

IMPORTANT

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Interview Transcript Title Page

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Interviewee Surname:	Heyman
Forename:	Ernest
Interviewee Sex:	Male
Interviewee DOB:	4 January 1918
Interviewee POB:	Berlin, Germany

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INTERVIEW: 138

NAME: ERNEST HEYMAN

DATE: 15 NOVEMBER 2006

LOCATION: LONDON

INTERVIEWER: BEA LEWKOWICZ

TAPE 1

Tape 1: 3 minutes 0 second

BL: Today is the 15th of November 2006 and we're conducting an interview with Mr Ernest Heyman. My name is Bea Lewkowicz and we are in London.

BL: Can you please tell me your name?

EH: Ernest Keith Heyman.

BL: And what was your name at birth?

EH: Ernest Klaus Heyman.

BL: And where were you born please?

EH: I was born in Breslau, which is now called, its Polish, Wroclaw in 1918.

BL: Mr. Heyman, thank you very much having agreed to be interviewed for refugee voices. Could you tell us something about your family background please?

EH: I was the youngest of three children. Me and my two sisters were all born in the province of Silesia, in East Germany as it was at the time. My father was a civil servant and liable to be what one calls posted – to use the army term – from one city to another after a certain number of years.

He started off when he was young in Pomerania, then to East Prussia, and then to Silesia where my two sisters were born and where, in 1918, I was born in the capital of Silesia called Breslau. He was a civil servant, as I said, but not, as one calls these posts, a Beamter. He was really a very artistic architect. He studied architecture in Berlin and, although he filled the post of civil servant, he dealt with buildings in the Prussian area of Silesia as an architect and expert in the building industry. I grew up, therefore, with the model of a father who was very close to me personally and, as a child, I was very impressed by the activities which he went through: meetings, buildings, climbing up ladders onto scaffolding, and perhaps this was one of the reasons, perhaps the main reason why I also decided to become an architect.

BL: can you tell me something about your grandparents please?

EH: I was very close to my father. That was perhaps a reason for my living in the past after a lifetime-experience. My mother was a very hard-working woman who, compared with the culture today, very rarely had a holiday. She looked after the family of three children and a fairly large household, and that was very arduous job for her. She was trained, coming from school, at a teacher's seminar really, in Berlin, but never carried out her profession because she married very young. But, looking back, I would say that I was perhaps the victim of that situation because she ensured that I was a very hard-working pupil at school, and at home dealing with the home-work was not always very easy for me.

Looking back, whilst there are some misgivings about my childhood, I grew up in a sense as the only child because my two sisters were fifteen and ten years older than I and that had certain effect on my upbringing.

Tape 1: 4 minutes 57 seconds

BL: In which way?

EH: In a sense that I was fairly isolated. I regarded myself in a way as an only child. I had my mother, who looked after me beautifully. I had my eldest sister, fifteen years older than I, who also looked after me, so I, in a sense, had the second mother. And my, what I would call, my younger sister was ten years older, was not really on my age level, and I grew up alone, in a sense as if I were the only child.

BL: What sort of friends did you have?

EH: Very few friends. I would say that in Breslau I spent my first ten years, really my important childhood that is, I only had one school friend with whom I went to school and went home again and that was all. I can't remember having had any other children. I went to a nursery school as a very small child, which I dimly remember, which I didn't particularly like. But, generally, I grew up as an only child fairly lonely but happy. I had a happy childhood, and that I think I had to stress because, despite the past experiences in one's past life, I will say that me being, having been, an only child in a sense I was happy.

Tape 1: 6 minutes 55 seconds

BL: Was there a lot of contact with the extended family of your father or mother?

EH: Yes, there were a lot of contacts with the family of my mother, not of my father. My father had no relations. As I said earlier, he was posted from city to city, from Wroclaw to Stettin, to Königsberg in East Prussia, from Königsberg to Silesia. He had only his colleagues as friends. But my mother had her family in Berlin, and it was not a huge family but a very close family and I was sent to Berlin from Breslau possibly twice a year during the summer and during the holiday period. When my mother took me by train to Berlin she could also see her mother and sister and brother and her family. But that was perhaps, from my mother's point of view, the only opportunity to

get away from her household duties, and she soon left me in Berlin with my aunt and family and returned to Breslau to look after the family and the household.

BL: What was your mother's family name, your mother's maiden name please?

EH: My mother's name, maiden name was Ury. U-R-Y (E-H spells the name).

BL: And can you tell a bit about her parents?

Tape 1: 8 minutes 33 seconds

EH: Her parents. I cannot tell you much about her parents. I only know that my grandmother was a wonderful woman, lived up to the age of 93, and she died in April 1940. My grandfather died when I was only two years old and I hardly...virtually I would say that I didn't know him. I did attend my grandparent's 50th anniversary, wedding anniversary in Berlin, but I have no memories of that really. My mother was very close to both of her parents, her mother and particularly, I would say, to her father, who died in 1920, and that I seem to remember was very sad and unexpected. He died in Berlin and my mother was in the middle of her household duties in Breslau. And in those days there were no mobiles and we had no telephone in our apartment in Breslau, and the news of her father's death came through by telegram, and I heard this from my younger sister Else, who was ten years old, and she told me this in more recent years. But she remembered the occasion when the telegram arrived, and my mother was in shock at the loss of her father, and my sister told me a little bit how my father embraced her and that was second hand information, and that was probably a very rough time for my mother. She couldn't get herself away for the funeral because the household, with four other members, was quite an arduous job. In those days the shopping was, of course, a little different to today. There were no cars; everywhere one had to walk, which was a very good thing, and she worked terribly hard to maintain a good condition for the household.

Tape 1: 11 minutes 5 seconds

BL: How did your parents meet?

EH: Yes...my mother, as I think I said, she married very young, when she was twenty-one and my father was considerably older – eight years older. He studied architecture in Berlin and he had friends at university in various faculties, particularly law. One of the university friends my father had was my mother's eldest brother who studied law and so he was introduced to the Ury family, so he got to know my mother. But she was at that time very young. My father...I suppose his four year course at the technical university in Berlin must have started at age eighteen, which is 1881 – 91 [1891?]. My mother would have been a teenager, so I can't tell you more. Presumably, he fell in love with her when she was older, late teenager, and they married in 1902, when my mother was twenty-one, as I said, and my father was eight years older.

Tape 1: 12 minutes 54 seconds

BL: Where did they get married?

EH: They got married, when?

BL: Where?

EH: In Berlin. I can't tell you the details. I believe they got married in a synagogue, but there are no photographs of anything at all, certainly none left and none passed to me.

BL: And what was the profession of your mother's father?

EH: He was a manufacturer of tobacco. He had a, I would say, a very primitive tobacco factory in the old part of Berlin. It's difficult to describe; it's all very second hand. My mother described it to me. He made snuff tobacco and cigars and his business was quite successful initially. But, gradually, in the early part of the 20th century, the business went down because he refused to manufacture cigarettes, and the culture at the time was to change from snuff and chewing tobacco – I don't know what all this is. He refused to be deflected. He was advised to change his production to cigarettes, but he refused to do it and his business went down, and eventually he had to sell it, and that was the end of his activities in that field.

Tape 1: 14 minutes 57 seconds

BL: Where did you live in Breslau? Do you remember the area and could you describe it to us please?

