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**Interview Transcript Title Page**

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<b>Interviewee Surname:</b>	Napier
<b>Forename:</b>	Lore
<b>Interviewee Sex:</b>	Female
<b>Interviewee DOB:</b>	16 April 1930
<b>Interviewee POB:</b>	Schönlanke, Germany

<b>Date of Interview:</b>	19 July 2016
<b>Location of Interview:</b>	Kidderminster
<b>Name of Interviewer:</b>	Dr. Jana Buresova
<b>Total Duration (HH:MM):</b>	1 hour 23 minutes



## REFUGEE VOICES

**Interview No.** RV185  
**NAME:** Lore Napier  
**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016  
**LOCATION:** Kidderminster, Worcs., UK  
**INTERVIEWER:** Dr. Jana Buresova

**[Part One]**

**[0:00:00]**

*The interviewee is Lore Napier, in Kidderminster, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016.*

*Mrs Napier thank you very much for kindly agreeing to be interviewed for the AJR Refugee Voices project. May we start by- your family name, and where your parents were from, and their date of birth.*

My maiden name was Hannelore Spagat.

*And where were you born?*

I was born in the part of Poland that was called Schönlanke [present day Trzcianka, Poland]. It was German territory at the time.

*And which year?*

1930.

*And your parents, where did they come from?*

My father was born in Szubin [Schubin- German], which is somewhere in Poland. And my mother was born in – I have got it on paper. Can't remember the name. I – I think it was part of Germany she was born in. Well, it was actually, yeah, just outside Berlin.

*And what was your father's profession?*

He...he was a very spoiled son of factory owners in - in Schönlanke. So, he didn't really have a profession, but he liked playing around with machinery, I think. But... that's as far as I know.

**[0:01:44]**

*Did he do any bookkeeping, or anything like that?*

Pardon?

*Did he do any bookkeeping in the factory?*

I have no idea. I've no idea.

*And what did your mother do? Did she have a...?*

My mother- My mother did not work. No... no. She... came from quite a very rich family. When we lived in...in Schönlanke, we lived in... it was ...her father, her parents- her grandparents were landowners, and we lived in a big house there. And... because her- her life had been very unhappy. Her grandparents had looked after her from about the age of nine. And they were her- did everything for her. And... So... she didn't have to work at all. She had servants and... nannies and things.

*Did you grow up in Berlin?*

Well, we left- we left Schönlanke in 1933 when Hitler came to power in Berlin, because my parents felt it would be better for us to integrate ourselves in - in Berlin where they'd both originally come from. And my father's, and my mother's family had businesses. My mother's

family-owned large shops and things, similar to [John] Lewis's. So, in 1933 we went to Berlin. And... that's when we- So really, I know nothing of Poland, at all.

**[0:03:25]**

*What are your memories of Berlin at this time?*

My memories of Berlin... When I was five, I went shopping once with my grandmother, who, my mother must have met again and became- didn't live together. Went shopping in the centre of Berlin. And a crowd suddenly gathered. And Hitler's cavalcade came along. And all the crowd were doing salutes, "*Sieg Heil*". And I wasn't going to. And I must have been about eight, nearly nine by then. And she said, "You must, otherwise something will happen." And I did see people taken away, and beaten. But I only spent my holidays in Berlin, because I was at a boarding school till I was nine-and-a-half. My memories of Berlin. In my school holidays, when I went back to... my mother's flat, the children who I used to speak with, weren't allowed to speak with me. Because I suppose their parents had said to them, you know, "We don't- Aryans don't mix with Jewish people." I remember we weren't allowed to go into any theatres, cinemas, cafés... or even parks, cause the benches there said, "*Juden verboten*". Our Jewish doctor could no longer practice, so I don't know what we did without a doctor.

*Did you feel frightened in those days?*

That I can't remember. I think, as a child, I knew it was happening, because it was pretty evident what was happening. And... I don't think I felt frightened, but I knew that a lot of my parents' friends had gone to America. We had relations there, and I remember my mother tried to get us to the States 'cause she had uncles and cousins and... Her brother actually was in Argentina, in Buenos Aires at the time. But their quota was full. So... that was the end of that.

*Your boarding school, was it a Jewish boarding school?*

It was a Jewish boarding school, and I went there at the age of five-and-a-half, when my parents divorced. I didn't feel very Jewish because my parents were...[coughs] were first and foremost Germans. Judaism- Judaism was very low on their...their list of things.

*So, would you describe your family as very assimilated?*

Yes. Very much so. Very much so.

*And did you ever go to the synagogue at all?*

**[0:06:08]**

No. I think my father would go occasionally, but my mother, no. I never went. My mother did try to do a little bit for the Jewish religion. On a Friday night she'd have the meal and the candles and she'd wave her hands and a prayer. I don't think she really knew what she was saying. But that was a little bit of- Yes. She had a to try to remember. Keep in touch. Cause of course her family had all been – I think - very strict Jewish.

*Mn-hnn. And in boarding school, did you have Jewish prayers? Did you have any religious instruction?*

We must have done because we had Hebrew lessons. And most of the children there could read the Hebrew. I couldn't. When I left at the age of just nine-and-a-half, I still couldn't understand Hebrew. I must have been very much against it. First of all, 'cause I didn't really want to be there. Secondly, I knew what was happening.

*And... what happened to you when you left the Jewish boarding school?*

Pardon? I'm sorry I can't hear...

*What happened to you when you left the Jewish boarding school?*

My mother had heard of the Kindertransport... but it was difficult to, to ...for her to... do all the... necessary... [phone interruption] They- they managed- they did all the paperwork. And

the whole boarding school was only a very small one of fifty children. And they did all the correspondence. And before I could come to England of course I had to have foster parents. And that, that was all arranged by them. So... we actually went by train to the Hook of Holland with all these other children. And also... I think someone must have been going with us. I'm not sure about that.

*And... when did you leave Berlin?*

June the 20<sup>th</sup> 1939.

*Can you recall how you felt and how your parents felt at that time?*

**[0:08:24]**

Yes. Yes... To me... I didn't know what was happening. I wasn't afraid of going to another country, or to another family, because having been in a boarding school, I was used to not being in a family situation. My mother gave me a photograph... that had been taken a week beforehand. And it shows my mother and myself. And on the back, she put – [gets emotional] this is when I get emotional ...Sorry. She put, "Hannelore, never forget me." I'm not an emotional person at all but that...

*Of course...*

Sorry about that. But by June, parents weren't allowed to go on the platform. They had to be-say their goodbyes outside the station. And when the train left, our blinds were drawn. As soon as we left the station, we could, could pull our blinds up again. And I saw to my amazement, my father driving alongside in his car waving at the train. He had no idea where it was, because after a time the train went much faster than the car. That was my last glimpse of my father.

*Did you ever see him again?*

No, I didn't. No. He died in Auschwitz.

*How was your mother when you said farewell to each other? Was she very emotional?*

She wasn't an emotional person at all. She... ..I can't. It's very difficult to explain. She would never, ever cry. I can't really remember. But when she gave me that photograph [becomes emotional] she must have- She must have really been feeling...

