn't get away with it. They got her number. And also, she made trouble – did I tell you she made trouble with the other – the Rosens, they were. The Grünbaums, they married the Rosens. Their name was Rosen and they lived in Golders Green. They had a house in Golders Green. [01:48:01] And so, she wrote – because they loved my mother, they liked her very much. My mother wanted to know my father's family. So, she made trouble. She was so jealous. She went and she told them things that my mother said about them, which wasn't true. So, when my mother got to – told them, she said to my mother, one of them in particular, said to my mother, 'I'll send you back where you came from.' My mother told me. So, my mother wasn't friends with them anymore.

*And what...?*

That's what she did. She told my mother thing that – lies, she told lies.

*And Henny, what was the name of the aunt who bought you ice cream? What was her name?*

Pardon?

*The aunt who bought you the ice cream, what was her name?*

Grünbaum.

*And he first name?*

Well, she married my uncle, my father's brother.

*What was her first name?*

Taube.

*Taube Grünbaum?*

Yeah.

*She bought you the ice cream there in Regent's Park?*

No, no, the one I lived with bought me the ice cream.

*Ah ha. So, what was her name?*

Her name was Chana, Chana Rivka.

*Hanne...*

Auntie Chana Rivke. She was father's first cousin.

*Chana Rivke Grünbaum?*

Yeah, she was a Grünbaum. But her married name was Danzig.

*Danzig?*

Dan – yeah. Yeah, it was Danziger.

*Danziger?*

But when they came to England, they couldn't speak – Danzig, they couldn't speak English, the Danzig. So, the people that interviewed them said, 'Danzig, plus one. Danzig, yes, Danzig.'

*Danzig.*

So, they were Danzig.

*So, she was the mother of your family, the woman?*

Well, she was my father's first cousin.

*Yes, and they took you in?*

She was a Grünbaum, yes.

*They took you in?*

She took me in. She had four of her own. She was very good and she's –

*So, it was the family Danzig?*

Danzig, Danzig.

*Family Danzig?*

Yeah, Danzig, Danzig.

*The husband was called what? What was his name?*

[01:50:01] She took me, yeah.

*What was his name, Henny?*

Oh, the uncle?

*Yeah.*

Yeah, Danzig.

*Danzig?*

Yeah, she was a Grünbaum.

*And Henny, because –*

And he was the Danzig. Came from – they came a young married couple and they had all their children here.

*And Henny, you mentioned now that you spoke Yiddish with them.*

Yeah.

*You spoke Yiddish?*

Yes, I managed with Yiddish. I heard Yiddish.

*So, you spoke Yiddish from Cologne? You ...?*

Well, I heard my grandfather, my mother and father sometimes spoke Yiddish, you know.

*Yes, but you –*

I knew it and that's how I managed, because their children spoke English.

*So, when you came, could – was the Yiddish for you?*

The Yiddish, yeah, Yiddish. I managed with Yiddish. If it hadn't been for Yiddish ... And I had family from the other side, nothing to do with me really. They all came to see like a statue, they all – oh, I'll make you laugh.

*Go on.*

The younger cousin, the youngest one of the children, same age as me, everybody said to me, 'How are you? How are you?' in English? And my cousin said, she told me that, I was learning. She said, 'Next time they come, 'How are you?', you say, 'Mind your own business.' And I did [laughs]. They thought I was such a rude girl, but later they were... [Laughs] I just said, 'Mind your own business.' I didn't know what I was saying.

*So, she – yeah, took advantage. She made fun of you.*

Yeah.

*But Yiddish helped you? Anyway, Yiddish and German is a bit similar, so...*

It's very similar. It's very similar. So, my husband also, the same thing, parents spoke Yiddish. In fact, one of my sister-in-laws told me that my mother-in-law – I didn't know her, she died already, she never spoke English, could never learn. [01:52:04] She had five kids, six kids. She was busy, she never learned to speak English. My husband could also.

*So how did you manage to learn English if you spoke Yiddish...?*

In no time at all. I'll tell you something that I will never forget. As soon as I was sixteen, I could speak English. And she found me a job, I told you, sewing on buttons. And I went in that job and there was another girl, sixteen, English girl. And I made friends with this girl, was same age. And she had nice parents who lived a little while away, took a long bus ride. And it was Christmas time and she invited me to stay with them for – over Christmas, to have Christmas with them. She was my friend, sixteen-year-old. And I said, 'Yes, I'll come.' And I did take – my family here told me to buy a cake or something to take. And I did, I bought a cake and I took it. They were so nice to me, her mother and father. I think she had a sister, I can't remember that. And they bought me Christmas presents, the same as her children. I'll never forget that girl. But when I lost – left the job and she left the job, war broke, I've lost –

I lost touch. But I've never forgot them, how nice those people were to me. They felt so sorry for me, you know.

*Because they know that you were a refugee?*

Oh, yes, yes.

*What reception – did you meet other people? You know, I mean...*

Well, you know, I wasn't here all that – in the country all that long when they invited me. [01:54:03] That's why she invited me.

*So, it moved you?*

She introduced me to her parents, must have told them my story. And they were so nice. I'll tell you- I meet such nice people all the time. The people that work in the Holocaust Centre and the Sobell Centre, I'll say ups and downs there, nicer people you couldn't find. And they're so nice to me. They call me I'm special [laughs]. And I say, 'No, I'm not.' 'You're special.'

*That's nice.*

And my grandson is like that. I don't know but the other children, I suppose they're like that, I don't know, because my son is like that. And that's why my son got on so well. He made friends with doctors. But my son was working, before he had his own – here, even in this country, he was working with doctors. He had to go to a doctor's surgery and you know, help people.

*Henny, we need to know about your parents. Once you left on the Kindertransport, what did happen to your parents in Cologne?*



Well, my parents, once the children were gone, my parents left everything standing and smuggled – they had smugglers. And the smuggler, that was terrible, the smuggler slept in the children's bedroom. And my mother's oldest brother and his wife, they also shut up their own place and they came and lived with my parents. And then, the police came, they were looking for the smuggler and my uncle. They were sleeping in the bedroom. So, my father said he doesn't know them. [01:56:00] 'No, they're not here.' They took my father to prison for eight days and then they let him go.

*In Cologne, in the prison?*

In Cologne, in Cologne. Yeah, Cologne prison, *Gefängnis*, and they let him go. And my grandfather's home, he had a very big picture as wide as this door. A big – a family picture, family, when my mother was about fifteen years old. And they had the whole family, my proper grandmother. A picture, great, big picture. And also, he remarried, but this picture was in the dining room hanging on the wall. So, when my grandfather was sent back to Poland, the flat was there, big flat was there, they came in that place. They came in and they smashed it up. They took that picture. Every time I went with him, to my grandfather, I stood in front and looked at that picture. But such a – my grandmother, she was blonde. Such a beau – I come from a red-haired family. And I used to stand and look at it. They took that picture and threw it into the street and tread on it. And so, my grandfather came back, came back and went to Belgium. All my family did that. But they got them in Bel – they didn't get them in Holland, they got them in Belgium.

*Where did they go in Belgium? Where did they go?*

To Auschwitz.

*No, in Belgium, where did they go to? Did they have some Polish...?*

Oh, they came back to Belgium, because they left their homes and they came back.

[01:58:03] They had money, they took a train. First of all, when they went on the boat – on

the trains, went – on the border of Poland, they wouldn't let – the Poles wouldn't let them in and the Germans would let them come back.

*Yeah, that's in '38, wasn't it?*

That happened, yeah.

*Before Kristallnacht, yeah.*

Yeah. But in the end –

*So, your parents went to Belgium?*

And they lived – the uncle, what's your name? I've forgotten the name.

*Lewkowitz, Lewkowitz.*

Lewkowitz. My uncle is David, but his name, David, he was also – but his wife was still in Cologne and his child. And he had the Polish passport. So, he – they sent him back, but he also came back to Cologne. They got themselves back somehow, they came back. And they – and then got his wife and his child, and then smuggled into Belgium. No, Belgium, yeah. From Belgium, they went to the south of France where my mother was. And he stayed alive, they made it. But my – he – I think he went in with the – what do they call them? The people that were fighting back.

*The partisans?*

Yeah, he went, was with them.

*Resistance?*

Yeah, he went – he was with them and he got his wife and his child. My aunt had flaming red hair. I come from the family who've got red hair. The oldest brother had red hair, the sister had red hair and I had red – and the grandchild now, their grandchild's got red hair. They live in Cologne. [02:00:00] Now I've got two cousins that live in Cologne.

*Really?*

Yeah.

*What are they called? What are their names?*

Lewkowitz.

*And they live there now?*

Pardon? They live there now, yeah.

*And they're called Lewkowitz?*

Lewkowitz, yeah.

*Okay.*

And they came from Poland, I don't know. My father came with – the oldest Lewkowitz, his name was Sender. Sender Lewkowitz. And that was his – my father's friend. And the youngest one was Alfred. Then the middle one, the middle one – around the corner in Köln, around the corner from Kleinen Griechenmarkt, the street, I think it was called Großer Griechenmarkt, there was a kosher shop. They had a few chairs for people to sit and eat. And I think that's where they used to go in. So, he met my mother and I – in Cologne, I used to go a lot to the park with my friends. And one day, I still remember it like yesterday, I was – I don't know how old I was. Nine, ten, maybe ten years old. I came home from the park, I don't know if you know in Cologne, the –

*Which park?*

The big park in Cologne, the big park.

*Stadtwald?*

I can't remember the name but anyway, I was in walking distance. We used to walk- my friends were always going to the park. Anyway, I was walking from the park street. A man – oh, I think I sold something for charity, I sold something. I went – and I think it was that. He saw me again, I went and knocked on his door to buy something for charity. [02:02:03] He did. But then, going home from the park he was outside his house, home. And he recognised me and he came out, and he held needle to me. He wanted to marry my mother, and my father came and took him away, took her away [laughs]. They were all good looking, the men. I've got a picture of my uncle, my mother's brother, how good looking he was. You know what they used to call him? They all had Yiddishe names, nicknames. So, this aunt, uncle with the red hair, they called him the Geler.

*The Geler?*

Geler, yellow. Yiddish is 'gel', that's why it's called the Geler. One had big, bent legs. They called him the Krimmer [laughs]. By their name, he was the Krimmer. And what did my uncle that went to – went back to Cologne ...? They stayed in Cologne; he died in Cologne. And his wife had also died in Cologne, buried there. But they also called him, I can't – I forget now what they called them. They all had a Yiddishe name.

*So how did you mother – how did your parents end up in the South of France? They went from Belgium, they crossed to France?*

No, they came back. Well, the thing, they came back. My mother didn't come back. My mother didn't go back, she thought she'd come to England. It took her some time before they

let her in. She came as a domestic, because she didn't have to do that. She had grown-up children.

*But this is after the war?*

After the war.

*So, in the war time, once they left Cologne...*

I didn't hear from her; I didn't hear from them at all.

*Did you have any correspondence?*

Nothing at all.

*So, you didn't know at all what was happening?*

[02:04:02] I didn't know what happened to them, no.

*So, when was the first time you heard from your mother?*

As soon as the war was over, my mother went back to Belgium. And she – my mother knew where we were and she wrote that she's back in Belgium, because she had two brothers there. And she lived with her older – not the one from Spain, but her younger brother. He was hidden. He was hidden by – not a Jewish woman, but she had a house and she had a business selling cigarettes and things. So, she hid him. And I think he might – he did have a job. But the Germans, they didn't know he was Jewish. That's how he saved his life. And she hid him when he was back and he used to help her in the shop. I know, I used to go. I used to go to Belgium a lot. And they came with her, he married her in the end. What could he do? She loved him. She loved him like mad. So, when he died, she died as well. She was so...