EH: Well Breslau was not a very large city; it had approximately 750,000 inhabitants. It was after all the largest city in Silesia. We lived in an area, a southern area not terribly far from the centre of the city, which was reached by tram. And it was very built-up; there were relatively few green areas. I would say that, from today's point of view, it was not terribly beautiful, but when you look back to your childhood and you would say that this was the most wonderful area where you were brought up. Large, tall residential apartment buildings, all built just before or just after the turn of the century, and it was a built-up area really, very different to what we would call here a suburb area, which is a very open environment.

BL: And did you live in a house or in a flat?

EH: We lived in the top floor of a four storey – it was three storey really - three storey apartment block. But, to get to the first floor, the lowest floor, you had to go up a marble staircase, which was equivalent to the height of a storey, so virtually we had an apartment on the fourth floor. And to imagine my mother doing her shopping daily or every other day, I cannot remember, and then carrying all the bags up literally four floors. It was quite an achievement. It was a very hard job for her, and I remember her being quite exhausted when she arrived at the top floor.

Tape 1: 17 minutes 25 seconds

BL: Was there any help? Did she have any help with the house?

EH: She had help; she had a maid. It was quite normal; there was nothing special about having a maid in those days. These women came from relatively poor households, quite frequently from East Prussia, which was really a low economy area in those days, and still today is, and she dealt with the cleaning, preparation of the meals, which I believe my mother prepared. She served; she washed up. Her duties started, I would say, at seven o'clock in the morning and didn't finish really probably until after nine o'clock at night. Conditions which today would be just unthinkable.

BL: Was she Jewish or non-Jewish?

EH: No, she was not Jewish. She was, what I would say Anglican, or what in Germany was called Protestant.

BL: Could you tell us why your parents moved to Breslau?

EH: They moved to Breslau because my father was posted by the Prussian Finance Ministry in Potsdam from Königsberg first to Wroclaw, and then to Breslau, where he stayed from 1913 to 1927, fourteen years.

BL: And can you tell us a little bit about the religious orientations of your family?

EH: Religious orientation. My father was obviously brought up...he was the eldest son of his family, was from East Prussia. In those days, I assume, they must have been orthodox. He was sent to...as it was frequently done, as an eldest son...he was sent from East Prussia to Berlin to a distant relative where he in fact grew up. He was sent there as a boy of twelve. He was sent to Berlin. He lived with the family, and he went to the gymnasium in Berlin. But, when he joined the Prussian civil service, I believe he really turned his back on the religious activity and I merely remember that in Breslau he never went to the synagogue. Now, my mother it was quite different. She went to a school in Berlin. She was friendly with a school-mate of a girl who became later the wife of the Chief Rabbi of Breslau, a woman called Hilda Sängler, and my mother was quite unhappy with the way that my father conducted his children's education. He never...Even during the high holidays he always went to the office, whereas I was kept away from school, which suited me of course. And my mother took me, in a way not with my full agreement, to the synagogue during the high holidays because I remember she was expected by the wife of the chief rabbi to be there, and so the orientation is a double one. My father was really not regarding himself as a Jew. My mother was unhappy about it, but couldn't do anything because she...in those days married women conformed to the way the husband would have wanted her to do that. I went to the Catholic primary school, a girls' school, for the first three years were a primary education, co-educational, and I recall when I was six years old the school was Catholic, quite traditionally Catholic, with prayers before the teaching programme started in the morning. I remember one time, I'm sure I was about six years old, maybe not older, one boy came to me, approached me and said: 'du alter Jude'. I didn't really understand what that meant -

Tape 1: 22 minutes 56 seconds

'You old Jew'. I'd never head that word before, and it was also before my time, before I was taken to synagogue during a high holiday. I didn't know what he meant, so I thought it was a swear word, and I said 'Selber einer' – same to you, and he was

quite taken back; he wasn't sure himself what it meant to be a Jew. And I mentioned this to my...I think it was lunchtime, Mittagsmahlzeit. And the same time, I remember, I cannot forget, how my mother looked at my father at that time and, without saying anything, just to indicate: 'there you are, now you've got it'. And, from there on, it was explained to me what it meant to be a Jew.

BL: Which year was that when that happened?

EH: Well, if I was six years old it would have been 1924.

BL: So well before the Nazis came to power.

EH: Oh yes, oh yes. I would say this: Silesia had a very large proportion of the population was Catholic. In a sense, if you go to study the history of Silesia, it was Austrian at one time. Many centuries back it was Polish, part of it was Polish. Poland of course is very strongly Roman Catholic. But the education was excellent, which is known, which is still the case today. Catholic schools have a very high standard of teaching.

BL: Did you have separate religious instruction?

Tape 1: 24 minutes 56 seconds

EH: Not at that time. I had that later in Berlin.

BL: Do you remember any other incidents of anti-Semitism at school or...

EH: No, none whatsoever, none whatsoever. And one would say that I was too small. I left Breslau when I was ten. I had very protected life. The friends of my parents were no relations of our family in Breslau. Our circle of friends consisted entirely of professional colleagues of my father, in other words, architects as well – civil servant architects, Beamten. I hate this word Beamter, incidentally. And my mother had a circle of friends, what was called a Kränzchen, consisting entirely of the wives of the colleagues of my father. That was their social life. They met relatively frequently, the Kränzchen, the little circle of wives, and the children were brought along. That was... I wasn't particularly keen on that I remember. I was a relatively lonely child.

BL: Meaning both, in terms of friends and...

EH: In terms of friends and within the family. As I said before, I was regarding my self, or I felt like, an only child, but it was interesting to have two older sisters.

BL: But you said that you were very close to your father.

EH: I was very close to my father. I was very close to my mother, but it was a different relationship. She educated me in every sense of the word. She looked after me when I was ill and one was ill quite frequently in those days.

BL: Did your father then take you to see what he was doing and...

EH: Yes. Obviously not while I was very young, but later on, when I was about eight, nine, ten, depending on the type of inspection he had to conduct of buildings, churches in particular. Father was very involved in the maintenance, in the extensions, and even in the planning of churches because in Prussia - Prussia was Protestant - and it was supported, totally controlled by the Prussian state, and as a Prussian architect, the building inspector, he had a lot to do with churches, and later, when I was about eight or nine, he took me along on his, what he called his, official inspection journeys to the various parts of Silesia, not terribly far from Breslau. In churches we met vicars and clerical people; it was interesting. But he also took me along to other buildings, schools and state schools. But it wasn't really until we moved to Berlin that, when I was ten years plus, he took me to buildings which were under construction, going up ladders, scaffolds, that I found very interesting.

BL: And anything else before you moved to Berlin, anything else from your time in Breslau you remember?

Tape 1: 29 minutes 22 seconds

EH: Not really. I would say not really. I enjoyed of course holidays. My Berlin aunt owned a holiday home, a house in the Sudeten Mountains, also in Silesia, approximately a two hour train journey from Breslau. But that wasn't really until she got that house; she bought this house in 1926. The first time this was used as a holiday house for the Ury family was in 1927, just about the time when my father was posted from Breslau to Berlin. But I remember my first holiday and other holidays in the seaside in Pomerania, long train journeys from Breslau. In those days holidays were a little different to what they are today. But for children, for small children it was delightful to be on holiday with the parents and these are little impressions which one never gets rid of.