**[0:10:13]**

*Yeah...*

*...sad.*

*Yes. And... Do you remember the name of the boarding school that you were at?*

No...no, no. No. It had been German. It had been Jewish. So...no idea.

*What did your mother do after you had left Berlin?*

Pardon? Excuse me?

*What did your mother do after you had left Berlin?*

I... I, I, I – I don't know at all. But I know that... two or three weeks later she had a letter from my foster parents. My foster parents at that time were in Cardiff, in Wales. They had me because they wanted to have a friend for their daughter who was the same age. My mother - and I have a copy of part of that letter - my foster mother there, sent a letter to my mother saying, "We would like to adopt Hannelore. She has become very much of the family. Geraldine and Hannelore get on very well together..." Which was absolute rubbish; she was a frightful child, but I shouldn't have said that, should I. "...She cannot become British or English unless we adopt her. Frau Spagat, at the end of the war, you may come and visit her any time."

*And this was just two or three weeks after you had arrived in Britain?*



Yes! Yes! So that rocked her bowl. My mother, by hook or by crook, managed to get to England a week before the war started.

*She must have been devastated.*

She must have been. Yes, she must have been...yes. She'd lost everything hadn't she? She'd lost everything in Germany, and I was all she had.

*Because... as a lady at home, as a housewife and a mother, she would have lost her own sense of identity without you as well.*

**[0:12:16]**

Yes. Yes, certainly. Certainly. Certainly.

*And how did you feel, arriving in Britain? Where did you come to? Did you come to Liverpool Street and then...?*

It was Hook of Holland to Harwich, and Harwich - Liverpool Station. And there we were met by our future foster parents, who were from - from Cardiff.

*And what were their names, your foster parents?*

Bolton. Mr. and Mrs. Bolton. I don't know their - their first names.

*And... what was your immediate reaction to them?*

When I say that the first breakfast I had, consisted of something I couldn't eat as a Jewish person.

*But... When first you met them at the station...*

No, I can't remember that. It was only Mrs. Bolton, because Mr. Bolton was in the Airforce. I don't remember that at all. She must have been a kind person, to take in a refugee.

*Was the family Christian or Jewish?*

Yes, presumably so. No- they were Christian, but I don't remember them going to a – to a church. They definitely weren't Jewish. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been given me bacon for breakfast, would she, on the first morning.

*How did you respond to that?*

Well of course it was something I hadn't eaten. I can't remember what I did. I was a bit horrified I should imagine.

*And ...How did you feel about the family, your environment, and their own daughter?*

**[0:14:00]**

In, in, in Cardiff? They had quite a big extended family. And of course, all came to greet me, and they were talking about Christmas, although this was of course then the beginning of July. And of course, Christmas – I didn't know what they were talking about. They were telling me how excited it would be if father Christmas- coming down the chimney. [laughs]

*Did it all seem very strange to you?*

Very, very strange. Although I must say that in Berlin, we did celebrate St Nicholas, where we left shoes outside our bedroom window, filled with sweets. Very German tradition, wasn't it? Not Jewish.

*And... what did they ask you- How did you address them? Did you speak to them as an aunt or did they insist that you call your foster parent 'Mother'?*

I don't know, I would imagine it would be 'Aunt' and 'Uncle'. But I was there for such a short time. I remember very little about it. I know that I wasn't happy with, with their daughter.

*Could you remind me how old you were at that time?*

I was nearly ten.

*And you said that you were not with them for very long.*

I must have been with them a month perhaps.

*And did your mother arrive after [inaudible] then?*

My mother- my mother arrived a week before the war started. And of course, she- as a refugee she had to straight away go to Bloomsbury House in London. And then she- never in her life, but- all refugees had to go into domestic service.

*All the women...*

For the women, yes. She worked for two maiden ladies in Tunbridge Wells. Absolutely lovely. I didn't meet them.

*In which part of London? ...Or, or was it not in London?*

**[0:15:48]**

It was Tunbridge Wells she went to. Tunbridge Wells. Two maiden ladies. And they were lovely. They treated her... not as a domestic. But of course, my mother contested with the authorities in Bloomsbury House, Bloomsbury Square. And I was taken away from Cardiff and put into a halfway house, which incidentally was in Tunbridge Wells. And then... there was- then they would find more foster parents for me.

*Yes, that would have been necessary because most of the women in your mother's situation...*

Yes...

*... were not allowed to have their children with them.*

No, no, no, no, no. No, not at all. No, not at all. She was allowed I think to bring something like ten shillings in our money with her. She brought lots of clothes and things, but she- she couldn't bring any money with her.

*No. But in England...*

Oh, yes.

*So, the women generally either did not have the room for a child, or the family or the people they were working for would not allow the child...*

No, no, no... No, not at all. No, not at all.

*How long were you with the halfway house?*

That's only been a matter of weeks.

*And how did they treat you, the...? Was it a family?*

As far as I can tell it was... There must have been more children. Quite fine. But this is quite an amusing story I must tell you. I remember walking to the - into the town one day with, with quite a few of us. And I heard somebody singing, "*Hang out the washing on the Siegfried Line...*" and my father's name was Siegfried! And I couldn't understand what it meant. I know now what 'Siegfried Line' was. That's the only thing I remember about Tunbridge Wells.

**[0:17:34]**

*And when were you and your mother reunited? When - or if - you were able to live together again?*

No, I wasn't reunited with her until I went to my next foster parents.

*And where - where were they?*

They lived in Yorkshire. West Riding in Yorkshire.

*And who sent you there? Was it Bloomsbury House?*

Well, apparently The Refugee Association appealed to all the – all the Methodist churches. And my English mum and dad, as I called them, said yes, they would take in a refugee. They had no children of their own, so that's how I came to go with them - be with them.

*During this time, did you have any opportunity or inclination to go to a synagogue or... to learn about...?*

The nearest synagogue was in Leeds and it was quite a way. And the... rabbi did come to visit once, but there was no way we could go... to – to, to Leeds. It was too far.

*How did you feel about that? Did you miss it or were you not bothered?*

No, no. Because- No, no, I didn't miss it at all. No, because we hadn't really been so-called practicing Jews.

*And did you hear about the then Chief Rabbi Hertz who was very anxious for Jewish children to be brought up as Jewish?*

Yes, I have. I only found it out...not long ago. Catherine found out papers when I first came to England, and also that I must have been visited in, in in- It was Heckmondwike that we went to live. And it said there the Rabbi had called, and got through to my mother in London, and she hadn't replied. So that meant that she wasn't...

No...

...didn't want to follow it up.

*Did any of these Christian families that you stayed with, did they ever insist that you go to church, or to try to convert you?*

**[0:19:51]**

No, no. None of that at all. My English mum and dad- my mum was a local preacher. She was also the organist. My dad was a Society Steward; he was very involved. My mum had a ladies' group. And I went there, and the people there loved me. And... there was no pressure on me becoming a Christian. But... that was my family. And I did become a member of the Methodist church when I was sixteen.