*Henny, let's pause for – in the wartime, just tell us what – your parents were in...?*

No, it wasn't in the wartime. It was before the war.

*Before the war?*

Before the war. I used to go a lot to Belgium.

*Before the war?*

Before the war.

*From Cologne?*

I used to go. I've even been back to Germany. I've got a picture in the property that was my grandfather's, it was very big. And the gardens, you can see them all being – it was, you know, it was – the garden there was big.

*But where was that?*

It was all smashed in.

*Where is that?*

In Cologne.

*This is in Cologne?*

Where my grandfather lived, our house was in there. And they came back, they got the house back. And they built down, it was three or four-storey high. They built the downstairs and then they moved, my uncle moved back in there.

**[02:06:07]** *Post-war?*

They moved back in there and I used to go and visit them. I used to go and visit, yeah.

*Henny, I tried to find out what happened to your parents in the war time. So, they were in South of France?*

Wartime, they were in France.

*Both your parents?*

Yeah.

*And then, what happened then?*

And after France, they had to go back because they had property.

*No, but your father, your father –*

Oh, my father was gone.

*So, what happened to him?*

We didn't know, my mother didn't know. My mother never knew.

*But they were together, your parents? And were they arrested or what happened?*

Yes. Well, yeah.

*Tell us, yes.*

In **Territet**, they lived in Territet where – yeah.

*Where did they live?*

She was in – no, that's Switzerland, was Territet, where my mother was interned, was in Switzerland. No, they lived in – no, they lived in France.

*And then, what happened to them?*

After the children went, they went to Belgium. They were smuggled each time to Belgium. And then, when the Germans, when the soldiers moved – the Germans moved into Belgium, my parents left to go to South of France.

*Okay. And then, what happened to them there?*

And my father, they had – my father worked on the land. He had to have a job. My father worked on the land; my mother didn't do anything. What could they have had? One room? And I think what happened there, a few doors away where they lived, there was a Jewish wedding and my mother went to the wedding. And then, all of – that's what my mother told me after, when she came. And all of a sudden in the wedding, it went [makes whispering noises]. [02:08:02] Something was going on outside. My mother ran out and she saw my father being pushed on to the wagon. And the last words he said to her, 'I'll see you in England', but he didn't make it. But she never knew what happened to him, ever.

*So, he was –*

My mother, when the war was over my mother wrote to us. And oh, and I was in the army and I asked – so the war was finished, but not quite. You know, it was still dark, everything and the soldiers were going backwards and forwards. And I said – my mother went back, was in Belgium. And I asked whether could – my leave that we used to get every three or four months, I usually used to go back to London, to my family. I said, 'Can I have my leave in Bel...?' I told them my mother – told them the story and I said, 'My mother is now in Belgium and I've got family there. Can I go to Belgium see my mother?' They said, 'Sure, you can.' And I travelled with the troops. I travelled to where my parents – my mother was in



Belgium. I travelled with the troops to Belgium. I had my two weeks with my mother in – my mother lived then with her older brother and his wife. And she helped my mother bring me up, they had no children. So, I went and lived with them, and slept with my mother in the bed. And then, they had to take me back where the soldiers were going to go back to the camp in – outside Nottingham, I was.

*And Henny, what was it like to see your mother? You hadn't seen your mother for...?*

I had – I came in uniform. I didn't have my –

*What was it like to be reunited?*

No, I had to go into uniform, of course, with the soldiers.

**[02:10:00]** *But what was it like to see your mother again after so many years?*

Well, it was wonderful to see her again. We all cried. And when they heard how much money we get, my wages, they were laughing, because my uncle worked but didn't actually work. They did illegal work. I think it was something to do with money [laughs]. So, and my younger brother was married to the English woman, the Belgian woman. Well, she had her own shop, so he wasn't bad off. And so, when I said what money I got and you can't get this in here ... And the family I lived with, I said they became my brothers and sisters. The soldier, her son who was a soldier, came also back by then, from – he was released. And he got married, Yiddishe girl. And their children I see sometimes, but not over these last three years. When the Holocaust Centre used to go for the day trip to Westcliff, they used to come and see me because they lived that end. They used to come and see me. But of course, the three years ... But I have been speaking to them on the phone and my daughter speaks to the youngest one, grandson, she speaks to him on the – what is it? What they speak on?

*iPhone?*

Facebook, Facebook. Yeah.

*Facebook, yeah.*

And he – the uncle, they're not young anymore.

*But Henny, how did your mother manage after your father was arrested or taken away?*

*How...?*

Well, she thought he would come back any minute, because it happened. My mother told me some person, she got remarried and then the husband came back and she had two husbands.

**[02:12:04]** *But how did she manage in France to survive?*

Oh, my mother made enquiries through the Red Cross. She made enquiries through the Red Cross.

*Yeah, and did you ever find out what happened to him?*

No, she never found out what happened to him.

*And you didn't?*

No, the Red Cross couldn't find out what happened to him. That's why she always thought he would come back. She thought he was hidden somewhere. She never knew.

*And she survived in the same place in the south of France? She stayed there, your mother?*

My mother, no. She was in Switzerland and then went back to Belgium. My mother was in Belgium.

*So how did she get to Switzerland? How did she manage to get to Switzerland?*

Smuggled over the mountains, climbing. A lot of people went with other people from Italy. First of all, they were smuggled into Italy near the border. And then, they went with other people. The people were climbing, like you get here, they come on boats. There, they was walking over the mountains.

*And she was...?*

And behind her, they were shooting the people.

*And you said when she came to Switzerland, she was interned?*

So, when they got over the other end, they took them into that hotel, like here. But they had to fend – they had nobody else, so they had to fend for themselves. My mother was in charge of the kitchen. And she told me [laughs], sometimes my mother told me it was all very funny. She told me that when she was hidden in France, after my father died, when taken away, she lived with a family. She helped – she had to work, do something. She was with another family. That was a mother, a mother and father, and a daughter, her husband and a couple of children. [02:14:04] So they took her in. They came – they were Jewish, they came from somewhere, not Germany, Hungary or something like that, to help with the children. They took her in for help. A terrible story. They took her in to help with the children. My mother was young and good looking. So, the grandmother eventually – where did they go now? Where was it? It was in the South of France. She got jealous, people were jealous of me and my family. She got jealous, the two men. And she said to my mother, she wanted some cotton, sewing cotton. My mother should go in another little way – a long way away, where the shops were. What could my mother do? That's what she told her to do. They looked after her, they paid – I don't know if they paid or – I don't think so. I think my sister, no, my sister used to send my mother money. See how we were brought up? My sister sent my mother money. So, she – through the Polish embassy. And she said to my mother, she should go and buy the cotton in another village. My mother couldn't do anything else and she went, and she was in the shop. My mother said it was raining and she had an umbrella. My mother told me this is a joke, some joke. But she had an umbrella, she went in this shop and she put the umbrella down. And – or she had it in her hand, I think. She thought she'd set it down, but

she had it really in her hand. And the Nazis were there collecting the people. My mother got so frightened. [02:16:00] She picked up the umbrella, she thought she picked – she picked up two umbrellas. That was the joke. She ran out and she went back to the – the woman never expected her to come back. She thought she got rid of her, but she didn't. My mother went back. But the joke was she told the story, that's supposed to be funny. She went back with two umbrellas. Another joke, another joke, very funny indeed, my grandfather in Brus – also in Brussels, my grandfather was waiting for his daughter-in-law. And she had black hair, really black, she was. She was German-Jewish. And she felt so frightened of being Jewish. So, anyway, she's supposed to meet her, that's the joke. My grandfather stands in front of a shop like this and he's waiting for his daughter-in-law. In the meantime, she dyed her hair blonde. Anyway, she went to meet him, she stood next to him and didn't say a word. And my grandfather moved away. So, she moved next to him, he moved away [laughs]. In the end, she said, 'Tate, tate', in Yiddish, 'It's me.' That's the joke. That's how my mother told them, everything a joke, big joke. You can get a heart attack, never mind about the joke.

*So, she managed to survive?*

Yeah, all – and everything was told. All what happened to them was told in a joke.

*And how long – do you know how long was she in Switzerland in that camp?*

As soon as the war was finished, well, my mother tried – my mother came 1947.

[02:18:00] *Yeah. Do you know the name of the camp in Switzerland?*

In Switzerland, she was at Hotel Bri – I knew the name, I forget. It will come to me. I knew the hotel, like I say, my sister and I, we went there.

*Bristol, did you say?*

Bristol, that was the hotel.

*And where was it?*

Yeah.

*Where was the hotel?*

In Territet.

*Territet?*

Territet, yeah. Yeah, I've been to – I've been around in my time to many countries and I've been to Switzerland, where my parents lived. And also, in front of the hotel. I told you, my sister and I stood crying, because my mother was dead already.

*When you met your mom, did she...?*

So –

*When you met your mother, how – I mean, she had lived – she had – you know, it must have been a stressful time.*

Well, I tell you, when my mother came, she came to the sister-in-law. My uncle was dead already some time. She came to the sister-in-law- we lived in Hendon. And I lived in the West End. So, my mother was one day in Hendon and then she came to see me. And I arranged to meet her, Baker Street, Baker Street where she gets off the bus. From Hendon you get the bus straight to Baker Street. So, I went to the bus stop and my mother came the next day by herself to meet me in Baker Street. And then, I took her. I didn't have to get the bus, I lived within walking straight from Baker Street.

*And she wanted to come to England to join you?*

It wasn't easy, it wasn't easy. It took time. Apparently, it was her son, she gave her son's number and she came as a domestic. And then, the other family, there was the grandmother, she was a Grünbaum. [02:20:00] And her children married, somebody married a Rosen. And then, this sister-in-law made trouble and – but I didn't know them, because my family I lived with weren't friends with – they're obviously not nice people.

*But your mother wanted to come to be with the children?*

My mother wanted to know all the Grünbaums. Yeah, my mother was friends with them for a while. So, I don't want to make trouble, tell them lies. Like she went to school and told lies about my sister, she made lies. She tried to make trouble between her two daughter-in-laws, but she didn't get away with it. They got her number.

*But Henny, did you mother go after the war, '45?*

That was after the war, yeah.

*Did she go back to Cologne at all? Did she go back?*

Oh, we did go back to Cologne, just for a holiday because my mother had a brother went back.

*When was that? When did you first go back to Cologne?*

When the war was finished, later. They had – that was her older brother.

*And what did you see there in Cologne?*

And the Lewkowitzes went back.

*What are your memories of that? What did you find?*

Oh, we used to back – the first memory, I've got pictures. I don't know if they're in there or not. I took pictures in the yard, in the back yard. It was very big and he had child – my grandfather was already gone. But the younger son, there was one younger son of hers, he was three years old, he's fifteen years younger than me. He was – lived in Bel – was born in Belgium. She was pregnant when they was smuggling in. She was much younger. She was my mother's age, maybe a bit older. So, she – I think she came with a child. And he went to Auschwitz, because I've got pictures of them now on the way to – he helped me with it. [02:22:04] I think they came on a computer or something. And he did that for me. What's his name? Is it Max that works at the Sobell Centre?