BL: And when was your father posted to Berlin?

EH: That must have been in early 1927. I think he left Breslau on his own. I believe it was April 1927 he left Breslau, but we did stay. It wasn't easy in those days to move a family from one city to another. He went on his own and I believe, but I cannot be absolutely sure, he stayed with my mother's family in Berlin, whereas we carried on in Breslau, me and my two sisters and my mother. I was ill, I remember. I was quite seriously ill in the early part of 1927, just about the time when I finished my primary school, the Catholic girls' school, and moved over to the gymnasium. But I only had practically part of one year at the gymnasium before we moved on to Berlin in December 1927.

Tape 1: 32 minutes 30 seconds

BL: What are your recollections of Berlin when you came to Berlin?

EH: Wonderful! First of all, there was the family; there was the grandmother. We stayed with them. I stayed with them and I think my mother as well at Charlottenburg, which was a nice part of Berlin, which was originally a separate city. But it was mainly the matter of getting to know the family and the relations. My mother had quite a large family there. Two branches: my grandmother had a sister, who also had a

fairly large...children and grand children, and these two families spent a lot of time together, the Jewish families. They were of course originally very orthodox and this is perhaps where I got to know a little more about the cultural side of the Jewish population, the Jewish community.

BL: What was the name of that family?

EH: The other name of the family was Davidsohn, Davidsohn and Wallenberg.

BL: So that was your grandmother's sister.

EH: It was the children and grandchildren of my grandmother's sister. I remember – going back to Breslau – when I was seven years old I was sent to Berlin for quite a long time I seem to remember. It must have been at least a month, but I can't be sure how that could be reconciled with the schooling, my education. But my mother's, my grandmother's sister died in 1925 and I was sent...I should imagine it was suggested that I should be sent to Berlin for a longer period to cheer up my grandmother, and that's what happened. I spent approximately a month with my aunt and my grandmother and my uncle. He was a doctor and he was unmarried. He also lived with his sister and his mother. I had a wonderful time Whether I cheered up my grandmother I don't know, but perhaps I did.

Tape 1: 35 minutes 24 seconds

BL: What was the name of your aunt please?

EH: My aunt's name was Else Ury.

BL: Can you tell us a little bit about her?

EH: Well, she was a well-known writer in Berlin. She wrote children's books, mainly oriented for teenagers, teenage girls, and she became quite famous in Germany in the 1920s, and of course she suffered when Hitler came to power. She was thrown out of the of the German Writers' Federation and was not allowed to write any more, to publish any more, and she was unmarried and had no children. She saw one after the other of her family leaving Germany, and she was left entirely after her own mother died in 1940 at the age of ninety-three. She was left on her own and she had no means of avoiding the Holocaust. She was deported to Auschwitz in January 1943, and she died there.

Tape 1: 37 minutes 0 second

EH: Her works and her life have once again been researched. There are her books; particularly one series of books is still in print now.

BL: What is it called?

EH: It's called the Nesthäkchen series, consisting of nine volumes from the little girl of three or four playing with her dolls to the time of her own golden wedding anniversary.

BL: So at the time were you aware that she was a well-known writer?

EH: No. Not at that time. To me she wasn't a writer at all. She was just what I called Tante Else.

BL: Did she read stories to you, her own stories?

EH: When I was older, she didn't read. I could read myself. She wrote also other books, books suited perhaps more for young boys, and of course for Christmas, which we celebrated in my own family, I was always given a new book which was getting published. She produced at least one book per year and indeed, when I mentioned the failing business of my grandfather, my aunt was at that time, my aunt was already professionally active and published books for very small children, fairytales, and she managed to, presumably - that is my theory - to assist her father to maintain the standing of the family, which in those days was not particularly gratefully received, because women was not supposed to be professionally active, particularly when the business of a father failed and a daughter would jump in and make up for the losses. And I believe initially, very initially when she started writing, she used what we would call...I cannot think of the word now...

BL: A pseudonym?

EH: Yes, a pseudonym of some kind. She published articles in papers, in the press, always in connection with young children.

BL: You said that she didn't have children of her own.

EH: None of her own. Was never married.

Tape 1: 40 minutes 0 second

BL: What sort of school did you go to in Berlin?

EH: Did I go to? I had practically one year in Breslau, where I started off with languages and Latin. And when I got to Berlin, my father had arranged for me to enter a school in the west of, south-west of Berlin in the place called Grunewald, a gymnasium where they started off with English. So I had the task, which my mother took as over-literally as a teacher, to concentrate on English language. When I entered the second year of the grammar school I had to make up for one year of English, which I managed to do with the assistance of my mother. That was one of her favourite languages, and she was very ambitious and succeeded literally in getting over this gap which I had. I would say practically in two months I had reached the standard of English level at school. That was initially a problem, but it was overcome. And that's where I stayed until the final...I stayed there for eight years.

BL: Were there any other Jewish children?

EH: Quite a few Jewish children. This was regarded as...the location of the school was in what one would call a very affluent area, in the west of Berlin, in the south-

west, close to a forest area called Grunewald, and this was an area where there were beautiful villas, and very affluent industrialists, business people and there was, I would say, there was a proportion of up to practically twenty per cent of the children were Jewish.

BL: And there did you have religious instruction?

Tape 1: 43 minutes 5 seconds

EH: There I had religious instruction. Not immediately so far as I can remember. I must have been about eleven years old. Rabbi...I think his name was (he was a well-known Rabbi actually) Lehmann. He came twice a week in the afternoon. It was done in the afternoon. We went to the school in the morning from eight o'clock until one or two, and afternoon school was picked up at four o'clock in the afternoon, and we had religious instructions by the Rabbi and philosophy by another teacher, by a religion teacher, and the Bible stories, quite interesting.

BL: And did you make more friends in that school?

EH: Yes, but not a large number of friends. My first friend was non-Jewish. When I arrived at the school, he invited me, or his parents invited me - I started school in January 1928. I was invited to a birthday party on the 13th. I remember that well because I was very close to that boy for many years until he appeared one morning in 1934 in Hitler uniform. So we had, 1928, six years we were very close friends, very close friends. Not only was I friends with him, but we went to holidays together and with his grandmother and my parents to the Baltic Sea. It was a very pleasant period until Hitler came.

BL: What happened when he showed up in the uniform?

EH: Well, he was actually...what happened, he, well, the school, the gymnasium was a very progressive one and it split when we were approximately fifteen years old into humanistic department and languages department. He left the branch of the school where I was and I carried on with languages, French and English and Latin, and he went over to the department which concentrated on Latin and Greek, so we had virtually no lessons together anymore. When he appeared in the uniform that was the last week we talked to each other, and we were not really...he wasn't in my class anymore. That was the beginning of the Nazi period. I saw him again - it must have been the late 80s, possibly, late 80s, in Stuttgart. He had disappeared but I found him again as I joined the old boys of the school and eventually I found his address.

BL: And you contacted him?

EH: I contacted him and he was unmarried, a very sick man, a lawyer. It was an interesting time when I saw him one day in Stuttgart.

BL: Maybe we come back to that at the end of the interview. Do you remember when the Nazis came to power?