*How long did it take you to decide to become a member of the Methodist church?*

Sixteen was the earliest really you could... There was no pressure at all. At all. ...All my friends of course were Christians. Some of them weren't Methodist, but... that didn't really matter.

*And how do you feel now? Do you still feel a Christian or...?*

Yes, but I'm very proud of my Jewish heritage. I have a- I wear a Star of David. It's always under there. My daughter wears a Star of David openly, and as a school teacher she's very proud of that. I'm very proud of my background. Even perhaps German. Though I must say this, at school, when I came to Kidderminster High School... The school song was, "*Land of my birth,*" – it's a hymn – "*I pledge myself to thee...*". I couldn't sing that first line. Couldn't pledge myself to the land of my birth.

*Did you ever speak any German in Britain as a child?*

No. No, I didn't. When I went to a grammar school in Heckmondwike, and then there was a- you paid to go... And... I didn't even want to continue the German language, cause my second year there, I had to choose either German or Latin, and I chose Latin. And the headmaster had my... my English mum and dad into his study and said, "This child ought to remember her German." I said, "No." I forget all about Germany. Cause I was actually in Berlin on Kristallnacht, and I knew what was happening. So, I had not very good memories.

*Was it a conscious act of cutting off, of separating ...from that?*

I think it was stubbornness. ...I would say I was a stubborn child, but I'd been a very independent child being in a boarding school. So that's- that helped me a great deal I think, in my life. All through my life.

*You knew your own mind.*

Yes. My family would say that. [both laugh] They would definitely endorse it.

*And when did you leave school?*

**[0:22:54]**

I left school when I was seventeen-and-a-half. I was going to- I wanted to take my- I took my School Certificate. I wanted to take my High School Certificate, which it was in those days. And I wanted to become a teacher. But my dad, being a carpet designer... He'd been head carpet designer at Heckmondwike. Of course, during the war, the carpet factories all closed down in Heckmondwike. And so, we came to Kidderminster in '45, when I was fifteen. And he was twenty years older than my mum, so all he could get... He went to work in one of the carpet-... design rooms. And he was told that when... When all the designers came back from the war, that would be him finished. So, for two or three years- of course there was no pension in those days. And they had- Although we had a very nice house in Yorkshire, their savings were very little cause their life was their church. So... I thought I would help them. So, I left school and went to work in an office. But I think my- I think they deserved me to do that. There was some money coming in, but I thought I could contribute some money to the family.

*And what about your mother at this point?*

My mother. After twelve months, the English government lifted the ban, and so she went to live in London. She lived in a little room with a gas fire. She'd always been a- 'cause I used to visit her in London in my school holidays- She'd been a good cook, of course whether

German or Jewish I don't know. So, she had a job in the daytime cooking, a job at night time cooking in a- I think it was in a Jewish club – refugee club. So, she had enough money to buy a first house, an apartment, then a second house. So, she really worked, very, very hard. She always said – I don't know I should repeat this - but the British are lazy. She was a worker. Never had ...worked until she came to England.

*Did she look upon this as a major achievement in her life?*

Yes. I was very proud of her, and to think that- what she had achieved. ...Unfortunately, I did... let her down. Cause when I was sixteen... Cause when you came on the Kindertransport... Foster parents... should look after you till you were sixteen. Also, by the way, I had to pay fifty pounds... that was a lot of] money in those days. Several thousand. So, when I was sixteen, she said, “Would you like to come and live with me now?” No, I broke her heart and I said, “No.” We had no - very few shared memories in Germany. I was still in school! I think I did break her heart. She did- She didn't ever say anything, but, she- deep down it must have really... So, I used to spend holidays there. When I got married, we used to visit her as well, the children.

**[0:25:58]**

*Did you ever keep in touch with any of the other Kindertransport children?*

No, no, no. We went our separate ways. No, no.

*You were scattered...*

I would like to have done that. I would like to have done that.

*Did you feel very lonely as a child, or as a young adult?*

No, I didn't cause I had my lovely mum and dad. I was bullied of course, if you call it bullying, when I first came and went to school because... I was German. Because I was Jewish meant nothing to the children, but remember, that these children's fathers were fighting the Germans. So... I wasn't too happy at the first school. So, when I came to



Kidderminster, I went under my mum and dad's name. Not my German name. But all the children at the high school know me because I had a dark brown uniform; their uniform was navy blue. And I had a German, possibly a - a Yorkshire accent. So, people I know in high school would say, "You did sort of stick out like a sore thumb." [laughs] I was very happy at the high school. Very happy. I you know, I met lots of good friends.

*And... as a- as a young adult, so soon after the war had ended, did people resent the fact that you had come from Germany?*

**[0:27:18]**

I don't think a lot of people even knew. I don't think a lot of people even knew. And I had so much going in my life then. I had lots of friends, that I really didn't think much about my past. I think more about it now in the last few years.

*When you say you used the English family name, which one was that? Was it the Boltons?*

Pardon?

*You said that you used your English family's name...*

Yes.

*What was that name? Was it the Boltons?*

No, no, they were the ones in Cardiff. My English parents were Nellie and Alfred Garbutt. And they were- that's a photograph of them over there. I had a most happy childhood; that's mainly what I had. [cries] I'm getting emotional again; I'm not emotional at all. Sorry about that.

*It's fine... Did you ever become a teacher as you wished?*

No, I didn't because I went- Because in those days it was easy to get a job and I always liked the notebooks for putting figures in. So, I was very fortune- I went to work in a small

spinning firm in Kidderminster. Cause Kidderminster's got a carpet firm- with a yarn spinning firm. And I was very, very happy there. And I stayed there until I got married. I was a bookkeeper. I had big ledgers. I did sales...invoices. And I had huge ledgers like you see in Dickens' time. They were very heavy to put in the safe but... I was very happy there.

*It sounds as though you made lots of friends...*

I did.

*...wherever you went.*

Well, I did because I - I was in Guiding. I did lots of things and I - I actually became a teacher in Sunday school. I know it sounds strange. [laughs]

*And when and where did you meet your husband?*

**[0:29:20]**

My next-door neighbour... introduced me to him because she was going out with his brother. [laughs] He was living in Stourbridge at the time, but he was originally from, from - from Morpeth... near Newcastle.

*And he was English presumably?*

He was English, and he actually is nine years older than me. And he was- and he was a Commander during the war, and got wounded on D-Day. I said to Roger, "Did you ever think you could marry a German?" And he said, "No."

*Was he Jewish?*

No... no... Christian. He actually was- he actually, when he was a child, he went to the Anglican church and...

*And how accepting was your husband's family of you?*

Everybody loved him. But not my mother. She would like me to have married a nice Jewish boy.

*I was going to ask that. Yes.*

Yes, yes, yes.

*Yes.*

She did come into the Methodist church to see us married. That was the only time she had ever been in a Me- In a... Christian church.