*Yeah.*

He helped me and he made them into a big picture. My grandfather and two other sons.

*And what did you feel when you came back to Cologne?*

Oh, the first time, I came to my uncle with his – he lived there with his wife. Oh, they built on – downstairs and that's where they lived. Later on, they moved into a flat somewhere else and we'd go back many times, many times every year. Every year we went, because my sister and I were working and the summer, like I said, we worked for ourselves and we went out to work. We wanted nice shoes, we wanted nice clothes, handbags. You don't want to see what I gave away just lately, you wouldn't believe it. Brand new handbags that cost hundreds of pounds now here.

*What – I mean, you came back...?*

They were – you had so many, they were never used.

*Henny, but when you came back to Cologne, I mean., many of your friends didn't survive, many –*

Oh no, no, there was nobody there, no.

*I mean –*

No, just my family. There was other Jewish people that I could – but...

*Not many Jews from Cologne went back to Cologne?*

No, no, most of them went to concentration camps. No Jews from Cologne, no.

*So, what did you feel like coming back to...?*

Well, Cologne, I met some – well, Kurt Marx, I met him.

*Here?*

Here, yeah, here.

*Yes, but I mean in Cologne.*

They came from Cologne. Not there, they weren't there.

*I mean, in post-war Cologne, did you go to the synagogue?*

I met him here.

*Yeah. Did you go to the synagogue there in Cologne post-war?*

[02:24:04] I went back, but not school. I never went to –

*Synagogue, synagogue, did you go to synagogue?*

No, synagogue at that time, there was no synagogues.



*Roonstraße synagogue?*

None at all. The synagogues were later, much later. And the synagogue, when I was invited to the mayor of Cologne one time, there was a synagogue that I didn't know about. There's a lot of cinemas in little Cologne, I didn't even know about this. I don't know if you knew Neumarkt, the Neumarkt?

*Yeah.*

No, it wasn't Neumarkt, it was another one. Neumarkt had – we lived also near – we lived near – no, we lived near Neumarkt. Bayardsgasse towards Neumarkt, yeah. And where the horse's mouth came out, remember that? Where the horses right out – they got two horses coming out from the building.

*Yeah, yes, yeah.*

They weren't real. Yeah, well, we could go in walking distance. And no, this was somewhere else. There was a synagogue that was smashed to pieces and when I was there, I was there – I don't know when it was. A few years before the – oh, that was the first time after the war. See, I don't know. Some – I was invited by the mayor of Cologne- I took my friend with me.

*When was it?*

One of my friends.

*In the eighties? In the eighties, or when was that? 1980s or...?*

Yeah, I was – that's right, I was eighty-nine at that time.

*Ah ha, okay.*

It was that time of year, I had my birthday and there was the Shabbos. I told you, they made a big table in the Roonstraße. And they were all invited from the *Rathaus*, yeah. [02:26:08]  
Yeah, and that gave me a present.

*2010, yeah.*

I've still got some of it.

*But the community, was it very different?*

It was a big box with a face and Cologne written on it, and something else. I've still got the box, I've still got the face cloth and some per –

*Was it...?*

Oh, forty-seven and eleven [4711 Eau de Cologne].

*And were you pleased that they invited you? Were you happy to be invited?*

To the – to be invited to the *Rathaus*?

*Yeah.*

Yes, yes.

*And what do you feel about Cologne today? When you went there did you still feel a connection or...?*

Well, I was just a visitor. I was just a visitor. My sister was twelve, but soon she was dead. My sister died. My sister got married, a frum. She married him because she was a Shul goer. She could have married before, but Cohen – my sister-in-law, my sister-in-law's brother, they weren't Jewish enough for her. Cohen was their name. They weren't frum enough for her, my

sister, because she lived with my aunt and uncle, who were frum. Well, all my family were kosher and frum. Well, where my sister lived, there were very frum, because she had the brother, the sister-in-law, who called himself Rabbi. But he wasn't a Rabbi, but they were so frum.

*She married...?*

His wife was the worker to earn the money and he was in the thing all the time.

*Yeah, so your sister married somebody religious?*

He lived around the corner in Cologne. But my sister – not in Cologne. Where was that?

**[02:28:01]** *In London? London?*

No, that was in London, in the East End. That was the East End, yeah, and they were the frumers. And my sister, the family of my – it's my brother-in-law, they were Cohens. They were Jewish people, but not very Shul goers. And they all well in the arm – the husband was in the army, because the boys were all born here. And my mother-in-law, I didn't know her but I did know my father-in-law. He had his own barber shop, he was a barber and –

*This is you now, not your sister? This is you?*

That was here, yes. And he told me his mother was frum but not his father. But they were the Franks and he had a barbershop. But to my sister, oh, my sister got married in the end, and he was from the frumers. But not – modern frum, you know, modern frum but kosher.

*And where did she live? Where did she live, your sister? In London?*

Yeah, my sister, they bought a house in Cloister – not Cloister, I lived in Cloister Gardens. Around the corner from where I lived. Just the big street after the station, the house near the station.

*In Edgware?*

That's where they bought a house. I – her husband lived one year. On her honeymoon, they went to Italy or no, Spain, they went for a honeymoon in the best hotel. And all the Jewish people used to go and he courted her in the swimming pool. He died, he was married one year and he died. He had kidney problems. My sister never married again, she just couldn't – other people... [02:30:00] On my husband's side, a cousin who lived in – he also lived – he was about the only – from his – my cousin's – my husband's side, the cousin – he lived in – he used to come and see us. He lived not far from us, big house. His wife died young. We went to see him- my sister was a widow already. She had the house. He loved her so much, this man, my sister, they bought a house and Penshurst Gardens. It was three bedrooms, but big – my house is big, there's was even bigger. But three bedrooms, three large bedrooms, that's what I've got. And it was all insured, they had a mortgage, it was insured. He had central heating put in, was insured, everything was insured and he died. My sister had – was – everything was paid for. And he used to make a joke. He used to make a joke, another joker. He used to make a joke, 'If I die, she'll be a rich widow.' The jokes and it happened. He had – he went into business; he was a tailor. And he had a brother, a tailor in the West End somewhere. Went into business with a partner and was doing okay. And he died a year after they were married. So, my sister sold half the business. He had a partner but she had to fight for it, because she was left with nothing, beside the house. So, my sister had to work.

*So, she worked with you?*

She had – she worked to the last minute, she had to work. My sister got ill, she was sixty-two.

[02:32:00] *And your brother?*

My brother had another story. Now brother was fourteen when he came and then eventually, he was with a Jewish family. I will have told you, it's all in there. They wanted – and anyway, in the end, he had to go into the –

*Hostel.*

And he – but he wasn't married. But he was only in his twenties when my mother came. I was only about twenty-three. And anyway, he met a girl, she had the same name as me, Franks [name]. And they lived in Ridley Road, have you heard of Ridley Road? And anyway, they went out sometime. I've got pictures of them together and they wanted to get married. She still lived with her mother. I don't think she had a father, he must have died, but she had a lot of aunts. My father – my brother had a car and he – her family made good use of my brother. If somebody had to go somewhere, they called him. Freddy was his name. Alfred, but we called him Freddy. And I think when he was working, they called him Alf, because they all had the same name as well from that side of the family. My cousin here, his bro – my uncle, my father's brother's son was Alf, Alfred. So, he must have been from that side. And then, they had another son, his name was Monty but that must have been from his wife's side. She had a brother living in the East End, her brother, he was ultra, ultra. And then my mother, my mother had some family here.

**[02:34:06]** *But what happened to your brother?*

That's – oh, my brother?

*Yes.*

My brother wanted to get engaged to that girl. And so, but her mother hadn't – or her family hadn't met my mother yet. Hadn't met my mother yet, but they wanted to get engaged. And the mother, I don't know what happened. But well, I know what happened but I don't know why that woman was like that. She didn't – my mother, we just had a mother five minutes, brought up without parents. And that woman, the girl's mother, she laid in about my mother. My son was – my brother was there and in that flat where they lived. I was never there, I didn't know them. And so, she laid in about my mother. 'I suppose your mother will want this and your mother will want that' and she laid into ... Can you imagine my mother? We had her five minutes. My brother took his coat and walked out, and she never, ever got married. Nor did my brother, but years and years later they became friends. But they didn't

live together, it was just friendship. But what a stupid woman to lay into my mother. It didn't – she didn't know her. My mother was happy, he brings a Jewish girl home. Like my husband's father and his family, he had a stepmother, which I got good friends with. But the other sister-in-laws didn't. He was a young man, so he got married again. They weren't happy with it. But I was and she was – I was really happy with her. So, she came with me when I got married in the synagogue. [02:36:00] She came with me. You know, everything I did the English way [laughs]. Everything was the English way.

*What do you mean by the English way?*

The way that – well, I had my cousins who were born here. They all got married in synagogue, they all married Jewish people. So, I had – I didn't know what to do. My first cousin, Grünbaum, he married a girl, he became rich. He had a very big wedding with all the trimmings, in the synagogue. I can't even remember what synagogue he got married in. I don't remember. I got married in the Western synagogue, Marble Arch. But it wasn't in Marble Arch, there was another synagogue. It was the Back Turnings [?] [laughs], I forget the name of the street, that's where I got married, because I used to live in the West End there.

*Henny, before we – I want to know about your marriage. But before that, you need to tell us about the army a little bit. And then, we're going to have –*

My husband was –

*One minute.*

In the army, yeah.

*Okay. Henny, let's – because the card is running out, let's have a break and then we'll talk about the army. And then, we're going to talk about your wedding.*

Yeah, that's right. You – even one's got a pearl necklace.

*Henny, I wanted to ask you now, because we haven't discussed it properly, about you joining the army.*

Yes.

*Please tell us about when you first joined it, what choices you had.*

Well, I couldn't have been – done anything to do – a friend of mine, she did fire watching. But like I said, my family went in the army and one was – the one my age went in the RAF. Another one went in the army. She also did driving, she drove officers, learned drive there. And then the son went also, went – sent away. [02:38:02] He was away for two years, three years. So, I went in the army and first when I went, there were about – oh, about – must have been two dozen people all from Czechoslovakia, all Holocaust survivors. So, all – we were all together, came, and we did our training together. And then, like training was how to salute and things like that, we learnt. We were walking, how to walk, how you walk, you know, all things like that. And after that – that was in Newcastle and there was also some very nice Jewish people used to invite us for dinner.

*Which year was this, Henny? When was that? When?*

When was that? 1942, beginning of 1942.

*That's when you joined?*

Yeah. And then after the training, we were sent – I was sent to – oh, it was fantastic. I was sent to – civilians weren't allowed there, Westcliff, Southend. Westcliff, in a private house. So, I didn't do very much, office work or something, but I wasn't happy with it. And I said I can do a bit more – better than whatever I was doing. I wasn't there all that long, but I liked it there and I had my Jewish friends as well. Wherever I went, there were Jews. I like it when they say the Jews – oh, did you know that we did the work in America? The Twin Towers, we did that. Oh, now I remember what I wanted to say [laughs].