EH: Very much so, although there is not very much to say. I remember it was the beginning of a mealtime. My father was an optimist and he said that maybe it was a good thing. It was the economic situation in Germany at the time, in 1933. Again, with hindsight, because at the time I wasn't aware of it, I didn't read much of the newspapers, but he was optimistic and said that maybe it was nothing particular to worry about. But of course nobody in our family would have read Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. I haven't read it, I've got it here in fact, but I've never opened it. Got a new volume in fact, which I picked up when I was in the army in Germany. It was discussed between my parents and my sisters at the dinner table and I was aware of that. My mother was a pessimist and she...they were concerned. I think one would say that in those days one was concerned. My father was not a Zionist. He was an anti-Zionist which you understand after what I said about his attitude towards the Jewish religion. That I remember. It was in the 30s. It must have been on the 31st of January, the day after Hitler took over control and, so far as I am aware, the family, the Ury family, was not concerned in those days, with the exception of perhaps my unmarried uncle, who was a doctor, a medical doctor, who lived in the same apartment with my...with his mother, my grandmother, and my aunt, his sister. And I believe he - although I have no direct evidence - I believe he was extremely concerned about this. And not only about this particular day when Hitler took over. He was already concerned in the 20s. I said earlier on that my aunt bought a house in the Silesian Sudeten mountains - beautiful area incidentally - and she bought that in 1926, and my uncle it was told, of course he didn't mention it to me personally, said to his family: 'Don't buy a house in Silesia in Germany, buy it in Switzerland.' They considered this, I believe, but they felt that since my aunt wanted this holiday house primarily for her own mother to get away from the city of Berlin to a healthy climate, they felt that to have a house in Switzerland would entail too long a rail journey. It was not a question of flying anyway. It was all by rail and it would have been too much of a strain for a woman, who was then already eighty years old, which was very old for that time. So he had a vision and felt that the things were not going the right way.

Tape 1: 52 minutes 8 seconds

BL: Do you remember the boycott of the Jewish shops, do you remember any other events...

EH: ...Sorry?

BL: ... Do you remember the boycott of the Jewish shops? Do you remember any other events in that year 1933?

EH: No, I have...this was the year of the boycott? I have no knowledge of that. I mean now I know what happened. I'm not aware of anything untoward in 1933 at all. My father went on with his work at the office. He had advanced himself. He was a very senior civil servant. His office was in the government quarter, in the Wilhelmstrasse of Berlin, and he enjoyed his work, there's no question about it. To what extent he was concerned, I wouldn't be able to say. What I do know is that my parents always kept unpleasant information away from me; they didn't want to upset me. So, in that sense, they may well have been aware of dangers, but they wouldn't have mentioned this to me at the time.

Tape 1: 53 minutes 40 seconds

BL: Were you worried? Do you remember being worried?

EH: No. I was totally naïve, and I thought, why should I have worried when adults weren't worried? You know, we all know the history of the Jews in Germany, the assimilated Jews. Many thought that Hitler had plenty to do to improve the economic situation, which was in the disastrous state at that time, which he did incidentally, but at the expense of...The dictatorship is able to do all sort of things which a democracy cannot do.

BL: Until when could your father stay in his job?

EH: He stayed in his job until the end of year 1936. The Nuremberg racial laws were issued in September 1935. No, sorry, I made a mistake. Following the racial laws in September 1935, he was immediately forbidden to enter his office. His secretary had brought all of his belongings home and he was, as from the 1st of January 1936, not 1937, he was forcibly put into his...He was given his pension. Initially, of course, his full pension, but then of course things changed drastically.

BL: That must have been a terrible shock to...

EH: ...Sorry?

BL: That must have been a terrible shock to your father.

Tape 1: 55 minutes 46 seconds

EH: He wouldn't have shown it. He wouldn't have shown it. I do remember the time when all this happened. I was then in my final, that was in '35, almost in my final year at the grammar school. My parents were on a holiday at the time, in Italy, over the period of the Nuremberg party rally even, where the racial laws were proclaimed. And it was within, I think it was within twenty-four hours of the Nuremberg party event, that a letter arrived, which I recognised immediately. It was a yellow...I think it was a strong yellow letter from Potsdam. I opened it. I was in charge of the household because that time my sisters were no longer in our apartment. So I was left alone with the maid and I had full jurisdiction to pay her and the deal. After all, I was then seventeen years old. And I opened the letter and the letter really very briefly said: 'You are herewith instructed not to enter your office again.' I cannot remember the details. I took this letter, or discussed this letter, with my aunt Else Ury on the phone and she said that well of course we did expect it, which is true. At least I expected it, and my aunt, family expected it as well. And it was only two or three days later that my parents arrived back from their holiday and we, my aunt and I, who waited for their return on the platform, when the train pulled in...And I was very worried to break the news to my father and my mother. I still see my parents with their suitcases approaching me, Tante Else and me, and my father immediately said...I had an idea, a strong idea, that he knew what had happened because he would have read the papers, and he took one look at my face and he said: 'What's happened?' and I told him. He must have known. He must have expected it. That is what I remember. He didn't enter

his office again. That was 1935. I was still at school, but, at that time, my sister, my eldest sister, had left for Amsterdam. They moved, with her husband and her young child, they moved to Amsterdam. My other sister, who was, I would say, she was a Zionist, very much to the annoyance of my father - she had gone to Palestine in February 1935.

Tape 1: 59 minutes 40 seconds

BL: Mr Heyman, we have to stop here because we have to change the tapes.

End of Tape One

TAPE 2

Tape 2: 0 minute 4 seconds

BL: This is Tape Two; we are conducting an interview with Mr Ernest Heyman. We were talking about your sisters. What happened to them in the 30s?

EH: My eldest sister got married in 1932 and she had a baby in 1933. They moved away from our home to the southern part of Berlin and, due to the political changes, they decided to emigrate to Holland. My brother-in-law was given a task by an American businessman to deal with the import and export, particularly the export, of machines - I don't know what kind of machines - to different parts of the world, including South America so far as I recall. And it didn't matter where he lived. His boss - he really was a single person, but a very well connected person in government circles in New York - his boss arranged for him to open an office in Amsterdam, and that happened in, I believe roughly in January, in February 1936, so they moved out from Berlin to Amsterdam in January or February 1936. Perhaps I should have mentioned my younger sister, Else, who was ten years older than I. She was a Zionist, very much to the regret, or perhaps it's not a strong enough word, of my father. She was trained in an agricultural school in central Germany and she left, she got married, as a so-called...It wasn't a marriage; it was what in Germany is called a Scheinehe, a mock-marriage to a young Zionist who also had his so-called certificate of entry to Palestine at the time. Otherwise, she would not have been...If she wasn't married to him, she would have not been able to leave Germany.

Tape 2: 3 minutes 1 second

She left Germany in February 1935, so that our family had shrunk. And I was scheduled to leave for London immediately after my so-called Abitur, which was expected to be in March 1936, only two or three months after my eldest sister had moved to Amsterdam.

BL: When was your immigration first discussed? Or your...that plan to go to London?