*And did she- Did your mother want your children to be brought up in the Jewish faith?*

Oh, no. No, of course not, of course, no. She never said that. No. No. No.

*But she would still have liked you to marry a Jewish man...*

See I don't think she was that... I don't- religions were- I must tell you a funny story. I shouldn't say this. Her brother lived in Argentina, and the reason he went to live in Argentina was in the early- after Hitler came to power in 1933, there was a very, very rich Jew in Berlin who had...had parcels of land in Buenos Aires. And he said to all his friends, including my - my uncle that he would give you a parcel of land in Buenos Aires. You can break in horses out...you know. So, my uncle did that, and of course he made money. And then he had factories in Buenos Aires making car interiors. But then he came to England when I was eighteen. It was a lovely experience. He spoke German and Spanish. With a dictionary we managed to converse. But what I'm trying to tell you is, he and his sister must have been practicing Jews, because when we came to her flat - she was living then in Hove in Sussex. She'd left London. She tried to keep her utensils separately, because Jews don't mix meat with milk. She didn't, but that was just, you know, lip service. Just to show how Jewish she was. But she wasn't.

**[0:32:12]**

*And how do you feel now, with your Christian Jewish background?*

I'm quite proud of that. I- It's mentioned whenever I go on talks. And the church I go to, every three months, we have a – a prayer service, which I've not been to. And the minister at our church said, would I give my testimony at one of these. It's only ten minutes. So, I said, "But I'm not a member of the religious..." - Yes, I am, I believe in God and I pray – "what do I say about this?" "Speak a little bit about your background, and then say sins." And I thought about 'sins', because I've tried to give something back into this country. I became a Guider, I became a Probation volunteer. I used to visit people in prison, in prison then talk to their families. I do stewarding at the local parish church; that's where- I did my Guides there. So, I'm involved in the, the Anglican church. I help with the Samaritans' purse for the shoe boxes. I make jam for the money. I belong to the Civic Society. There's also numerous other things, so I've tried to give back a little bit... my - my debt to this country. I'm sorry, that hasn't been put very well. I should have thought about that before you... [with humour] I didn't know you were going to ask me that.

*Could I just go back one second please?*

Yes.

*Which year did you marry please?*

I was twenty-six, it was...it was...it was 1956.

*That's fine. And what did your husband do?*

Engineer.

*That's great. You've been involved in lots of activities.*

Yes.

*And... you went recently to Harwich, on your special trip...*

[0:34:23]

Yes, yes.

*This was a memorial trip.*

Yes. A fortnight ago there was a special trip from Liverpool Street Station down to Harwich. It was a special train laid on called a 'Kindertransport Train' because that was reliving our journey from- when we came. So that was... I didn't know how I would feel. My daughter came with me and my granddaughter came with me as well. And...

*Was it your daughter Rachel?*

Yes. And - And my...my granddaughter Sarah. I'll tell you a little bit about Sarah. Because on our... my '*Juden*' card to come to England- it's all in German; of course, it's got a Nazi flag on it and Swastika. And on it is my name, Hannelore Miriam and then in brackets, 'Sarah'. Because all Jewish females were given the name of 'Sarah' and all Jewish men were given the name of 'Israel'. So, when my granddaughter was born my daughter said to me, "I like the name Sarah. Would you...?" I said, "Yes. Have it." I didn't mind when I put in my, my identity card but...yes. Sorry, that was a bit of a [inaudible].

*Was it a painful experience going to Harwich?*

It- I did wonder how I felt, and I worried about it the night before. When you think I had to be up at five o'clock the following morning to get there, is quite, quite something. I didn't feel an awful lot. I would like to have talked to some of - some of the people. But only twenty-five of us on the train. The train was full of children who were doing- who were at school who were doing the Holocaust and Kindertransport. I - I did speak to one or two at the station, but they all seemed very, very Jewish. They were all talking about shul the next day. I mean I know all of that. But I would have liked to talk to them more, but there wasn't a chance during the day to talk to the *Kinder*.

*That's a pity.*

And...I've have got all the information about the names of people who went. There were only twenty-five of us, and only two of us came from Berlin. So, there'd been no one else on my – on my... transport.

**[0:36:36]**

*Who organised this trip?*

It was this- It was the AJR, I suppose. The Association of Jewish Refugees. It was in one of their- I have a monthly newsletter, and it advertised that last year. And I said to Rachel, "Would you like to go?" And she said, "Yes." They did actually also advertise a six-day-trip holiday to Europe visiting places. But I thought that was too much, and actually that had been cancelled because we're all older. I mean some of them – Kinder - were in their nineties. I felt quite young actually. [laughs]

*Yes, indeed. I mean, when you think that Nicholas Winton out-lived...*

Yes, some of them.

*...some of the children he rescued.*

Yes. I was very honoured. I did speak to - to Barbara. I didn't know who she was. Jus - she was standing I went over and spoke to her. When I found out who she was, I said, "Can I have a photograph taken with you?"

*And this was in connection with the trip?*

That - that was actually in Harwich. We were standing about, waiting - wondering what was going to happen next.

*What sort of a programme did the visit include?*

I have- I have actually a copy of it. The, the, the programme was that, if my memory serves me right, when we got to Harwich, we were having, we were going to have- We met- We had seats at Harwich Quay, where there was going to be several dignitaries there. It was a welcome ceremony. But what I must say, as we walked along there, the Kinder – it seems silly to be called a Kinder – there were some chairs just for us. And families had to walk behind us. But these children lined either side, and they were clapping us. I got emotional then. I felt like the Queen or something. I thought, do I deserve to be clapped? You know. I haven't suffered.

*These were local children?*

No, they'd come from London. They'd come from London. There was a few local children. And then we had this... Several- A lot of dignitaries there.

*From - From Harwich, or...?*

**[0:38:32]**

Yes, there was a lot -there was a lieutenant from the army. And there was also- It wasn't the Chief Rabbi but it was the next in line. And... there was Eric Pickles. He was the only MP there, because he - he has some position with - with refugees. I don't know quite what exactly he does. And I actually spoke to him as well. I spoke, I was speaking to him at Liverpool Street Station wondering why he was there. [inaudible]. And then from then onwards, we were taken by buses to a Christian church. It was a very nice service. But when I think what a- Most of the Kinder there were still Jewish. But it was a very nice service. But...

*How did the Jewish people respond to a Christian church?*

Well, we were made very, very welcome there. And then after that- Shall I mention my foot? Sorry. When we got off the ...When we got to the – to the church, we'd been travelling since – I'd been travelling since six o'clock – but we'd been travelling since ten o'clock. This was nearly two o'clock. And we wanted to go and find toilets. Toilets of course... queues. So, we were told to go to a very old public house next door.

*And that's where you broke your foot.*

And that's where I fell down the step...

*Yes. Did they arrange a lunch for you, or...?*

No, no. On - On the train we were told there would be some food and drinks. My daughter luckily had bought a little pastry, Danish pastry just to eat, which we did. And lots of water. And on the train... they did bring some more, kind of Danish pastries around, and there was tea and coffee. And Rachel went to get it, and they said, "No, we'll come and bring it round to you." By the time we got to Harwich, they'd run out of teas and coffees. So, we hadn't a thing to drink all day except for water.