*Henny, can I just ask...?*

[02:40:00] When I went to – before I was at the army, I wanted to say before but I was waiting for you. When I went talking to – in Cologne, to teachers, and I used to teach five schools in five days. And one afternoon or evening to teachers. So, this was one evening I talked to teachers and there was – and they can ask me questions after I finished telling my story. And one got up, an older student, and he said, ‘Why do they always pick on the Jews?’ For the moment, I was stuck. I just didn’t – I got a bit nervous, I didn’t know what to say. I just never thought about it. And then, it came into my head. I said, ‘Jealousy’ and everybody tells me that was just it, the right thing to say. I said, ‘Jealousy.’ I said, ‘We Jews are not just the religion’, that I heard. I said, ‘We are...’, what is it now? ‘We are a race.’ And I said, ‘And we are clever people.’ I said, ‘Maybe not me, but on the whole, I would say that. But on the whole’, I said, ‘we’re very clever. The best doctors in the world are Jewish.’ And I said, ‘We had become...’, goodness knows what, I told him that. And when I tell somebody that today, like in the Holocaust – the other day, I was telling – oh, we’ve got a new group now in the Holocaust Centre. We just – it’s tomorrow morning as well. I’m going tomorrow morning, it’s a new group. What is it now? We can talk to anything, anything, something like that. And I told them about it last week and the same thing, what I said. And they said to me straight away, ‘Yes, yes. That’s it, that’s it.’ I said, ‘I’m so glad I’ve got...’. [02:42:01] I said, ‘God ...’, I don’t know if I believe in God, but [laughs] I will say, ‘Thank God.’ I said, ‘Thank – God must have put this in my mind, to say it was jealousy.’ Because I was stuck, I didn’t know what to say, I got nervous.

*It’s a difficult question, yeah, yeah.*

And I said, ‘We’re clever people.’ And the man who does all the arranging, Doctor, what’s his name? Doctor, religious – religious teacher, he’s been to Israel many times. About thirty or forty of them, they go to to Israel and lots of things like that. And the Jawne is now –

*A museum?*



Yeah, he worked at some other one as well. They worked there as volunteers, to keep it clean and got all the pictures on the wall. I gave him a load of my pictures and I've got – they took photographs of it and –

*And do you like speaking to the Cologne school children? Do you...?*

Well, there's – yeah, the school teachers. The one school teacher, I've got a picture of her and me. I'm very – they came to England and they let me know and we met halfway. They rented some house somewhere and we met halfway. And her husband, they'll all very nice people and the children. When I go – and I never go empty handed, there are seven children and I've got seven bags. It costs me, but I don't care, because they're not poor people and the children are small, they like – kids always like something new, doesn't matter. They've got books, I can't tell you what they got. And they're clever children. And I bring them also English learning, English books that – and sometimes I buy them some clothes that I see. [02:44:02] Like fancy, little – I once bought for the little boy, the twins, they're a boy and a girl, I bought him in one of the shops in Edgware, a whole suit. A little suit and also, I buy books, I buy toys. I can't tell you what I buy them.

*Henny, how did they find you? How did they get in touch with you? How did they find you?*

Oh, they phoned me up. They phoned me. They phoned me up on my birthday in June, phoned me, and the children singing happy birthday in English. And send me cards and I'll send them – the children I'll send cards. I've got by now, the girl is ten.

*And then, when you went there to talk to the children, when you go there to talk, what do you feel like coming back to Cologne, you?*

Well, I've been going back for years before him.

Yes.

Yeah. The first time, I was invited by the mayor of Cologne, yeah.

*Yes. And you find it's good? Do you find it's good for you to talk as well?*

Yes, yes, I like these people. They've become like my family and their wives. The one that's a woman teacher and she invites me to her home, she's got her own place. They're not poor and they've got –

*And you feel they want to know...?*

They've got their own house in the country, in Cologne. [2:45:26]

*And do you feel they want to know your story, you family's story?*

They know all about me, they know about everything. Yeah, I'm not the only one. Kurt Marx and – they all go went back to Cologne and other places as well. They all go back. I did one, I think I told you was near Brent Cross, but that was –

*But Henny, what I want to ask you, do you feel that at this point in your life, that it was a good thing for you to make friends in Cologne, so to speak, or...?*

Only the school teachers, no, yeah. But the children listen to it. I've been told some of the children are very noisy and naughty, and they're all so quiet when I talk.

*And do you speak...?*

That's – the teacher told me.

*And do you speak in German to them?*

I speak in German, yeah. Because it's always different people and for me, it's always the same story.

*Yeah, but you speak – you still have a Cologne accent? You speak in kölsch?*

Have I got a kö...? I don't know, I can't speak *kölsch* [laughs].

*You can't speak kölsch?*

No, I've never spoke *kölsch* because I went to Jewish school. We had a lovely school, had a lovely – and the teachers. I've got teachers – I've been slowly filling up the bag. I don't know what I've got in there.

*We're going to look soon, but –*

But I've got – the teachers, my school. Just two years, all the teachers – most of the children went to concentration camp. The teachers went to concentration camp and different ones. different ones. And oh, I must tell you this story. I've got the Holocaust Survivor Centre, years ago we used to go – when we were in Hendon, we used to go on a Sunday. And they used to have volunteers there to see to us and entertainment, all sorts of things. I used to love it. I used to go out every Sunday. And one day on a Sunday, a couple came in, older and she came from South Africa. He went to the same school as me. But what happened was he came in, as he came in – from South Africa he came, with his wife, and he said, 'Is there anybody here from Cologne?' So, I said, 'Yes, Henny Franks is here' and he came up and he was introduced to me. He took my hand and he wouldn't – his wife was there, it was nothing like that, you know. **[02:48:03]** Just somebody from Köln. He held my hand. He would not let go. 'Oh, oh', he said, '*e Mädche von Köln, e Mädche von Köln* [in the Cologne dialect: a girl from Cologne]. And then, he said he was a bit older than me. So, I said, which teacher he had in – he went to the same school and he told me Fräulein Kross. I said, 'Do you know you're younger than me?' He didn't know. I said, 'If you were in that class and you had that teacher, you were one below me.' He told me that they properly – because to go to South Africa they made him older. So, I told him, 'You're younger. You're younger, a year younger than me.' Fräulein Schloss used to be – I went to Fräulein – I can't remember at the moment. And I said, 'I was one up from you.'

*So, he was...?*

They had two lovely daughters, two lovely daughters, they came to the Holocaust Centre. Then his wife, I don't know, he went to live in the flats there. The flats in the Sobell Centre there. And his wife used to be friendly and his daughters always used to be friendly. He died quite young. But how he came to Henny...

*What was his name?*

Pardon?

*What was his name?*

His name? Oh, I can't remember.

*Don't worry about it.*

I can't remember. He didn't live too long. But every time he did see me on a Sunday, he came, he held my hand and he would not let go. I had to pull away [laughs].

*Very important.*

And –

*Is it important for me – for you, for example, to meet other people from Cologne?*

Well, I know, of course, my – there was some others but I don't see them anymore. [02:50:03] Can't remember them either. Oh, there was Hans, Hans, I said the name yesterday. Hans Walters, you don't know him.

*No.*

Yeah, he also comes from Cologne and he went to the Jawne School as well. And he is – somebody said he was – I read he was dead, but Mark told me last week. I saw him, I see him sometimes on a Wednesday. On a Wednesday morning they've the Yiddish class and he's there and I'm not. But sometimes I'll go there on the Wednesday, there's nothing else I'm interested in on the week. I go on the Wednesday, something more interesting. That's the only time now you get people, because the Yiddish class is quite a lot of people. So, I join them. And tomorrow, they've got new group. They had one – started off last week and I enjoyed it and I enjoyed talking [laughs]. And it's – what's it called now? "What goes on now."

*Okay.*

So, we talk about now. Everybody gives their two pence in.

*Not about the past?*

Pardon?

*Not about the past.*

Yeah, well, I ... [Laughs] It's hard to get a word in sometimes.

*But Henny, what – do you say you go – you used to go back to Germany. So, what do you feel about Germany today?*

I'm indifferent. I feel very, very British, English. And as to my wedding, everything was done the English wedding, the English way. The mother-in-law came in the car with me and she was his stepmother.

*Tell me, how did you meet your husband?*

Pardon?

**[02:52:00]** *How did you meet your husband?*

Oh, I went – I think it was Pesach. Well, it was some Jewish holiday and I went to – I don't know if you know, I went to a dance. It wasn't a Jewish dance hall, but all the Jews used to go there. Tottenham Court Road, Astoria, have you heard of the Astoria?

*Yes, yes.*

That's where I met my husband. He came up and asked me to dance [laughs], that was it.

*And what was his background?*

So –

*What was his background?*

Pardon?

*What was his background?*

He came and asked me to dance, didn't know anything about me. Maybe thought I was Jewish and his parents – like he lived in Stamford Hill with his father and stepmother. And he – something, what did he say once? Oh, when we got married and we had our own place, he bought them a television. And he said, should he bring the television? I said, 'No, no, don't you dare. No, leave that there.' And my husband – my sister got married and her husband had no mother, and he wanted to give my sister the mother's ring. But he had a sister. My sister said, 'No, that when belongs to her daughter, not to me. You go and buy...'. And see this ring here? That's the best from Marks and Spencers. He bought me a beautiful ring, two carat ring, it got stolen out of my safe. That's about – just before – five years ago. I had the house done, I had five people working there. I had a lot of work done, thousands of pounds. Needed doing because I've been there sixty-four years. The ground needed doing, all new

floorboards. [02:54:03] You know, the strips and it's – I tell you how – my house is long, but twice like what you got here. All the way down, I call it a football pitch. I built out, it wasn't necessary but I thought I'd spend our money and it's a good job I did. Mind you, first I didn't want a house, I wanted a flat because I... And my husband's father lived in a house in Stamford Hill. And his brother and sister, they all had houses. But I wanted to live in a flat. We did look at some flats in Stamford Hill and we decided on one flat. It was a beautiful flat, we had to pay key money. I think he was a few hundred pounds. And she said it was – the key money was for – was a lovely flat in a big block. And she said – it was a Jewish woman who was in charge. And I think it was about 400 pounds, something like that. That's seventy years ago. And she said that it would be for – before, we agreed and were talking, it would be about four years, that key money. Then we had to pay the rent, was about – over six pounds a week, six pounds a week. It wasn't cheap but it was a nice place. It was just past the cinema on the corner at the time. So, we agreed. So, by the time – and I think we did- paid the money, some money, the key money, it's called. And then all of a sudden, it was for a year. They wanted it again in a year's time. So, my husband said, 'No, you're telling us lies. You said it was four years, I'll have my money back', and we bought a house instead. But it was about a couple years later. [02:56:00] We lived in a couple of furnished rooms, couple of furnished rooms in Stamford Hill. And it was a Jewish old couple, had this big house. And when I fell pregnant, I said, 'Well, it's time we moved out here.' And that's – some of my family lived in Edgware, my aunt, this aunt I'm telling you about. We were close to her, like we were very good to her in her life. But we did things for her that her own – she had two sons. Not the same as having a daughter. Also, they were nice girls, but still we went to visit her, all regular. We didn't live there in the end.