EH: The whole question of my future was discussed, I would say, approximately in 1934. I remember - this was all done above my own head - I wasn't consulted. Not at first at least. The consultation took place between my mother, I should imagine, less so my father, and my aunt, Else Ury. There were thoughts floating about that I should go to a 'Hotelschule', a hotel college, hotel administration, hotel service college, at

first in Geneva, where there was, I understood, a well-known hotel college. But that was, I believe, to be in French and my French was very poor. Then they thought, they discussed the possibility of my going to Prague, Czechoslovakia, where the college was, I understood, in the German language. Now, you can imagine when it was put to me to consider these alternatives I was in a terrible state because I had no intention to go to a hotel school.

Tape 2: 5 minutes 25 seconds

I wanted to become an architect, and on that subject my father, you can imagine, was also absolutely against it. I had a very good relationship with one of my teachers, my class, my main teacher at the gymnasium whose house I passed every morning on my way to school and who had...he was a wonderful man, and there was no question of being anti-Semitic. He was a professor, he had the title of Professor, and I mentioned this to him that they want me to go to hotel school possibly in Prague. But he said, he called me - I was the only one in the class which may be of interest whom he addressed by my first name -he said: 'Klaus, under no circumstances are you going to leave the school early; you must go through to the Abitur', and I reported this at home and that was the end of the idea of the hotel school. It was discussed at that time...

BL: Sorry, we just have to stop for one second...Yes, 1934 -

EH: It was discussed again and it was decided that we will do what had been planned originally. I would be able to stay with my cousin in London. He was the son of the eldest brother of my mother, Fritz Ury, and I will study architecture in London. My father had an assistant in his own office in the Wilhelmstrasse at that time, although by that time his office was moved to another street very nearby, to Charlottenstrasse. He was an architect and he left my father's office, which was an architects' office, but a civil service office, and he went to England, initially to London, but later to a place near London, north of London. My father wrote to him at the time, it must have been 1934-5, asking him to give us information about schools of architecture in London.

Tape 2: 8 minutes 22 seconds

What would he recommend? And he, I remember, he replied, - I was shown the letter-suggesting various schools of architecture: Liverpool University, then which was supposed to be one of the top schools of architecture in England at the time, then various London schools, University, an association school of architecture, and he mentioned the polytechnic school of architecture. And he said: 'I'm sure your son will not be able to afford either Liverpool or the London University, or the AA, the Architectural Association School of Architecture. I would suggest that he attempts to get registered at the Polytechnic School of Architecture', and that is what I did when I arrived in London.

BL: So it was planned in '34 that you were going to...

EH: It was planned as an option in '34, although that was the time when they still considered the ideas of my joining the hotel business.

BL: And before you left in 1936, what are your last memories of Germany at the time, of Berlin?

EH: I must admit, I had met virtually no anti-Semitism even in my school. In my own form, class, it sounds rather peculiar but the school was extremely liberal, and the pupils at that time, 1934, '35 and '36, the majority of the Jewish pupils had already left the school and presumably the country. There were generally children of very well-to-do business people. We had at the school, I would say, very conservative, right wing conservative pupils, for instance one of the – very nice – pupil was a grandson of Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke, who may or may not have been rightly known now. There was, as far as I was concerned, no anti-Semitism. I met no anti-Semitism at all, but one was totally aware of the situation. In particular, since my father was eventually pensioned off.

Tape 2: 11 minutes 30 seconds

B.L.: So did you want to leave Germany?

E.H.: Oh absolutely, there was no question of leaving Germany. All young people wanted to leave, and there was no question, there was no future at all for us. My father, I was told, it must have been - 1933 or 34, he knew professors at the what was called Technische Hochschule in Berlin, the technical university now, and he enquired - he had contacts with professorial staff - and he enquired: 'what are the chances of my son entering the school of architecture'. And he was told that 'yes', currently he can enter the school of architecture, but the problem was that they cannot guarantee that he can go and get on with it, and they advised that he should get out. And that's what I did. I arrived in London very early in April 1936 and within 48 hours I enlisted or registered with the Polytechnic School of Architecture. There was a little problem, and that was the question of the tuition fees. I lived at the time in Hampstead, where my cousin and his new wife occupied a furnished apartment, and they had booked for me a little attic room in Belsize Avenue, which I was told about. And there was a problem with my address at the time, whether it was in county or out county. In county, the fees were very low. If my address was regarded as out county then it would be an enormous fee, which I felt I could not pay. I ought to say here now that my aunt Else Ury had arranged for a money transfer from Berlin to London. As a result of her possessing English state papers, that is to say they were government gilts, and if these, if her holding - I wouldn't have been told, what her holding was, but must have been a substantial holding - if her holding was offered for sale to the Bank of Germany, Reichsbank, they would allow a monthly transfer of £16, it was 200 marks, to an account in London. And so I received in 1936 and 1937 - I think it was the end of 1937 that these transfers were stopped - I received a monthly transfer on a bank account of £16 eight shillings approximately, which was an enormous amount of money at the time, particularly since I then, later in 1936, stayed with my cousin and his wife in a small apartment in Golders Green, and so I succeeded in having my address at the time, which was Belsize Avenue, recognised as in county, so my tuition fees were very low. The bus fare, as I remember, from Hampstead to Oxford Circus was thrupence at the time, which sounds interesting in terms of today's costs.

Tape 2: 16 minutes 10 seconds

B.L.: What were your first impressions when you came to England? And how did you come?

E.H: I travelled via Amsterdam, where my sister and brother-in-law and young child lived. I stayed there two or three days and then travelled on by train from Amsterdam to the port of Flushing or Vlissingen, as it is called in Dutch, and then we crossed the North Sea to Harwich and then by train from Harwich to Liverpool Street Station. That was the way I travelled frequently, later on, on holidays to Berlin. Always via Amsterdam, where I was put up by my second mother, as I said, my eldest sister, and then on to Berlin. But that only happened in 1936 and 1937. In 1938 I still wanted to go to Berlin for my holiday, but my second mother stopped me. She said under no circumstances will you go to Germany again because you may not get out again. My impression of England was extremely favourable. When I arrived in Harwich with my luggage, a suitcase and a rucksack I had no idea what to do. I was not met by my cousin, which must have been done deliberately, because they had probably said that the boy is old enough to find his own way to our address. Well, the boy was not. He was old enough, I would agree, but he was not bright enough at first to know. I didn't study a plan of London. I didn't do anything. I assumed that I would be met. But I was not, so I telephoned, which in itself in those days was quite a task because of the English version of the automatic – the telephone boxes, with a button 'A' and button 'B' and so forth, but I managed.

Tape 2: 18 minutes 28 seconds

Then I was told to take an underground to Hampstead. Well, that was not exactly helpful. I did take the underground and got out at the Hampstead tube station, but it was the wrong station. I should have got out at Belsize Park, and so, as I arrived with my suitcase and my rucksack, I was wondering: where do I go from here? So I asked somebody, a middle aged lady, and she said: 'Oh dear. You are really quite a distance away. I will come along with you and show you how to get there.' And she took me along from Hampstead tube station some small streets, along small streets, and then she suddenly realised that she also was unsure which direction to go, and she asked someone else, another middle aged lady, and she said: 'oh yes, you're not all that far away. I'll come along with you', and so I finished up not only with the two ladies, but with three ladies, and I thought, when I realised this, that this is incredible. That would not be conceivable in Germany. The helpfulness of the people, which started already at the Liverpool Street Station with a porter. The porter approached me at the Liverpool station, at Harwich, Harwich railway station, taking my suitcase. I was in a panic: What is he going to do with my suitcase? And he pointed at something on his hat and I thought: 'what on earth is that supposed to mean?' And he saw that I did not understand. My English was very good; it was really very good from my grammar school, but it wasn't quite as good to get me through one or two problems in London. And then he said: 'aiti' I said "'aiti' I've never heard that before, what on earth does that mean?" And he pointed up and I saw 'eighty' and he pronounced it 'aiti.' That was my first lesson. Don't always assume that you understand. So, eventually, I found the address - coming back to Hampstead - I found the address and all was well. I was taken by my cousin's wife to the little attic room. I was given a meal in their apartment. And that was the end of my time in Berlin, as it were.