*Oh, gracious!*

So... I think probably that why I fell because I was dehydrated and also hungry. Although I can go ages without eating. What we did miss is, because from the- I, I managed to hobble to the church, to get to the church. I was sat down all the time as I was during the service. Then after the service we had about a ten-minute walk, perhaps less. We were supposed to go to the called an electric cinema but actually it was a theatre, where they were going to show films of children landing in Harwich. And I wanted to see that. Not that I knew- Seeing me. But I thought, "I'd like to see these children arriving off the boat, and see how they felt." I'm told how I felt happy about coming on the boat, but that's another story. And... So, we managed to walk, quite painfully, with my ankle hurting, my foot hurting, to - to this theatre. When we got inside, I said to my daughter, "Can I have a drink of water?" And we sat down. The next thing I knew what had happened, that I'd passed out. I went grey. All pandemonium. I was taken outside. Luckily there was a policeman there who had first aid experience, and helped me. Then I had...

**[0:41:54]**

*So, did you miss the film completely?*

I did, yes.



*Oh...!*

So that was quite a- quite, quite awful what happened then. And I had to go to the local hospital forty miles... forty-odd. And then my foot was x-rayed. And I'd broken it, and I was given a huge boot.

*Could we come back to the actual programme?*

Programme, sorry about that. I do apologise. After that, when I was lying outside... there was a procession of children going by. There had been a special carnival been laid on for the Kinder, which of course I missed. Then we were going to go somewhere else where there was going to be a concert. And that was it. It was only half an hour stop... to find somewhere to eat. We were originally told there would be a restroom for us to go which would have been nice really. So. I missed... But I missed the- But the important bit was our reception... at Harwich. That was lovely. And also. on the... buses taking us to the to the, to the church... each bus had some of the school children there. And they sat by us, and were talking to us. They wanted to know more about - about us, which was lovely. So. I did talk to some of the children.

*Overall, did it make you feel sad? Did it evoke memories that you thought you had forgotten?*

No, it didn't. It didn't. It sounds- Doesn't sound very- I should really say it does but it doesn't. It doesn't. My life has been since. My life would have been very different if I'd stayed in Berlin. But I've had a very happy life here. I have a lovely family.

*Are you conscious of the fact that if you had stayed in Berlin, you might not be alive today?*

I would not have been alive today. My father managed to survive until 1943. February 1943. How he survived I don't know, in Berlin. Then he went to Auschwitz and he died three months later. Which he went to- we found out this when we came back from Auschwitz, we had an email from Auschwitz to tell me the details. And apparently, he went... to selection stage. And he was selected to work in Buna and he lived three months. Worked for two months and the last month he went into an infirmary. I do wonder why there was an infirmary

in a – in a death camp. I just did... Going back to my, my, my knowledge of... forgetting German. I did think at the end of the war... I was hoping of course to meet my father again and I thought, “How will I speak to him? I’ve forgotten all my German.” And that worried me. Only a little worry.

*Throughout these years, did you dream of going back to Germany? I know we said earlier that you had mentally cut off from that, but did you dream of seeing your father again, and your other family members?*

**[0:45:18]**

I don’t know any of my family. I would like to trace them. Presumably they all died. We weren’t a very close family. This is why my family now, we are very close. We were very – is the right word to use? - insular.

*Did you miss having grandparents, your own grandparents around you, and did your children here in Britain miss maternal grandparents?*

No, they called me ‘Omi’; it’s either ‘Omi’ or ‘Oma’. I’m called ‘Omi’. I’m ‘Omi’ to all their friends as well. No, no. I think they’re quite proud of me. I’m very proud of them. I’m very proud of them.

*And did you take your suitcase, the one next to you, with which you first arrived in England...*

Yes.

*Did you take that on the trip to Harwich?*

No, I did wonder about it, but I thought, “It’s a big thing to take isn’t it?” It had been in the loft. I had to rescue it the other day. I have taken it to some of the schools with me.

*What did you bring in your suitcase with you?*

Very little. Not a single toy.

*Books?*

I never... My mother wasn't... a very hands-on mother. I had books apparently but I never had a toy. I didn't have a toy until I came to England; I had a doll. My first doll. I had clothes in there... but not very much, I mean I couldn't... Just before I came to England, my mother decided I would have some new clothes. And her family was such that, we used to go to the dressmaker. And I remember walking to the dressmaker in Berlin... and I had a coat. Royal blue coat with a little - with a big mother-of-pearl button, and a little peter pan collar which you could take off to wash. And she thought I would look more English, but I didn't when I came to this country. I really don't know. I really don't know what was in there; it must have been very little. It could- A couple of books, not a single toy. Just a few photographs.

*What were your photographs? The one of your mother that you mentioned...*

**[0:47:29]**

Of my mother, yes. Two of my brothers and I, when we were little. And... one of my father, which I seem to have mislaid. Only a very, very small one. ...Photographs of me as a child. In fact, I was quite a pretty child; you wouldn't believe it now, but, yeah... So, it's just my sense of humour coming out. As my daughter says, "It's German humour", except Germans don't have humour. So... yes, very few photographs.

*Was there anything very special to you that you put in the suitcase?*

I don't think so. If I'd come straight from a family situation there might have been more. But because I came straight from a - a boarding school, where I would have very few possessions, wouldn't I?

*Yes...*

I don't know what I had there. I mean I must have had a change of clothes and things...

*You mentioned a brother. What happened to your brother?*

When we lived in Berlin, we lived in an apartment in a... high rise block. And one day, my little brother, who was only eighteen months younger than I was, managed to get on to a – a window sill. Whether he opened the window or not, I don't know, but he fell out. And that finished my parents' marriage. It had been a type of arranged marriage. It hadn't been a happy marriage. That finished their marriage. So not only had my mother lost my brother, she lost me when she- She thought she would lose me when she came to Germany. She lost all her possessions. Her marriage was gone. She was a very sad lady. You wouldn't think so. She was very... Germanic. I shouldn't say that, should I? When we were in Berlin we weren't supposed allowed to go to cafés or restaurants because my mother didn't look Jewish. My father did, apparently. She had fair hair and blue eyes. So, we got away with it. But we could easily have been taken away. This is the kind inaudible] my mother was: When she came to England and she went to live in - in Hove after she left London, if she wanted to cross the road, she would cross the road. She had a meal out, she didn't – She sent it back. She was very- Very- She was a biggish lady. Very strong person in character, and looks. Shouldn't say that about her, should I? But... I am sorry about all that happened to my mother. She was a very sad lady, really.

**[0:50:01]**

*And... what was her first name?*

Pardon?

*What was her first name?*

Kathe - K A T H E. Kathe, yeah.