*Henny, what was your husband's job? What was his...?*

My husband? My husband was also in the army. When they came out of the army, they all – no, when they left school, the father took them all into the barber shop. And then, when they had to go in the army and came back, they didn't want to go in the barber shops anymore, all these boys. And so, they wanted to do something different. Everything what they did was very funny, but it will take too long to talk about. So, they didn't know what to do. So anyway, and eventually – but what they did in between, the boys, it's very funny. They got

chased out – they did – they had some dolls or something. They'd do funny – went round to big stores and demonstrate them. He got chased [laughs]. He told me because he had – he was an identical twin. So –

*Your husband?*

But his twin – no, twins, the sons. He had a son – he had a brother, he had four brothers, or five, four. [02:58:01] One sister, she was the frum one with her husband. They were the frum ones. I belonged to this – in Stamford Hill, the big synagogue. And you know, they were very upset when he died early, the husband. There was nobody that come for the prayer. Anyway, that – I got on very well with all his sons and all his ... They were my friends. I used to meet them in the West End sometimes. But there's some of – there's one nephew, I don't know if you – and a niece. But the nephew, we were very close and I'll tell you about what my husband did. There were – some of the boys, they went into selling – my husband sold menswear in the market. But a bit later, the older brother, he opened up in – where was is now? I forget now. It was in the East End somewhere, that's right, near the hospital, I think. He opened up a wholesale materials –

*Textiles?*

And yeah, opened that up because he had a grown-up son. Was about eighteen, nineteen when I got married. And the son and the father, but they all died fairly young. My husband was only eighty-five, but that was already older than his brothers. Oh, his twin died six months after him. And my husband was in hospital and his twin brother, he didn't live in London, he came to visit his brother. He used to come regular. We got on well, he used to come regular to see us. I used to come by and he did the same. [03:00:00] And I don't know what I was going to say now. And oh, my husband was in hospital and he came to see – my daughter went with him to the hospital. And on the way out, my daughter walked with her uncle going out. The nurse ran after her, 'Mr. Franks, Mr. – where are you going?' [Laughs]. And he told me some really funny stories that happened to him. I don't think I did bring a photograph, but when I got married, you know, the two – one either side of me. And my



husband goes – and his brother is kissing me and my husband goes, ‘Ohh’ [laughs]. I don’t think I had a – only a big picture. I don’t know.

*Did they look identical?*

If you saw them together, the other one was a bit bigger. My husband was very slim. But the other one was a little bit fuller, not fat but a little bit fuller than my husband.

*You could tell the difference?*

My husband was more on the skinny side, same as his daughter, my sister, my daughter, I mean.

*You could tell the difference between them?*

If you see them together, you can see a little bit. But if you don’t see them together, you see one at a time, you wouldn’t see the difference. And yeah, we were very good friends, used to come and visit us regular.

*And –*

He had one daughter and she died. She was forty-two, she left two children.

*Okay. And when you had your own children –*

My husband also smoked himself to death. They were big smokers, that family. My son never smoked; my daughter smoked. And also, my grandsons never smoke.

*Henny, so when you had your own children, how did you – what was identity? How did you want to raise them?*

[03:02:00] Oh, well, he used to come regular. They knew him, uncle – they all had Yiddish names as well. My husband told me his mother was frum but not the father. He could take it or leave it.

*But –*

But my sister, my sister she had chances, I said, from my sister-in-law's brother and he was well to do. And he wasn't Jewish enough for her, Cohen was their name.

*Henny, what about you in terms of Judaism? How important is your own...?*

It's very important. I would never marry out, never, never.

*Was it important for you, your Jewish identity?*

No, I come from a very – I'm not saying they were ultra-frum, they were not. But I come from a very Jewish family. My father did – they don't even know here. I don't know if you know, some people know but not many, when there's three children stood in a row. But it's all because her husband had – they call it kapor shlogn [the custom of symbolically transferring one's sins to a chicken before Yom Kippur, done by moving the chicken in a circle around one's head]. My father did that. But here, some of them don't even heard of it. And my father did – well, I come from a very Jewish family.

*When would they do it? The Kapparot, it's for...?*

I don't remember which one. There was one – I don't know.

*Yeah, it's one holiday.*

I don't remember, because – I don't remember.

*They take the chicken and –*

The three – a chicken, yeah, yeah.

*Yeah, what did they do with it?*

And then you had – to take all our sins away. That's what it is.

*Yes.*

And I know my mother once told me my grandmother was very Jewish, my grandfather was as well. Shabbos Hanukkah, my grandfather had us three and he had my cousin in Venezuela. **[03:04:00]** So that's four, he had four grandchildren. So, Hanukkah, Shabbos Hanukkah, we used to go to him. And he used to be – all got presents. And one year, we had a – Mogen David with – it was made out – it was a Mogen David. And Moshe with the ten commandments. It was like that big [shows a small size with thumb and finger] and Moshe holding the ten commandments. I've never seen that in England. And it was gold and white and things, but it's like a stone and gold at the back.

*So, everyone got it?*

And all of us got that. Another time we got cardigans, special ones like the Germans wear. Do you remember like the black cardigans they ...? Yeah, we all got one of those. So, I had a very nice grandfather. He had a big, big block and tell you, nobody paid. He took in all the ones that couldn't afford to pay. And when he came to pay the rates, he had not enough money to have ... [laughs].

*And Henny, Judaism, did it stay important for you when you raised your own children also?  
To give them a Jewish identity?*

No, no, my children, first of all my children went to – for the first schools, kindergarten, they went to the expensive one. It was down the road in Edgware. What is it now, the school?  
Yes, the Jewish one, the expensive one. What was it called now?

*In Edgware?*

Pardon?

*I don't know, not JFS? I don't know.*

The biggest one. [03:06:00] What did you say?

*JFS? JFS?*

No, the JFS is later. My grandson went to JFS. No, went to the Rosh Pinah first, but my children didn't go to the Rosh Pinah. My children went to the other one. It was just down the road, to kindergarten. They went a bit longer, but it was very expensive and to send – we had the mortgage going. And to – and we had to buy a car with the stuff, to take the stuff to the market. A van, we had. Later on, we had a van and a car, but I never bothered because he had to go down the East End.

*Did you help your husband with the market? Or did you...?*

My husband worked in the market.

*And did you help?*

Not me, no.

*You didn't?*

I used to go – I had two young children. The only time, I used to go sometimes so he could go, I'd take my children with me. In Enfield, he worked, he was there for years. And then he had to go to the West End, he had two jobs. The other one was just his and then he was with his older brother in the East End. There was this wholesale ...

*Yeah. And did you continue with your dressmaking? Did you continue your dressmaking?*

No, I didn't. My husband was – his mother, like I say, they weren't poor. The father had his own business, so employed people, so wasn't poor. And my husband, the mother was treated – I saw a picture of her sitting in a beautiful dress. She was the queen of Stamford Hill, and he treated me that way. He treated me that way.

*So, it wasn't expected for you to work?*

Well, I – you're a married man [laughs]. I'll tell you what some of the Jewish fellas do. I could never have dreamt – I'd rather not married at all, with my background could never marry out. [03:08:00] I said my daughter, that Cohen wasn't frum enough for her. She married the Shul goer. And the one she married was a member of the Edgware – my sister got married in Edgware, where the Edgware Shul – got married. And when my mother – when my sister died, the whole Shul, the chazzan and – they all came to the funeral, my sister died. He was a Shul goer, that was all right for her. And my family, I came to London, they were all kosher. Nobody was – all kosher, because I know we used to go to the butcher with her.

*Yeah.*

So, and all the children that got married, they were all kosher. It wasn't quite like that England, was it? I don't know. Well –

*So, Judaism –*

Oh, no, no my family in Eng – no, I've got it wrong. I mean, the people are not all like that. But my family, the Grünbaum family, they were all kosher. Well, a proud frum on Shabbos as well.

*So, Judaism stayed very important for you?*

Yes, yeah. I – yeah.

*So, today, you said you feel very British.*

They all dead today, every one of them, everyone. There's one niece left; she was my bridesmaid. Like I said, I had everything the English way. She talks to my daughter on the phone, but it's a Facebook. She phoned up not long ago and she wanted to know what their grandmother's name. So, she said, 'Mum, what ...', my daughter, 'Mum, what was our grandmother's name?' I said, 'Estelle, you've got her name.' 'What?' I put my daughter's name... [Laughs] It's Estelle, my husband's mother was Estelle. And also, Jacqueline, my daughter's name. Jacqueline Estelle. My father's name was Jankel, Jakob, Jack. [03:10:03] Jakob is Jack.

*Okay. But that brings me very nicely to the next question.*

So –

*Henny, did you talk about the past with your own children?*

Oh, yes.

*Did you talk about your history?*

Oh, my – their father, my husband used to crawl on the floor with them when they were babies, and crawl on the floor. He wanted to teach them to crawl. But my daughter was awkward as always and she still is awkward, she wouldn't crawl, she was like that [laughs]. You know, babies got their baby talk, when she was in the pram, she was six months old and then say, what did she say? 'Pap, pap, pap, pap' or something like that. He was excited, the baby's calling... But as it happened, when she was about eighteen months old or so, and he went out to work in the morning, she stood behind the door. Like I say, he used to crawl on the floor with him. She went on the door and she was screaming, she wants her daddy. And she went at the front door and she was behind it crying, she wants her dad. And also, we were

very – well, I learned that from my mother, very fussy about the shoes and the clothes. The shoes got to fit properly. I feel I've got perfect feet because I have them done every six weeks. I only need cutting the toenails, I can't get down anymore. The AJR pays for that. And my – so when my children were small, my husband used to take the day off. And we used to go to the West End, John Lewis, they used to have special children – somebody there that looked at their feet. That's what we used to do. And I remember, I didn't know what to do with her, behind the door screaming. [03:12:08] I got some pictures, little ones I took. And my husband, oh, we made – my husband and I, we made arrangements. We had to go in the morning, we had to go. But I went on the train to John Lewis and he'd come up there when he finished whatever he was doing. And as she saw him, and I've got a picture of that [laughs]... He was – we always used to go – we had a van, didn't have a car at that time, we had a van. We used to go out to museums and things, that I brought my – used to go down, what is it now? To the parks, bought a painting. But you know already – that was Marble Arch, where they had all the paintings on the – bought a painting there on the wall. My daughter could paint very well.

*And did they ask about your past? Did you talk...?*

She doesn't anymore, to paint.

*Did you talk about your past in Cologne? Did you talk about it with your children?*

No, not really. No, not really.

*Were they interested in your past?*

They didn't want to – my son, they didn't want to – like his own parents, his own children, they didn't want to have sad stories.

*They didn't?*

One day, I must have talked – I don't remember it. I just can't imagine that. Anyway, I was talking to them, they used to come at the weekend. My son used to work in Edgware and he lived in Essex. That's where he could afford to buy a house. And he worked there over the weekend. It had something to do with children not right in their head. So, they used to come the weekend. [03:14:02] And I must have – and the children come to stay the night and the wife. And I must have spoken to somebody on the phone and I must have told them something about my mother. Something sad, I don't know, I don't know. I don't remember it, I never remembered it ever. But apparently, the little one heard it and he was crying to his dad. And he said, 'What's the matter with you?' and my son told me off. And he said, 'Grandma, grandma', the children loved coming to their grandma. I feel sorry for children that never had a grandma [laughs]. So, he said something about the grandma, 'Grandma', something sad. My son went mad, 'In front of the child?' But for the life of me, I could never remember what it was. How did I talk on telephone? What did I say? I don't know.

*So, they didn't – so –*

No, they didn't – the little boy was crying about this grandma, something that happened to me. I don't know.

*Did you talk about your father to anyone? Did you talk about...?*

No, not very much. No, yeah, I never told them. They don't know all that much. They don't like sad stories.