Tape 2: 21 minutes 16 seconds

BL: So, financially, you were cared for?

EH: Financially, I was cared for. That was perhaps the key to the whole of the solution to my future.

BL: And that time was your luggage restricted or could you take whatever you wanted to?

EH: No, what was restricted was the amount of money I could take with me. That was well-known at the time. I suppose it was twelve marks, which was, I can't remember, it wasn't much more than a pound. I cannot be sure of that now. But the money side was not a problem. In fact, I must admit, I had relatively very few problems. I came and within a week I had my place at the School of Architecture. I started off literally within a fortnight. I was already in a studio of the School of Architecture, which was in the West End of Great Titchfield Street, a lovely area really, and I found again - coming back to the question of my impression of English people - I found the staff so friendly. It was just unbelievable, and it was, of course, my first experience of a different sort of contact between students and tutors. The relationship between the pupil and a teacher, professor, at the grammar school was a very different one to the student of architecture in his first year and his staff. The friendliness is something that stands out in my memory.

BL: Were you the only non-English student there?

Tape 2: 23 minutes 25 seconds

EH: As soon as my first day, when I arrived at the school of architecture, I was introduced to a young student who came from Leipzig, and he emigrated with his parents. He was the only son, and he emigrated with his parents very early on, 1933 I should imagine, and I was eighteen years old, and he was only sixteen, and he started off at the School of Architecture in the previous September. The terms, or the session, always starts in September/October, and I joined the first year in April, and he had been there since the previous September. I was immediately asked to take my place in the study, with my joint table and so forth, next to him. And I thought that was a helpful thought that he would be very helpful to me. There were approximately, I would say, fifteen students in my first year. So I was the second [foreign] one, and, so far as I recall, there were no further students from Germany or Austria. We were the only two who went through right until the fifth year.

Tape 2: 24 minutes 50 seconds

BL: And at that point you lived in Belsize Park. Were there any other refugees or not yet?

EH: No. Not that I knew. I only slept there. I was away from breakfast time in the morning until after dinner at night. I took my meals with my cousin and his wife at the...street was called Belsize Crescent, number 19, which I'll never forget.

BL: What are the names of your cousin and his wife?

EH: He, his name was Fritz Ury, and she was called, her maiden name was Helen Plaut, Helen Ury. She came also from Germany. She happened to be part of the circle of friends of my eldest sister, Elisabeth. She knew the whole of my family.

Tape 2: 26 minutes 3 seconds

BL: And how did they support themselves financially?

EH: Well, my cousin was already of British nationality and she married him and acquired British nationality.

BL: And what did he do?

EH: He was called the manager, later the managing director, of a firm called Etam, a ladies fashion firm, although in those days, in the early days, they were largely concerned with ladies underwear. And I recall, when I visited Berlin as a small child, there was an Etam shop. My aunt lived for literally twenty, over thirty years in Charlottenburg, in that apartment block, and she took me, of course, for walks every day and, right next to her entrance door, was an Etam shop showing the underwear and stockings and things like that. Now, at that time, my cousin, who was twelve years older than I, was already with Etam. I was a small child and he was already training for business, for Etam business. He was in Chemnitz in Saxony, an area which I didn't know really. And this contact between my cousin and the Etam firm was arranged by his father, a solicitor, who represented the firm of Etam in some legal affair, and they arranged his son to be taken out of school at the age of 16 to be sent to Chemnitz to learn the business from the factory onwards.

Tape 2: 28 minutes 18 seconds

BL: And when did he come to England?

EH: He came to England already, approximately, I'm guessing now, when he was twenty years-old, in 1926, long before. He, of course, visited Germany regularly to see his family. I didn't really know him at all. I met him once in the Sudeten Mountains. We went on a day-trip together; After all, he was twelve years older and a rather cool person, but thoroughly good person. And when I now often think about that, recently married, he took a young student into his household so, in that sense, he saved my life.

BL: What was it like to go back to Berlin during that time? You said you went back.

EH: I went back during holiday periods. It was, strangely enough, not a problem. My sister, Lisbet [Elisabeth] was always concerned when I returned for holidays. My first holiday was virtually two-and-a-half months. I took along all the drawings, which my fellow students and the School of Architecture had carried out, prepared before I joined the school. It was a heavy roll of drawings, and my father was of course retired and he took a pleasure in teaching me. He went through all the drawings and made me copy out, not copy, but he taught me what the drawings were supposed to teach you, teach these students, and I prepared each drawing literally as a copy and took these drawings back to the School of Architecture. I wasn't asked to do that actually, but

my father thought it was a good idea to catch up on what I had missed between September and April, September 1935 and April 1936.

Tape 2: 31 minutes 6 seconds

And so I spent approximately one-and-a-half months working under the supervision of my father, who thoroughly enjoyed this activity. And then, after that, we went to my aunt's house, to the Sudeten Mountains for a holiday until I had to sit for the examination at this Polytechnic School of Architecture. I intended to, strangely enough, I intended to start afresh in October 1936. The headmaster, a very brilliant man, saw me, it must have been in May, and I said that well of course I'm going to start the first year again in September. And he said: 'Well, my dear Heyman, of course you will have to sit for the sessional examination', and I said that I can't, I've missed most of the year's teaching material. He said: 'you must try', so I was frightened, very worried about this because in June we had a whole fortnight, every day examinations on history of architecture, on theory of structures, mathematics and so forth theory of design, property of materials, and I sat for the examination and the results were posted to my, our address in the Sudeten Mountains where we were on holiday. And I passed pretty well all the subjects. Just except for the history of architecture where I failed and the important one, the building construction, I just passed at fifty per cent. Anything under fifty per cent was a fail. And I was provisionally admitted to the second year, subject to further progress. That was of course fantastic, because not only did I catch up on everything during the next three months, the terminal, the three terms to the session, the terminal examination I passed in the first class. And not only did I stay in the second year, but I also saved a whole year's fees and time, so I literally did a five year's course in four. And my final examination took place in early April in 1940. After this, it was already after the war had started.

Tape 2: 34 minutes 24 seconds

BL: When you went back in those years 1936-1937 did your parents try to leave?