*And your brother's name?*

Oh, dear.... It wasn't Jewish, and it wasn't German. It was a Greek... You see when my – when my mother did die, I was asked by the rabbi, because she actually was buried in a Jewish synagogue. I was asked by the rabbi, who phoned me and said, “What is her Jewish

first name?" I said, "I beg your pardon?" He said, "Jews have a proper Jewish name." Sorry about that.

*No, but- But many assimilated Jewish people didn't have a Jewish name.*

No, I know. I know. When she went to live in – in Hove, she joined the Jewish community there simply not to go to synagogue but because she liked the social aspect. But most of the Jews there... were very strict Jews. A lot of them Eastern European. And she wasn't classified as a proper Jew 'cause she was German Jew. ...I know. ...That's what she always said to me.

*Why did people differentiate, or was it because she was of German origin?*

I think so, cause a lot of the German Jews had assimilated, hadn't they? I mean a lot of them still went to synagogues. But...

*You've been a very active lady. You were mentioning some of your activities. You also go into the schools to speak about the Holocaust.*

Yes, yes, yes. Yes.

*How long have you been doing that, and how did it all begin?*

...My first talk I think was to one of the – one of the- I think it was in our church to a ladies' group. Then I was asked to speak at ... What are these ladies who have country things where they make jam?

*The Women's Institute?*

**[00:52:06]**

Yes, WI. I spoke to quite a few there. Then the word got round. And then my daughter is a school teacher, so she- She was an RE teacher originally, believe it or not. I got around. Then I spoke at different schools. I've done several schools in Kidderminster. I've been to... a Sixth Form College in Stourbridge. I've been to some Junior schools. It's quite difficult

because I have to be very careful what I say. And the first thing I always say is, “When you go on holiday, how much do you take?” And I take my case with me. So, I’m very careful, and saying about where I was born and that, and food I can’t eat. And do they know any children who are different from their own country. And that gets them talking.

*Do they ask you lots and lots of questions?*

Pardon?

*Do they ask you lots of questions?*

Yes, they do. Some of them have prepared before I go, and they do ask me questions. I think I prefer high school age. And, and, and... You know it’s... Some, this started about... ten years ago, I didn’t think much about my- I always thought that I was so fortunate that I didn’t- I came to this country... And partly I’m classified as a ‘Holocaust survivor’, which I don’t- I’m sure- Survivor is one who’s been in the camps, or... When we went to Berlin, we went to the Jewish Museum outside the... What’s the houses of parliament in Berlin called?

*The Reichstag.*

Reichstag. We wanted to go- There was a big queue. And we went into the museum and my grandson was only ten at the time, and the lady, the receptionist said, you know, “He’s too young to go.” And they said, “No...”, so my daughter explained that I’d – I’d been a Kinder, that I was a Kinder and we were going to go to Auschwitz. And so, when we came out after, he wasn’t- phased about it. We went to gruesome things- worse things of course at Aus- when we went there. And as we came out, she gave me a book. In fact, the book is there. “We give to all Holocaust survivors.” And I said, “But I’m not...” She said, “But you’re classified.” But I think that is- I don’t feel happy about that, because... I didn’t- I always think of Holocaust survivors as people who survived the camps.

*So, you don’t think of yourself as a survivor...*

No.

*... per se?*

I am so fortunate that this country allowed all these refugees in. Can I just tell you a little bit about something? Because I was a Guide and at St George's Day parade, they always have a service at...an Anglican church. And we always- At the end we always play 'God Save the Queen'. And at the end I made sure that my guides stood to attention. Cause I remember during the war, if we went to the cinema, at the end of every filming you always had 'God Save the Queen', or, 'God Save the King' in those days. So, I'm very, very British. I may not be English but I'm very British. I'm more British than a lot of people who live in this country.

**[00:55:26]**

*When did you go to Berlin, and what prompted you to go... and to take your daughter and your grandson?*

When my eightieth birthday was looming, six years ago, they said, "What would you like for your birthday?" And I said, "Well, what I would like to do is find my roots. I would like to go to my birthplace. I would like to perhaps go to the little village where I was born. Where my mother must have pushed me in a pram. I would like to go to Berlin, where I lived. I must find out the address." Cause I remembered my father's address very, very clearly and not my mother's so it just shows. It was 96 Gneisenaustrasse – I even know- even know how to spell it. And then I wanted to go to Auschwitz. I knew at that time, through the internet, that my father had gone to Auschwitz. I didn't know before then. So, we did that. And it was a three weeks tour. And I got a booklet with all the photographs in there showing where we went. Sorry, what was your question? I didn't like Berlin.

*Ah.*

I didn't like Berlin. I didn't like Berlin.

*Did you feel a total stranger there?*

I did. I didn't- I don't like the German being spoken. May I say...say something about the language? I've been to... the north of Germany a few times. Kidderminster is twinned with Husum, in north Germany, and I've been a few times. And I felt that- I've stayed with a family there, and I've made friends with Hedwig. And... I did try a few German words, and she used to laugh at my words, so I thought "Well, I'd better try and go to German classes." So, when we came back, a few of us went to German classes to an Austrian gentleman. So, we went and had German lessons for about two years. And apparently, my accent was pretty good but my grammar was terrible. [both laugh] Yeah. So, I do understand a bit of German. Now. Having had lessons here in England. [laughs]

*You mentioned that it was your eightieth birthday, but... Was there a particular incident that prompted this urge to go back?*

No. I think as people- As they get older always relive their past, don't they? And relive, going to relive more and more my past. And I wanted to go to Berlin. And I wanted to go to Auschwitz, which I know would be very difficult for some people. I watched everything on television about Auschwitz. It's a programme called 'Yesterday' or was it 'Yesteryear'? I watched all of that. So, when I actually got to Auschwitz, I wanted to walk on the railway line. I wanted to go to the selection process – process 'cause I knew then, from when we had the email, that my father had been selected to live. Some parts were pretty horrid. Some of the... things we saw. We saw children's shoes... children's toys... hair that had been cut off. And... we had to go by car again to where the site was where the huts were. The huts of course were all destroyed but they had been rebuilt there. So, we went in there, and there was the three-tiered bunks. Sort of very strange three-tiered bunks. And so, I could envision my father being there. [with emotion] So I knew about that.

**[00:58:53]**

*That must have been a terribly painful time for you.*

It –bringing my family with me helped me. It was good for my grandchildren. My granddaughter, who's now just finished university, has been a few times. She's been with the school. And her father, my son-in-law, is a music teacher, and he takes his school children - his orchestra - to different parts of Europe. So, he actually took them to Auschwitz. So, she's



had three- Been there three times. And she has a- I bought her a few years ago for a birthday present, a silver chain with a Star of David with a cross on top of it. Because she is, I suppose in Jewish eyes she is Jewish. And she's very proud of that.

*Was it in some ways a sense of relief, of having completed something?*

Yes. [gets emotional] Yes. Yes, I'm sorry. It's not like me at all.

*Don't worry...*

I'm never, ever like this. Believe me. Yes, it's – it's closure. Closure.