*Are they interested? Do you find other children – or what about the grandchildren? Are they interested in your history?*

Oh, my grandson is different. My grandson, see, I couldn't afford to send to school – my children to send to the Jewish schools. Two – was too expensive. They went to the kindergarten and my husband had – we had the mortgage on the house. I was a member of the Holocaust Centre, that was later on. I was a member, so I paid my membership there. And well, it must have been even before, we had a mortgage going and he needed the money



for business. So whatever money we had went back into the business. [03:16:04] So I couldn't afford to send them. Anyway, it was too far, it was in Camden Town, the school. I couldn't have gone there that early in the morning. So they went in the local school, which is where all the other Jewish children from Edgware went, so they had Jewish friends anyway. So that was okay. But – and eating, they used to go to eat in the synagogue, the Edgware synagogue for lunch. And I used to help out there sometimes lunchtime, to – had to hand it to the children and clean up the plates. Only though – I took my – not every week. But I took, you know, whenever it was my turn, I took my turn. And the children were happy there and they had their Jewish friends anyway.

*And your grandson? You said your gra –*

My grandson, well, my oldest grandson, he went to the Rosh Pinah, we helped with the money. And then, he went to JFS. Now, he learned in school. And also, the other – of course, my son emigrated to Australia with his two boys. And I know the boys were young because I was in hospital with my hip repairs. They came to say goodbye in the hospital. So, but my oldest son, he – my older son, he's got two sons. So, the older one was here before, about three or four years ago, he came. Six-foot-odd [laughs] and a lovely young man, a lovely young man. Yeah, he came and my son – not my son, my grandson, he's got – he's older. [03:18:01] The other one is maybe just about thirty, my grandson is thirty-seven. He'd already had his own place, my grandson. So, his cousin stayed with him. And as I said, we're good friends, but he stayed a month and then he went back. He's got a good job in – he lives in Sydney now, but it's going to move back to where his father lives. So, the mother died young, very young. So, she had cancer. They kept her alive for twenty years and then it came back- bosh! And did I tell you he was headhunted here, my son? And he promised he'd come back and he was already making arrangements of buying a house. He had two, he had two houses in – because where he lived, first of all, where they could afford to live was not – the school – my son's all for education. The schools, first of all, they looked for schools before he looked for a house where to live. They went to – for a couple of weeks, that's all the time he could afford to be away, because he had his customers, went to Australia, well, Melbourne and they looked for schools. Went to look for schools, good schools. And he found them and so – and then they took them – it took a year, because Australia's very fussy who they let in.

Anyway, they did go eventually. But so, he – I forget now, in the minute, what I was going to say. That the boys – oh, the boys went to a good school here as well. And then – but he also worked in Edgware. [03:20:00] He lived in Essex Way, but not as far as there, a bit nearer. But I used to go there sometimes, he used to take me the weekend, when he had to come and work. And he earned good money there.

*And what do you feel about...?*

And he worked with the doctor through here, he worked at a doctors, the surgery.

*But what do you feel about having your son now in Australia?*

What can I do?

*Yeah.*

And that time, I reali – I never – you see, you never realise some things that happened in a lifetime to somebody. My husband and the brother that lived in England, my brother, my husband – not – my husband was on his way to England, but he never made it. He didn't have the money, he had to take a job with his friends, the Lewkowitz. You never know what can happen in your life. What's – I'm just so – I'm already thinking of the next lot.

*About your son in Australia?*

Pardon?

*I asked you about what do you feel about being your son so far away in Australia? Yeah.*

My husband, oh [pause], I forgot what I was going to say.

*Don't worry, Henny. I have another question for you. How do you think that your refugee experience impact on your life? You know, what influence did it have?*

I'm very soft-hearted. If I hear anything about a Jewish person, I can cry. I don't even realise I'm crying, tears just running down my face. And also, I'm never a day without thinking about my parents. [03:22:00] I sleep very badly, I've got a sleeping problem and I'm up half the night. One o'clock in the morning, I'll turn off the television. And then in the night, it goes through my head.

*And what do you think about?*

About my parents.

*What do you think about, Henny? What...?*

And – well, sometimes – I don't dream about my parents. Once, I had a bad dream. It was my father, I forget it, but the next day I was very upset. And then, my father phoned me and said he's here now and he's coming tomorrow. They let him out and he's coming tomorrow. He'll be here tomorrow, that's what I dreamt, because tomorrow came and my father didn't come. I know it was a dream, but I was so upset. I was so upset, I was so disappointed. It was like it was real. I knew I only dreamt it, but the disappointment was really – it's unbelievable what can happen to a human being.

*How old were you when you had the dream? As an adult?*

I was an adult, I was married, I had the children. No, it comes – I don't dream it very often. But that was a dream I remember really vividly, how upset I was, disappointment. Because no, we had a very Jewish life, but not really, desperately – like I say, like my best friend was the kosher butcher. It was different.

*Henny, you said so when you can't sleep you think about your parents?*

Yeah, well, I always think about my parents.

*And what do you think about them?*

Well, what else can I do? My mother came, 1947. She didn't have a long life. **[03:24:00]**

*When did she pass away?*

She was sixty-seven, so we had her for about twenty years. And she didn't have to work anymore. Then my mother got – that was also my brother. My brother was in – I told you he was in the number one, Minster Road. And they were all boys. And he learnt also about a solicitor that came from Cologne. I don't know if you know, but Dr. – it was Mr. Jakobi. He was my sister's teacher. There was my – Jakobi *Eins* [one] – Jakobi and one, two ...

*From Cologne?*

Yeah, that's the father and son. So, the son was a solicitor in England. So, he didn't do me any favours, I tell you. But he – I don't think he was a very clever solicitor, let's put it that way. But he got my mother – my brother was working with his friends. They were also Jewish friends, same background. And he came home and brought the solicitor, Mr. Jakobi. So, we took him at that time. That was a long time ago, before I was married. He came home and he said to my mother, 'Do you want to take Mr. Jakobi's son?' 'Of course, we can take the solicitor' comes from Cologne. So, and he sawed for my mother. My mother had her own furniture shop, I told you. My father had his own ... So Jakobi Sofa everything for my mother from Cologne and she got money. And then, he – what he did is – but us children, we got a lot of education, that's it. **[03:26:05]** So he said, whatever money we are entitled to, we should give it to my mother. What did we say? 'Of course.' The three of us were entitled to some money, but this money, we gave over to my mother. But my mother didn't really need it, because she had from her life and losing her husband. So, she had money from there from Germany, but we had nothing from Germany. So, my mother died young, my dad died with her. My sister was a young widow by herself, and she could have done with the money. She worked 'till her last day. She was sixty-two when she died, she had cancer. And so, and I – well, I was all right. But yeah, the mortgage paying – I would have loved to send my children – but it so happens they went to an English school, there was all the Jewish children. Where I

lived it was all Jewish people. I had lovely Jewish neighbours who helped me with my babies and –

*So, she got some reparation, your mother got...?*

The whole street, Cloister Gardens – a rabbi lives opposite me from Mill Hill synagogue. We joined Mill Hill synagogue straight away when we moved into the house. My son got bah mitzvahed in the Mill Hill synagogue. My daughter had – I did everything what my frum English family did. But I didn't know any better. So much my daughter when she was born, she had her name given in the Mill Hill synagogue, did everything what they did there.

*Speaking of – Henny, I want to ask you, you said you did everything the English way. What was different for you? What was the biggest difference culturally?*

Nothing was different.

*When you came here from Germany...*

I was only fifteen and I came to my frum – not too frum, but my kosher family. [03:28:04]  
Go to the kosher butcher, but then I had my kosher butcher in Cologne.

*So that's what I mean, so it was similar? You didn't feel...?*

No, no, it was different because here –

*What was different?*

Because in Cologne, the butcher was – had no meat in the thing. I just know he was the kosher butcher. He had – he didn't sell to anybody because he had a certain amount. And his children went away, the three children, they were my friends. I was still there when they put themselves on a train and went. And later on, I heard the story and we still – my sister and I

went to Belgium, you know, to visit the parents. So, but then I was put up the English-Jewish way.

*That's what I'm trying to understand. What is different from the English-Jewish way, let's say to your German-Jewish or Cologne...?*

Oh, I'll tell you what's the difference. My cousins all married Jewish men, they all got married in the synagogues. In Cologne, you didn't get married in the synagogues. You had a chuppah at home. I remember my mother's sister, I was a – we had pictures. I don't know what happened to them. My mother's younger sister married the Lewkowitz, for instance. My grandfather, I told you, had a big house with an enormous lounge. They had the party there and I remember it like yesterday. I don't know how old I was. And I was the – and I had the picture taken in that long – with all the family. They got married, they had a chuppah put up and they had some other cousins. Big weddings with the chuppah done.

*In the house?*

Not only in the house, even if you've got somewhere else, you had the chuppah put up.

*Yes, so that's one difference, what else? What other differences were there?*

[03:30:00] Well, I was young and I took – as I lived with English people, I did everything there like –

*English?*

See, I didn't mix with any foreigners at all.

*But can I ask you one thing which I haven't asked you?*

Yes.

*Because you had Polish citizenship when you came here, did you?*

I –

*Because where you –*

They were all the English way. They were all young people when they came to Poland.

*No, I'll tell you why I'm asking you, because did you have a problem being declared an enemy alien or not?*

No.

*Because –*

I wasn't, no. I didn't, no.

*Because you probably as – with your Polish passport?*

No, what I had to do is if I moved – I found my sister's, so my sister did what we had in the war and when you move ... Well, I never moved. I was already natu – was I naturalised? No, maybe – well, maybe I did it. I haven't got that book. But I found my sister, you know, the blue – well, you wouldn't know, you're too young. They had the blue books where we could -when you – if you moved your place where you lived, you had to go to the police and get it changed.

Yes.

That was the only difference.

*You had that?*

I had all my English cousins.

*Yes. When did you become naturalised?*

I came naturalised – I came out of the army 1946, '46. I had to go – I think maybe a couple of months, a couple years later. I know we went to Cologne. We went to Cologne, all night it took on the train. And I didn't have a passport, I just had papers. We had to have a visa.

*Okay.*

I remember that. But by the time I met my husband, I was already naturalised.

**[03:32:00]** *And was it important for you to become British?*

To become British? Yeah. And I was like this – I felt more British than the British [laughs].  
And –

*Today as well? You feel more British?*

No, I feel just a mother. I don't think about these things. No, Cologne is just far away. I used to go regular to visit my uncles.

*And today, do you – you want to go back to Cologne today or...?*

Only to teach children and everybody tells me it's a mitzwah, but I do. So, I stopped, the last time I was ninety-six. That's – November was the last time, November and Jan – March the war broke out. Was it March?

*2019 when you...?*

I was eighty-nine, not... What did that say? Eighty-nine.



*Right.*

No, that was the first time, was eighty-nine. No, I was well into the nineties.

*Before COVID? Yeah.*

Yeah.

*And Henny, since we're coming to the end of the interview, how did you manage with COVID and not seeing people?*

I always manage well without everything. Yeah, I – except, well, after, I got the sleeping problem. I think that was after my mother died, that's why my brother had the same. We both had the same. When my mother died, we had a sleeping problem.

*Were you close to your mother?*

Pardon?

*Were you close to your mother?*

Oh yes, yeah. Especially we didn't have a – the most important years, we didn't have a mother. And when I'm in Germany, Cologne, I feel a foreigner. [03:34:00] I don't like – anyway, things stay in my mind. I've done the same in Cologne, somebody –

*You said –*

I was in the newspaper.