EH: They couldn't. They couldn't leave until...eh...my father was a typical civil servant. He said: 'I can't leave. I get my pension, what can I do? I've got no capital' or virtually no capital, I wouldn't know. And the only thing was he had his daughter, his eldest daughter, in Amsterdam, and it wasn't really until *Kristallnacht* in November 1938, that my sister wrote to the parents and said: 'Look, *Kristallnacht* has caused a tremendous upheaval in Holland. If you declare that you are ready to emigrate, to join us as a family in Amsterdam you will have no difficulty in getting an entry visa, but you must make up your mind within, I think they were given, a fortnight.' That was something which was absolutely terrible for my parents. They realised after *Kristallnacht* that all their illusions were illusions and that something could happen which they have never foreseen, and the long and short of it is that they agreed to emigrate to Holland, to join their daughter, and they left in April 1939. And everything was wonderful for the first few months.

Tape 2: 36 minutes 25 seconds

BL: Were you in touch with them?

EH: Oh yes. We corresponded several times a week, at least once a week.

BL: Did they describe *Kristallnacht* to you?

EH: No. No, my information, the letters were so careful, they would not. My mother was a pessimist and she thought that all the letters would be read by the Nazis. Also, my father, my parents generally, were not keen to tell me all the horrible things; they wanted to keep me away. But I had all the information from the press.

BL: What was your feeling? Did you want your parents to leave?

EH: Yes, of course I wanted them to leave, but my father was so correct as a Beamter, that he wrote to, it was part of the Prussian Finance Ministry, he wrote for the permission to emigrate to his daughter in Amsterdam. And he was given, a very short time afterwards, a letter of permission to emigrate, subject to cancellation of this permission, and so he was this correct and so he would get his pension remitted to Holland, which was of course not true. By the time the war broke out, they immediately cancelled his pension. They cancelled his pension, his transfer of the pension. The pension was paid to the so-called blocked account in Berlin, which he couldn't do anything with. Yes of course I wanted them to get out.

Tape 2: 38 minutes 40 seconds

But then there's something I should mention that has been worrying me now literally for seventy-five years. I spent my fourth year at the School of Architecture in Salisbury. It was then; I had to have a job at an architect's office. I went to Salisbury and had a wonderful time, had a very happy office, happy boss and well paid. Everything was wonderful. My parents were in Amsterdam, I wouldn't say happy - my mother particularly, she had to leave her ninety-two-year-old mother back in Berlin, which was a terrible thing for her because she knew that she would never see her again. She and my mother were particularly close to her sister, Else Ury and it was a terrible job, a terrible thing for her to leave her behind. But I was happy. I knew my parents were safe in Amsterdam, my sister was safe. The information from my younger sister in Palestine was not brilliant but at least she was out of Germany. My parents had booked a passage by boat, by ship, from a Dutch port to Southampton for a short visit. All pre-paid and so forth to take place in July 1939. By that time, the things were politically already very, very, dubious. This was just before the war broke out. I also was a bit concerned about this, because I wasn't sure that the timing of July was very favourable because I was very busy working my five, six months stint in Salisbury, in Salisbury architect's office and I thought I probably wouldn't have much time for my parents. Then, as time went on, May, June, it looked already as if war would break out. Then it happened that the... politically, that the Germans were concentrating forces on the Eastern front against Poland. And I wrote to my parents I said: 'You know, I'm rather concerned that you might be in England and a war might break out and you will not be able to leave again.' And my mother replied that: 'You are quite right, the situation looks so dicey that we have already cancelled our trip.'

Tape 2: 42 minutes 23 seconds

That I can never forget because they might not have...If they had postponed this journey by a few months war might have broken out while they were still here and

they might not have been able to get back...this thought that I was worried that they might not get back to Holland is something which disturbs me. I was so naïve at the time. It's just unbelievable.

BL: And war did break out.

EH: War broke out in September. They would have been able to get here and get back again, but the mere thought that I didn't want them to get stuck here in England...I did not foresee what was going to happen. And of course it did happen. They stayed in Holland and of course on the 8th of May 1940 Holland was occupied.

BL: And after war broke out could you still manage to get mail to them?

EH: Yes. Until early May. I can't remember the date, but I was able to correspond with them in quite a normal way I would say from September '39 until approximately the end of April – beginning of May 1940 with no problem. And of course mail from my aunt in Berlin and my grandmother died in April 1940. And my aunt sent her letters to Holland and, afterwards, my aunt could not of course write directly to England but I received the odd letter via Holland until the 8th of May. Later on, it was possible to correspond through my wife's sister who lived in the United States. And so my parents...I can't remember how they got hold of the address...my parents... but that was through America...my parents wrote a letter to my wife's sister in the States and she forwarded the letter on to us here in London.

BL: And what did they say?

Tape 2: 45 minutes 32 seconds

EH: What did they say? They said very little. Partly again they didn't want to say anything which would cause me worry and concern. Secondly, because if they say too much the letter wouldn't get through to the States. So 1940 was relatively, so far as I can judge now with hindsight, relatively without problems. '41 things were not so good and worry about the information. There was nothing we could do of course. In '41 I was in the army already and things - the correspondence - was rather more difficult at the time. And not only that because I was ... we were not married at the time. My wife, she arrived here in 1939 on a domestic visa and I think, not quite sure, but from 1940 on she was able to change her job to a more civilised activity.

BL: How did you meet her?

EH: How did I meet her? That goes back to my childhood days now. In 1931, we lived in Berlin at the time. I was altogether...from 1924 onwards I was sent for holidays to what was called a Kinderheim. I don't know whether that means anything to you, the Kinderheim. It was presumably thought that boys must be together with other children. So I was in a Kinderheim from 1924...28. And in 1931 I was sent to a North Sea Island called Norderney and I was then thirteen years old. There I met her. She was twelve. I thought she was a lovely little girl. I'd never really talked to girls before. I only really had my two sisters. And all the cousins in Berlin were all much older. I was probably the youngest of the whole enlarged family.

Tape 2: 48 minutes 27 seconds

So I met her there and it's probably fair to say that, with the exception of perhaps four years as teenagers, when my mother and even my father told me not to think about her all the time.... 'You must concentrate on schoolwork.' I decided, we decided, to break it off for a few years, then took it up again. I telephoned her when I was in the School of Architecture and visited Berlin and so we re-established a loose contact. What is important is that of course after the Kristallnacht I was in London. Then of course in '38, I had a letter from her: Would it be possible for me to find her a domestic job? And that I did. I advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* enumerating all the various certificates and training courses she went through.

BL: Do you remember the text of the ad – the advertisement? Do you remember what you wrote exactly?

EH: It's quite a long advertisement which mentioned Austrian cooking and patisserie, typing and stenography. I remember that was in the *Telegraph* and she had or I had... I gave my address for responses - about 4 or 5 responses. I sent them on to her with my recommendation and accepted one job. And she arrived in February 1939. I took her there. I hired a car and took her there to the... in Hertfordshire.

BL: And that was the job of one of the people who responded to the ad?

Tape 2: 50 minutes 47 seconds

EH: One of the people who responded. She selected it actually. That's how we got together. Very much to my mother's concern because she was a very old fashioned person. She did not, perhaps understandably, realise that times have changed. But my mother was a pessimist and possibly partly a realist. I'm not sure what – how far her vision went. Possibly she saw it all coming. My father I think was an optimist and that was reported to me by, indirectly to me, by a man who shared the time in Theresienstadt with my parents. It was conveyed to me through my late uncle, who was the father of my cousin, Fritz Ury. That when my parents were deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, he saw them off. This man reported to my uncle: 'The Heymans went off by train. He was ahnungslos.' So, presumably, that's what he thought. I'm not so sure my father was ahnungslos. But maybe my father, who was an optimist, thought that he would better himself by leaving Theresienstadt. He didn't know where he was going. My mother was the exact opposite.