*And when you speak to people about your experiences, do you ever feel - I'm not suggesting that you should – but do you ever feel guilty that you survived, that you came to Britain, others perished?*

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes. Because I suppose so many more could have been accepted into this country. And in other countries. The same thing's happening nowadays, isn't it? But of course, you can see why the infrastructure of all countries can't cope with an influx of refugees. But then, what happens to them?

*When did you join the ARJ – the Association of Jewish Refugees?*

Only two years ago. Because my daughter... joined for me on the internet although I do have a computer and things. And then... a few months later I had a lovely letter with a little card, telling me the name of Kathy Williams and she was my- She was the social worker. I thought, "Do I need a social worker?" But she was, you know, "I'm here if you need anything. If you want to talk." So, she came and visited me a few weeks later. And she's been my friend. I think she quite likes coming here, and she has taken me to one or two reunions. Because I think I'm more- I talk a lot. And because I talk a lot, that's why you've come to interview me today, isn't it? [laughing] But she, she is absolutely lovely. She's not Jewish either, so... But it's been my introduction to a bit of my past, which I didn't have before. So, I've been to a Kinder reunion, I've also been to a Hanukkah event last year in Birmingham. And that's the first time I've actually ever met any other Kinder.

**[01:01:59]**

*I was going to ask if that led you...*

That was the first time...

*...toward the link...*

Yes.

*...between the past and the present.*

Yes, yes, yes. I must say that I felt a bit strange the first time I went to a Kinder reunion. But I found out that some of the Kinder- We did talk to them. Some of them didn't go to happy homes like I did. So therefore, I feel more grateful than ever about my English mum and dad.

*Did it make you feel sad, or did it make you feel better speaking to other Kinder?*

I think it helped me. It helped me because I'd had no association with any at all. And I think it's brought it more into my life thinking, you know, what's happened. No, I've thought about it through all the years. In fact, I've cried about it. And a lot of my friends at school – they knew of course at school because of my accent – but... they didn't know really anything about me and I wouldn't talk about it.

*Did you make a conscious decision about whether to talk, or not to talk to your children about your background and experience?*

I – They knew straight away. There's a play called 'The Kindertransport'. And I... I, I went to Malvern Theatre to see it a couple of years ago. I'd got the story behind it as well. And I cannot believe that this mother didn't tell her daughter... I cannot believe that. What was nice when I went to - to the theatre in Malvern. Cause before we went, my daughter - Have you got time for all this? ... phoned up the box office and said that I was a Kinder. And they said, "Yes? Would you like to come?" So, when we went to get the tickets they said, "We have

another Kinder here, but she's an old lady in her nineties. And it's her birthday, so... So she is going to meet the cast. We'd like your mother to come as well." So of course, I met, I met, I met the cast who were quite famous people who'd been on television as well. I felt very humble. But I did- They asked me a few questions, but I wanted this lady to have the attention. She was in a wheelchair. I think she was in a home. It was her day. And afterwards – this will make you laugh – after, in Malvern, there's a very nice Waitrose there- I shouldn't be saying this much. So, we haven't a Waitrose in Kidderminster anymore. So, we went to Waitrose to do shopping. And as we went shopping Rachel said, "There's one of the cast following us around. I wonder why." So, she caught up and she said, "I wanted to hear more about you." Cause of course I talked more than this other lady. So of course, I had a long conversation. So, it shows I- I talk.

*So, you're educating people; you're informing people.*

But people are really pleased, and as you know that- I've had lovely letters back. And, you know, I've been told by several people, 'a bit of living history', which makes me sound ridiculous, really. That's why you're doing this today isn't it? Cause in years to come, people will see this.

*Indeed.*

**[01:04:54]**

I feel very honoured that you came here, and did all this.

*Thank you. Is there anything else that you would like to add, that perhaps we haven't covered at all? Would you say, or, a message for your family or others?*

Sorry, say that again. I wasn't listening to you.

*Is there anything you would like to add, that we haven't covered, or, a special message for your family or for other people who might see this film?*

You mean the people who are watching it? Yes. Well, I hope you haven't felt, as you were watching this, that I've said far too much. And that... I'm really- I survived, but I've had a lovely life in this country. And... I was so fortunate to escape Nazi Germany and death, possible death. Thank you.

*Thank you. And... Do your children feel at all German...?*

They're very proud, or not proud- yes, they do.

*...or European?*

Yes, my youngest grandson, who's sixteen, has a German football shirt he bought from the football team. And I said, "No, they should lose!" [laughs] Yes, they are- they know their background and their friends know, so that's going to be carried on.

*And you feel it's important that they do?*

I think it's very, very important. In fact, at the local high school I was asked to speak to an assembly in Holocaust Week. And my youngest grandson is there. And I spoke to different...different ages and different days. And on the last day, my grandson was there. I thought he'd feel embarrassed, but he didn't. Before I went there, and he was asked if he would try and lead me in, and he did. So, all school know about his grandmother.

*Did that make you feel very proud?*

It does, I mean it could go the other way, couldn't it? It could go the other way.

*But it hasn't.*

I'm quite famous as my- my daughter's infamous mother. [laughs]

*But she teaches, and she teaches m...?*

She's an RE teacher.

Yes.

She got a degree in theology. She knows more about Judaism than I do. But I have lots and lots of books. I know all about the different Jewish religion. I've read lots of books on the Kindertransport, which I read more and more now.

*And you've really contributed.*

Well, I feel... I feel very honoured to have had this interview and to be filmed. [laughing] I hope that future people who see this, and what they'll think of me. Not that I'll be here then.

*It's sure they will think very well of you. And thank you very much indeed for so kindly agreeing to this interview and...*

And my suitcase.

*And the privilege of seeing and touching your special suitcase. Thank you.*

**[01:08:12]**

**[Interview addendum]**

*Right. After the main interview, you kindly mentioned some additional points about the fate of... extended family members and your grandparents, and one person who went to the Argentine. Could you please expand on that?*

Yes. My great-grandfather, in- after Hitler came to power in 1933 - so my mother told me because we were living in Schönlanke then – apparently, he was sent to a concentration camp.

*Do you know which one?*

No, I don't know. But she tells me that he came back after ten months a broken man. That's all I know about him, really.

*What was your grandfather's name?*

Hermann, Hermann Stein.

*And your grandmother? What happened to your grandmother?*

I don't know.

*She didn't go to the Argentine?*

No. He was- I think he died long before that. I don't know anything about my grandfather.

*No, your grandmother.*

My grandmother. I thought we left her in Berlin. But after the war, and my mother died, I found amongst her possessions, a small photograph of a tombstone in Buenos Aires with her name on it. So, I don't know when she went to Buenos Aires, or how she got there, but... So, she actually escaped.

*And other extended family members, do you know what happened to them?*

**[01:10:12]**

No, I don't know any of what happened. I have a list of - of relations who live all over the world in, in the States, in Israel, in Australia...New York. But...I have names and addresses but they're all long gone now, aren't they?