*Henny, you said – you started the interview with the saying of your mother. You said your mother said something.*

Oh, that's right. No, my – oh, now I know. My mother always said sayings. She said, 'To know everything and to need little', that's what she said. So, when we read news, I read the newspapers, as many as I can get in my hand, from A to Z. I take two Jewish newspapers home, the weekly and the other one, Jewish News. I read them from A to Z. I can't always read them in one week. I'll read them some – the other week. I bring the new ones home. And I educated somebody else yesterday. I was telling her I – we had a television very early, My husband and I. We had a – when we could afford it, we bought a television. And I didn't have much to do except look after the children. I had – oh, I had a cleaning woman. We moved in, I was pregnant and my husband never liked me to do housework. I had a cleaning woman, I had nothing in the house, an empty house. He went out and bought a couple of deck chairs. Oh, and we had the bed delivered. There was a furniture shop in Edgware. He went out and – I had an aunt who lived opposite the station, that same aunt, she lived opposite the station, that little journey there. She lived there, she had a house there. So, my husband and I came and we stayed with her for a few days. [03:36:00] And we ordered the bed from that shop, delivered. And also, the house was waiting for the keys. And the pe – it was a lovely house. Well, it's nice now as well, but it's much – I built out. Now I've got a football pitch [laughs]. And – but it had a beautiful kitchen, lovely, fitted out modernly. And when it came to signing and they've given us the key, we went and had a look, they took the furniture out from the kitchen. The fitted cupboards and fitted cupboards there, they took it out. It was white and red. So, we didn't sign, we said no and that couple had to move out. They couldn't – she was married, she married out and she was Jewish. And she couldn't afford to live there. And they picked up the carpets, although we didn't care about the carpets. We can buy our own, didn't want somebody else ... But the kitchen was beautifully done. We said, 'No, I'm sorry, we're not signing. You can take your house back.' It wasn't as easy to sell a house as what it is today. So no, they brought all the kitchen back and put it all back the way it was and then we signed. And then we stayed with my aunt a few years until it was all done. And we waited for the – oh, there was the gas company and we waited for the gas, for the oven, the gas oven to be delivered. The kitchen sink –

*And you're still in the same house, Henny?*

I'm still in the same house. It's a lovely house, I can't go better than that. [03:38:00]

*Henny, have you got a message for anyone who might watch this interview in the future?*

The only thing, I wish everybody to be happy. I was just the lucky one. I always say I was the lucky one. And the great-grandchildren, or the grandchildren, from the la – to the couple that I stayed with, they're still in touch. But they live a long way away from me. But like I say, when the Holocaust Centre used to go to Edgware – when we used to go to Westcliff, they live that way and I live that way. They lived in Essex Way, so where all the other Jews live, you know. Some of them come from there, because there are survivors as well that come, I know them all. And so, I was brought up the English way, I was only fifteen. I was very innocent.

*So, what would you say to somebody based on your experience? What...?*

And some – well, my husband was very respectful to me, if you know what I mean, because some of them were all over the place. I didn't like that, that wasn't me. I find that disrespectful, I'm not a prostitute. I wouldn't have it and that's why I was thirty when I got married, just over thirty. I wasn't going to have that. I was in the army, I had Jewish boyfriends, Americans. [03:40:00] I made somebody laugh the other day. Where were we? Oh, when we went from the AJR do last week and the daughter of my friend who died, she was going with a friend and they picked me up. And I was telling them the story [laughs]. I didn't like to tell them, but I once went out, that's a story for life. I went out with an American soldier. That was in London, I was home on leave or something. And he took me out, I lived in the West End and he took me home and kissed me goodbye. And he said, 'With or without?' I was very innocent. 'With or without?' I didn't know what he was talking about. I didn't have a clue. I said to him, 'What was he talking about? What's that?' He realised that I didn't know. He said, 'Oh, that's okay. It's okay, nothing important.' At least he was decent, but... And I've had a Jewish friend, I've always had Jewish friends. So, I told her, she was a bit older than me, about eighteen months older, and I told her, 'What does he mean?' She was laughing and she told me [laughs]. And for the first – I never told my children that. And for the first time, for this friend and me, whenever we used to see each other the first thing we said, 'With or without?' [laughs]. She moved to – she used to live in

Stoke Newington and she moved to – with her husband, she moved to Bournemouth. Big house, he was a taxi driver. And one year, I went with the Holocaust Centre, the AJR probably, I went to Bournemouth. [03:42:00] We went to Bournemouth on holiday and I got in touch with her. The first thing we said to each other, ‘With or without?’ And the husband heard and he said, ‘What are you talking about? What is that?’ I don’t know whether she told him or not. And we always had a good laugh, that was for life. But I was very innocent and my husband was very respe – a lot of them – that’s why I very kept on with my husband. And because he lived in Stoke – in Stamford Hill and I lived some way, he had to walk. And one year later we were married.

*Okay. But was he – when you met him, was he...?*

Yeah, I was thirty-two.

*Was he still in the army or you already finished?*

Pardon?

*Was he still in the army when you met him, your husband?*

No, that wasn’t war time. No, my husband was in the army as well. He was born in this country, his brothers, they were all – his twin got a – his twin got – has done his hand... His twin and an older brother, they were together in a place and they were shooting the – I said the army thing, but I’d spoke to yesterday, they knew exactly what I was talking about. ‘Oh, she knows!’ They had to shoot up the weapons, the cannons. And I called them AC, AC, that’s the army talk. That’s all I knew, AC, AC, that’s the cannons. He was – at night, you know, used to come. And he had an injured hand from that cannon, probably came back at him.

*Henny, you actually didn’t tell us what you did for the army. What was your...?*

Pardon?

*You didn't tell us, what was your main job for the army?*

What I did?

*Yeah, what was your main job?*

Oh, I'll show you.

*No, no, wait, wait. Not yet, not yet. [03:44:00] Just tell me what it was.*

I'll show you. I went – my – I was in the – oh, I told you before that I was ... Anyway, it's – yeah. Anyway, I wanted to do – they asked me what I wanted to do. First of all, I had to do, oh, store woman.

*Store woman?*

Store woman, that's what I did. I had to do a course and I passed it. And then they put me into a very – it was a very big depot. And it's where – stores where the weapons came in. It was just – it's called Chilwell. It's – I think it's still there. Very big, very big. And I didn't – but I didn't drive outside the camp, only inside stores. And as the stores came in, they got delivered onto – it was like a – you see them now all the time in the street. Like a front and then all things hanging on.

*Yeah.*

I've got a picture of that, and I did that. And I had – the stores were all – a very big camp, you know. And they had to all be taken, every cannon had a number on it. You had to take them there, that's what I did. And yeah, they called it store woman.

*But you also learned how to drive a truck?*

So, I didn't have to do cleaning.

*No, but you also drove a truck?*

They wanted me to do cleaning. I said I wasn't doing – I said, 'Look, I'm capable of doing something more than cleaning.' They believed me and they sent me ...

*You stood up for yourself?*

Then sent me to Nottingham and – but I was at Newcastle I learnt first to do the – [03:46:00]  
But in Nottingham ...

*So, and you told me, so you're a veteran and that's why yesterday you laid the wreath in Edgware at the –*

Yeah, I was presenting the Jewish Care yesterday. I had the – holding the wreath. And then, I've got shaky hands- I didn't shake once. They all told me I did so well. I walked up to the centre, and I put the phone – I put the phone, I put the – it was from Jewish Care written on there, what they do. The same as what you saw the English doing, I watched them on telly. And I put it down on the centre and I walked back and sat down again. And everything was really pleased with me.

*That's a lovely, that's a lovely place to finish. Henny, is there anything you would like to add?*

What they – how they knew that I was in the army, somebody phoned up the Holocaust Survivor Centre years ago and they asked if anybody there that was in the army. And they said they knew about me and they said, 'Yes, Henny Franks.' So, from there, somebody came like you with somebody to help him. And they all came to the Holocaust Survivor Centre, and they talked – I told them the story. And that was one time. And then another time, I was on the computer. This man, I was on the computer a long time, what they said. Now I think you have to pay to watch it. It was for a long time I'm talking. And I also said to him, I felt

more English than the English [laughs]. And then, another time as well, oh, that's just a few years ago, the girl was there. [03:48:00] Also to the Holocaust Centre, there came loads of them. They all took these – they took loads of pictures of me. We made up some stories. There was another young man and I had to hold him and smile at him, like they just met me. I don't know, they sent me a picture of the girl and me. She put her arm around me, sent me that one but nothing more. They took loads of them. So, I asked them yesterday, 'What did they do with all these pictures? Where are they?' She said, oh, she'll bring me some. She was going to tell me but she didn't get a chance.

*Okay, all right. Henny, that's –*

Yeah, I wondered what they did with all these pictures. There was dozens and dozens of it.

*Henny, is there anything – we've covered quite a lot of your whole life. Is there anything you'd like to add? Something I haven't asked you or we haven't discussed?*

No, I'd just like to show you some of the pictures, yeah.

*The photos, we will do now. Apart from the photos, anything else you want to say?*

No, not really. I think I told you about all I know, most of it. When I go to Germany, they're all very nice to me really.

*Okay, Henny, well, thank you so much for giving your testimony –*

My pleasure, my pleasure.

*To Refugee Voices.*

So –

*Thank you.*

I had heard about you and I must laugh, my friend Roselee, she was born in this country but she married a survivor, she was married. She was really – also a sad story. Also, I must tell you, I know other people's stories. My friend, the one who died, she was a year older and I'm very friendly with her daughter and her family. She came and picked me up to go to the AJR do. I've been going to the AJR do since it started.

*AJR Tea?*

The AJR Tea. Was it just the tea? [03:50:00] I don't remember what we used to eat, but right from the very start. And well, I could say about twenty-four years ago. I belonged to the AJR before I belonged to the – there was a lady that I met at the AJR who was also a member of the Holocaust Centre, but I didn't know about the Holocaust Centre. She came from Cologne, I've met her and we got friendly. And she lived in Wembley and I used to see her a lot. And then, she took me to the Holocaust Centre in Hendon. And I didn't know about that place, I didn't know about any place. I think it was – oh, how I come to the AJR was, I don't know if you heard about what's her name? She used to be the top on the AJR. She met – oh, God, she became a friend as well. She was to top in the AJR.

*Bertha Leverton?*

Bertha Leverton.

*Yeah.*

I was friends with her. And she came around, what was it? Oh, I think my mother just died. I think she came around to my cousin Ruth, that I was telling you about. And she wanted her to join them, I think. And through that I knew her, but at the time my mother died; so I couldn't go. The very first one, it was somewhere, I don't know. I couldn't go because my mother just died. So, but then I started going later, later. And we've been friends for a long time, very long time. She used to write me sometimes, on Shabbos she used to make – because she was the frum one, when nobody was looking [laughs]. [03:52:00] Her children were very frum.



*And so –*

And she had some in Israel and she had a daughter here, and they were very frum. And –

*And Henny, tell me about the belonging to the AJR, that's important to you, the AJR?*

Oh, yes, yes. Yeah. Oh, I know Michael very well because Michael, I told you, I known him when he was – I was the member of the AJR, not him. And I'm very friendly with his mother, because she used to work in the Holocaust Centre, she was in the office. When my husband died and after a while, I went back and I was sad, and she came up to me and she put her arms around me. And so, you know, all these little things I remember. And she – and now we're very good friends. Because we don't see each other much but I saw her just now, and it was very joyful for both of us to see all the people I used to know, that used to work together. Because even now, the young ones, it's changing. But Karen I've known all this time and her husband. And there was another Jewish man, used to work for the AJR. He used to drive the car, he used to come and pick me up in the morning when I used to go. And he was very good friends with Karen's husband even afterwards.

*Henny, I think we need to see a picture. My last question to you is how do you see the future of the AJR? How do you think – what should the AJR be doing?*

Well, I think they've become – I had a bit of aggro. The AJR pays for me to come to the taxis and they pay for – to go – well, not only me. That's what they do, they give – and there was – there was a woman, she died already some time ago. [03:54:00] She was a very nice woman. AJR used to do a lot. I know two people who told me, one of them was only married – I see her now, the last one, I see now. She's not – she was – she's not a survivor. She's Jewish but not survivor, her husband was. She gets a lot of mon – she told me she gets a lot of money. And I know somebody else who was a survivor, but that's another story. You should hear some of the stories of my friends who are dead. It's unbelievable. She told me herself that when it's yom tov, she gets a lot of money from the AJR. She gets – and I know from my friend who died, she gets 300 pounds every time there was a yom tov, I get nothing. And now

I – now, recently I had to phone me – I know you only wanted to know about me, but the other two of them, one of them, Sharata , that is – I’ve known them for a long – she’s always – Sharata has always been there. I forget their names, Sharata and another woman. What’s her name? Something ... They wanted to see me, they wanted to come from the AJR to – I call it – what do I call it now? [Laughs] Well, I tell you what they did. I’m so tired, so some of the words I’ve forgotten.

*It’s late.*

They came, they wanted to come, they wanted to come to my house. Of course, I can’t have anybody in my house. You saw them now, the dog. I can’t have anybody. They wanted to come into my house, they wanted to interview me. I don’t call it interview, I call it something more stronger than that. [03:56:04] And the AJR pays for my taxis and they pay for when the chiropodist comes. All she has to do is cut my toenails. And she told me that the AJR have got very fussy now and of course, they’re not getting the money that they used to get. But they get money from Germany to pay for us. And also, what else did they want? Oh, they wanted something that I just couldn’t agree with. I said, ‘You’re ...’, some stronger words I used, can’t think, no. I said, so I wasn’t going to have them. I said, ‘I can’t have you in my home. I’ve got a dog, I’m frightened of the dog myself.’ You know, she loves me and she wants to kiss me and she scratches me. She’s got nails that long. Her teeth, got beautiful teeth. They’re that long, white. She doesn’t realise she’s hurting me. All she wants is my hand in our mouth. I think my grandson taught her that. And so, I don’t know. Anyway, I think the AJR want to take away from me the taxis, something. Well, I got very annoyed and I said – and also, the taxi firm is called Emess, they’re Jewish. But they’re very unreliable. You can get really a heart ache, so unreliable. And I did, I’m shaking like a leaf. We were going – they always came late, very late, never punctual. And then, we were going on our usual yearly trip to Westcliff. And we had to be there at 10 o’clock or something like that, the coach is coming. [03:58:00] They didn’t turn up at all. I had to go from my house to the Sobell Centre, where the coaches were to take us to ... They didn’t turn up at all. Well, I tell you, my heart was going. And so, I phoned them up and said, ‘They didn’t turn up.’ So, they said to me on the phone, ‘Don’t worry, we’ll wait for you. Don’t worry about it.’ I wasn’t the only one. There were other people who were the same, but I didn’t know that. So, but they

were always late. So, they said – I got really fed up with them and I said, ‘I don’t want them anymore. Finished. I’ll pay for myself.’ The thing is, I didn’t realise how much it would cost me really. It would cost thirty-two pounds, thirty-two pounds for one day, half coming and half going back. That comes to thirty-two pounds. Well, that’s impossible for me every week. Even if I’ve got just one day, it would – I like to go, I’ve made so many friends and I come in, the lights go on [laughs].

*So, you’d like the AJR to continue the support?*

They’re such nice people. Pardon?

*So, you’d like the AJR to continue the support?*

Of course, I can’t – look, I’ll tell you what happened, why I can’t afford it. My husband, we had a bit of money. I’m not saying we didn’t have much, not a fortune. Nothing much to talk about, a good few thousand pounds. My husband got ill, that’s me again, what my parents told me. And so, when you’re in hospital a bit longer, you have to give your pension. So, they said he’s got to give his pension to the hospital. Me, idiot, I did it. But I still had the household to pay for. I’ve got to eat, that was for both of us. [04:00:05] And so, I didn’t make any fuss, I gave it and I ate up all the money for a whole year. I paid all the bills, the house, you’ve got to pay bills. You know what you have to pay. Even now, I pay a lot of money. The electric bill’s going up, so they get – now the water bill is going up to 100 pounds a week. I think they give me something towards it, but I don’t know yet how much. And something else they’re giving, the electric they’re going to give me. That’s all – but and also, I pay council rent, all these bills, so.

*Okay, Henny, I think we need to finish the interview because otherwise we won’t have time to see your photos.*

Yeah.

*So, unless there’s anything else, I will thank you very much again.*

Oh, you're very welcome. So that's why I have no money today. I've never made it up. I was wanting to tell you about my ring.

*All right.*

My husband bought me a ring, it cost 300 pounds seventy years ago. It was stolen out of – I had the builders in.

*You told us.*

Yeah, they opened the safe. The safe is in the wardrobe. I've got fitted furniture. I always had that, my husband did that. And you can see, my children didn't believe me. They said I lost it and I showed them the lock where it's been interfered with. They left all the rubbish and they took just the one ring. It was insured for ten thou – it was valued at 10,000 pounds and it was insured. The insurance did pay me out.

*And this is a copy?*

And so, I never replaced it. So, I bought that in Marks and Spencers and it was ten pounds.

**[04:02:00]** *Very good. Okay.*

So now –

*Stay, stay, one second, one second. Just sit down again. Okay, just one second. Just one second. One moment.*

The first one is little – it's my sister, Grete. Behind her, the taller one is me, Henny Franks. And then comes my brother, Freddy, Alfred, Freddy. And the two boys next to – at the other end, they went to Auschwitz.

*When was it taken?*

From Belgium, they were taken from Belgium.

*No, the photo, when was the photo taken?*

Oh, the photo? That was in Cologne. Oh, I was ten years old, eight or nine, ten years old. So, how long is that? 19 –

*Late twenties or early thirties.*

Yeah, late twenties. I was born 1923. Oh, it must have been maybe '30, isn't it? 1930.

*Yeah.*

But I can't – who's that? I've looked at that for a long time.

*You said it was an excursion.*

Can I move?

*No, we can move the photo.*

On the left is the – oh, I don't – oh, that'll be Sender Lewkowitz on the left, the man on the left. And his wife is next to him.

*Yeah.*

And then, oh...

*The father? Your father?*

Is it my father?

*Yeah.*

My father, my mother and my sister. My sister, Grete.

*And you are?*

I don't think I'm on it.

*On the right, is that not you?*

[04:04:01] Is that ...? Oh, that's somebody else. Is that my mother's sister? The wife of the – of David Lewkowitz?

*And when roughly – where would it be?*

Is she on there? I don't know, I can't see.

Yes, that's me, Henny, my mother and father. My brother, Freddy, Alfred is his name. And my sister, Grete.

[MS1] And where was it taken?

[HF] It was on the way, when my sister and I, we were going to England. It was taken in a shop, experts, going to the station from – my sister and I are going to England.

[MS1] On the Kindertransport?

[HF] On the Kindertransport. My brother came April.

[MS1] And what year was that?

[HF] 1939.

*What do we see on the photo?*

Oh, that's me, yes.

*In the army?*

In the army, yes. You can see I've got my uniform on. That's the working clothes.

*And in what – when would it have been? 19...*

Oh, 19... I went in 1942, about 1942, '43.

*Okay, thank you.*

Which one is that? Oh, that's me, yeah, in the park when I was on leave.

*In your uniform?*

That's the one I showed to Prince Charles.

*Yeah? When did you show it to Prince Charles?*

He invited us to – well, everything is now four years ago, five years ago.

*And what did you say when he saw this?*

I said to him, 'I wore the same uniform as your mother.'

*Thank you. [04:06:00] Yes, please. What do we see here?*

Oh, that's just me, isn't that? Yeah, me and what I did and a colleague –

*In the uniform? Is this the...?*

Yeah, that's my working clothes.

*Yeah, in the transport police? Transport?*

No, no, Chilwell. Transport Control, it was the unit, it was called Transport Control.

*1946?*

That's when I came out.

*Thank you.* Yes, what do we see on the picture?

Oh, that's my mother, my sister and me, Henny.

*When?*

Must have been 1949, 1950.

*In London?*

In London.

*Thank you.*

Yes, it's my wedding day, Henny and Morris Franks.

*When?*



Franks.

*And when, please?*

When?

1950s, '56.

*Thank you.*

Yes, bar mitzvah day, David and Henny, his mother, I'm the mother. And father and his sister, Jacqueline.

[MS1] Yes, please.

*Yes, please, Henny. What do we see on the picture?*

Oh, the Stolpersteine in Cologne and my father, who went – it's all written on there. He went to Sobibor. And then, next door, one that was where my mother went, that she died in England. And that's all I can remember.

*And you were there when they took...?*

I was there, yes. And so were the students, they were surrounded by students, all watching doing it.

*In 2016?*

[04:08:02] Was it the ...? I don't remember exactly. Is that what it says?

*Yeah. Thank you.*

Henny Grünbaum.

*What is it? What do we see here?*

Just me.

*But it's your –*

That's my name. Well, Henriette Grünbaum then.

*And this is a document for the Kindertransport?*

Yes.

*Thank you. A registration card?*

I don't know, must have been. Naturalised, no, this is – oh, we were – I was naturalised. But they weren't, not at that time. Or maybe they were, 1947.

*It's a registration card, which –*

I think it's for me. Yes, I got naturalised.

*But it says the wrong arrival date, because it says 3<sup>rd</sup> of February '38.*

No, arrival date was 1939.

*Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Did you receive this from World Jewish Relief, from the archive?*

No. Archives must be from the government.

*When did you receive this? Or when did you find this?*

I just found it the way it came to you.

*Okay.*

I was looking for the others. I've got others that were from Jewish Relief. I want to know who paid the fifty pounds. And I found them from all three of us, how they looked after us for a long time after, that I went in the army, everything on it. And I don't know where I put it.

*Thank you. Yes, please.*

Yes, it's also hard to see of that's –

*Yes, from the archive. And it tells us a little bit about that – your mother's address and your uncle looking for you.*

Yeah, remember my uncle was looking for us. He knew we were in England, but I didn't know where he was in Caracas. My mother's brother.

*Thank you. Thank you so much again –*

No, thank you, thank you.

*For sharing your story and showing us your photographs and documents.*

It's important, yeah, for the future.

*Thank you, Henny. Thank you very, very much.*

You're very welcome. Oh, archives, yeah.

*So, we found another one, which –*

My sister? No, it's not.

*No, it's you. It's the first page of the document we just photo – filmed.*

Oh, afterwards.

*So, these are all the things which were written about you, I guess, in the –*

What they say.

*Archive at World Jewish Relief.*

Yeah. Well, it was a bit late in the evening when I found them. Got a bit tired and also, I couldn't see that very well.

*Well, you found the right things. Thank you so much.*

[END OF RECORDING 04:10:50]