*Do you regret that? Do you regret that you were not able to make contact with them?*

Yes, I am. It would be nice to know a little bit more about my past. Because there must be relatives all over the world. And, and my children must have probably got cousins. And it

would be nice. Yes. That- that is- that is the only regret I have about most of all of this... not being able to trace them. I wish my mother- apparently, she did have correspondence but she destroyed it all before she died, which was a shame.

*Do you know why she did that?*

She was a very bitter lady. I think she had lost so much because of the war, that she wanted to eradicate all, all - all her past, in a way. Her life of course was in England then. She made a new life.

*But was it-you mentioned earlier that she was essentially an unhappy woman?*

She was, because not only had my brother died, she divorced my father. She lost all her possessions in, in, in Germany. She had to come to England and - and work, which she didn't mind - she was a worker. And then she lost me because when I was sixteen, she said, "You can come live with me now, in London. I have a flat." And I said, "But...I'm at school. I'm happy." And I didn't have very many shared memories with her because I left; when I was five-and-a-half I went to a boarding school. And I think that probably it was quite hurt about it. She didn't show it, but she must have been - been quite hurt about it. She'd lost everything hadn't she? But she made a life for herself in - in this country. When she went to a retirement - home, she joined a... local synagogue and a Jewish society, and she had a nice social life.

*Where was the retirement home?*

Pardon?

*Where was the retirement home?*

She didn't go- she had a lovely flat down in... in...

*No... after... the retirement home.*

**[01:12:25]**

She didn't go to a retirement home. ...Sorry, I didn't quite understand.

*Oh, sorry, I thought you said she went into a retirement...*

No, no. She retired there, but she was quite able and physically able to do lots of things. No, she had a lovely flat there. No, she never had to have anybody looking after her. She wouldn't. [laughs]

*Has it left you feeling a little bitter, this alienation from your mother?*

I feel sorry now that I hadn't been a bit more thoughtful about - about it. Having a family of my own, and looking back, I should have been a bit more thoughtful, and more caring and loving. But she was a difficult person to really... love. I - that sounds awful. I thought I did love her but I really feel it's too late now.

*Does that make you feel bad about it?*

No, it doesn't. It doesn't... It doesn't. It doesn't. I must tell you the last thing that I did wrong. When- She had a Jewish funeral in Birmingham. And we didn't- We hadn't read her will by then. And she was- She was buried there. And when her will was read, she wanted to be cremated. So, I didn't even do the right thing then. ...Unusual. You wouldn't think she would have wanted to be cremated. So, I felt I'd done... I've tried to... I do talk to her in my prayers.

*But sometimes... you do what you think is best at the time.*

Yes, yes, yes, yes. And she loved- She loved my family. She loved my grandchildren, and - and they thought the world of her. What they can remember about her but yes, they- And my granddaughter remembers her a little bit.

*Did your children ever experience ...perhaps some racial remarks about your background?*

My elder son did. My elder son did. And he - he didn't want anybody to know that I was German. Where I came from. In fact, he said I came from Heckmondwike...which most people round here would sound like a foreign country. [laughs]



*And where was it?*

I lived in Kidderminster.

*Yes. ...We've added some points to your interview. Thank you very much indeed. Is there anything else that you would like to add or thoughts that you have had since?*

No, I've probably said enough, haven't I? I can't- I think most of what I've said in this interview, which has been absolutely lovely, are really the most important facts. Anything else would be pretty irrelevant, I think.

*Thank you very much. Thank you.*

Thank you.

**[01:15:09]**

**[End of interview]**

**[Photographs]**

**[01:15:29]**

Photo 1

Photograph is a photograph of me when I was about ten months old. It was taken in Schönlanke. ...1930 or '31.

*[Jana, Lore and cameraman discuss]*

Photo 2

It must have been taken a few weeks before I left Berlin. This is a photograph that my mother gave to me the day before I left Berlin, and I think it must have been taken a few weeks before that.

*And when was that?*

On the reverse side of the photograph, she's written in – in German, "Liebe Hannelore, Never forget me."

*And which year?*

I've - I carried that with me all the way to England, ever since.

Photo 3

This is a photograph... taken in Berlin, and sent to future foster parents in this country. 1939.

Photo 4

Taken in 1950, when I was twenty years of age.

Photo 5

I found this photograph of my grandmother's grave in my mother's possessions after she died. I thought my grandmother died in Berlin, but she'd somehow managed to get to Buenos Aires, where uncle Artur lived. And this is her tombstone.

Photo 6

My mother was- my mother was very proud of this photograph. She was proud of her three grandchildren - all had degrees. As she said, "Wars can take away money but they can't take away education." So, she was a very, very proud grandmother, as I'm a proud mother as well.

Document 1

This was my Jewish identity card, before I could leave Germany. There's a large 'J' there. But also, there's an added name, which is 'Sarah'. All the Jewish females had the name 'Sarah' ...included, and also all the males had the name of 'Israel'

It annoyed me so much that Germany is so powerful again. Story behind that. When I was twenty-one, my mother said, "Now you're twenty-one, I'd like to give you something special for your twenty-first birthday." To do a tour in, in, in Europe. So, I went to several different countries. So, the first time I was abroad, well I've been a few times since.

## Photo 7

This is when I was twenty, twenty-one I went abroad, and I was still a German subject, so I had to have a German pass book. I still remember the German national anthem.

“*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles...*” I also know the French, cause of course taking French in school, we had to learn the French national anthem. I can sing them.

**[01:20:33]**

## Document 2

This is my Alien Registration Book. When I became sixteen years of age, I became so-called ‘enemy alien’. And every time I left Kidderminster, I had to report to the police station, be it a holiday, when I came back, I had to report again. Course when I became a British citizen, I didn’t have to do any more reporting at the police station.

## Photo 8

Six years ago, when I was eighty, I went to Auschwitz. And I knew my father by then had died there. And I wanted to have a photograph taken of me standing on the railway line, where my... railway carriage would, would, would stop. And then I also wanted to go to the selection gate. Cause I knew one way used to live and one way to die. I found out that my father lived... for three months. It was quite an experience to go to Auschwitz. One I wouldn’t like to do again.

## Photo 9

On July 1<sup>st</sup> [2016] there was a special commemorative train, Kindertransport train, laid on, from Liverpool Street Station to Harwich. It was to commemorate the journey that we made, coming from Holland to Harwich and Liverpool Street Station. We had a very nice day there. I met quite a lot of Kinder. I shall always remember this day.

## Document 3

On the train going to Harwich, this was, we had one each, which was a message from the Queen commemorating the day. So, I’ll always keep this. I know it’s not personal, but it’s very nice to have this. I’m not framing it up.

## Photo 10

This is a photograph of my grandmother. Beautiful lady. I've ...no idea. My mother had this when she came to England, so I don't know anything about it. And when she died, my daughter had it framed for me. And, and it is a lovely... portrait of her.

Photo 11

A photograph of my English foster parents, who have made me what I am today. Their names: Nellie and Alfred Garbutt.

*Thank you.*

**[End of photographs and documents]**

**[01:23:25]**