BL: So from Holland they were deported to Theresienstadt?

Tape 2: 52 minutes 58 seconds

EH: My brother-in-law, my sister's husband in Amsterdam, belonged to what was called the Jüdische Rat, the Jewish Council. And he arranged, my brother-in-law arranged for my parents to go to Theresienstadt. Now...what has actually happened. My parents went first of all to the transit camp, to Westerbork. From there - that was in April 1943- from there they went to Belsen, where they stayed from... I think it was from May '43 until January '44. They had a whole winter or part of a winter in Belsen, which must not have been, cannot have been fun. And from there they went to Theresienstadt and I think approximately January or February 1944 until the end of

October. But they always stayed together. And in the end of October 44 they went on one of the last transports, one is told, to Auschwitz.

BL: When did you find out what happened to them?

EH: My parents had non-Jewish friends in Amsterdam. And I knew these people, at least I knew of these people. They lived in the same house where my late sister originally resided. It was in July 1945, when the Canadians evacuated Holland, that I was then with my engineering unit in Düsseldorf that I got permission and was given a Jeep and a driver to go to Amsterdam. I was given compassionate leave for – I think for three days. I went to Amsterdam and saw these...looked up these people, these friends of my parents in the area where my late sister used to live. And they told me the whole story. That was a terrible time for me.

Tape 2: 55 minutes 54 seconds

BL: Your sister was also deported?

EH: Sister, brother-in-law. But my parents were in Westerbork in April, May 1943. And I saw a...they were able to write to their friends in Amsterdam and I was shown and given a post card when I was in Amsterdam in July 1945 in which my parents wrote – and I'm only speaking from memory now, I've forgotten most of it: 'Our children arrived here today and left again the day after.' And in German my mother said: 'Das ist bitter' And the fact is that my sister and brother-in-law and my little ten-year-old boy nephew, they arrived in Westerbork one day, and were deported to Auschwitz the following day. That I have of course documented now in the Red Cross records. Whereas my parents stayed for quite a while in Westerbork until they were transferred to Belsen and then to Theresienstadt.

BL: Let's come back to you... We have to change tapes. Let's change tapes here....and then we can speak about you.

Tape 2: 57 minutes 45 seconds

End of Tape Two

TAPE 3

Tape 3: 0 minutes 5 seconds

BL: This is Tape Three. We are conducting an interview with Mr Ernest Heyman. Please tell us what happened to you in 1940 in England? Did you go to a tribunal?

EH: I went to a tribunal in Salisbury at the end of December-November 1939 and was classified as a friendly alien or whatever it was called at the time. And from that point of view everything was in apple pie order.

BL: Were you working then already as an architect?

EH: I was working as what I would call a fourth-year student, which was part of the training course to have six months or so in an architect's office.

BL: So did the outbreak of war affect Holland before the 8th of May. And my parents sympathised with me. My father said to me in a letter: 'Don't worry - when the war is over there will be an enormous amount of building activity.' He couldn't have been more right.

Tape 3: 3 minutes 33 seconds

But that wasn't very much of a consolation for me at the time. So I started a town planning course at the polytechnic in Regent Street. And, also, I decided to enlist for the Pioneer Corps. That must have been about the end of April 1940 – beginning of May because I do remember writing to my parents before the German attack on Holland: 'I have decided to join the same firm as Gordon Leigh'. Now Gordon Leigh is an acquaintance of mine and the nephew of my brother-in-law who was in Amsterdam. He knew that Gordon Leigh had joined the you in any way?

EH: Not really, apart from the fact that it certainly was a worry. One wondered how one can stay in contact with one's family on the continent. But I was so busy that I had very little time to think about these problems. And there was nothing really I could do.

BL: And then were you interned?

EH: Yes, that was following my completion of my architectural course, beginning of, very early April 1940. Before, in fact, Holland was occupied by the Germans I finished my professional studies and I was wondering what would happen next. I wasn't sure. I was accommodated by my cousin, Fritz Ury, and his wife. They lived at the time in Hampstead Garden Suburb. I realised that it was impossible for me to get a job. There were no architects' offices – they virtually didn't exist any more. There was no building going on. The future was uncertain. I was wondering what to do with myself. I corresponded and passed all of the concerns onto my family in British Army and he was evacuated from Dunkirk. He was also in the Pioneer Corps of course. And I assumed therefore that my parents knew that I was also intending to join the army. And then of course Holland was occupied, and one didn't know what would happen next, and what did happen next was the decision by the government to start internment of so-called enemy aliens including 'friendly' enemy aliens. As one remembers that Churchill said 'Collar the lot!' I have a certain amount of sympathy for the predicament of the government at the time.

Tape 3: 5 minutes 37 seconds

One wasn't sure whether the Germans in fact would attack Britain and there was of course the Blitz of London and other cities. And then of course the internment policy became known and I was fully prepared to be interned. I waited for my internment with a packed suitcase and rucksack presumably. And it did come. I'm not sure whether it was the end of May or some date in June 1940, but when it did come there was a policeman, I remember, who came to the house in Hampstead Garden Suburb and said, a very friendly man, free and easy, he said: 'I'm sorry to tell you but you've got to report to the police station in Finchley Road in Temple Fortune such and such a time in the afternoon tomorrow'. So I thought, well, that's it! And it was it. I was

there. There were quite a fair number of other people of all ages. I was then twenty-two and there were people there who were probably over sixty. I had an uncle who was then seventy-years-old; he was not interned. He lived at the same house as his son, Fritz Ury.

BL: And your cousin?

EH: Fritz Ury was my cousin.

BL: Was he interned?

EH: No, he was British.

BL: So you said - sorry.

Tape 3: 7 minutes 30 seconds

EH: He was British and so was his wife. And my uncle was not interned. We spent one night and part of a day at the racecourse, Kempton Park, and from there we went by train we didn't know where to. But it turned out to be Liverpool. And from Liverpool we went by boat across the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man. When I arrived with my suitcase and rucksack, we were told by some inmates – they were old boarding houses, old fashioned boarding houses which were requisitioned by the War Department for the interment purposes – ‘Don't unpack. You're all going off tomorrow to Australia.’ Now that I must admit put the fear of God up in me because I was very close to my then wife, although she was not yet my wife at the time. And I hated, although ‘hated’ is not the right word. I was terrified of going to Australia and leaving the shores of England. But, in the event, this was a rumour; it was proved to be wrong and we did not go off to Australia. And that was the beginning of my interment experience.

BL: Which camp did you go to?

EH: That was Onchan Internment Camp, which was just above Douglas, a very lovely position because one had the most lovely views over the Irish Sea. And the camp was surrounded by barbed wire, outside of which you could see the patrols of Pioneer Corps, British Pioneer Corps soldiers, who probably didn't have the foggiest idea of who we were. And it was a time which was of great interest to me with hindsight. At that time, of course, it was not very nice. One was concerned. And I remember I was very much concerned at the time about the possibility of a German attack on Britain.

Tape 3: 10 minutes 8 seconds

That worried me a bit because I was not quite so naïve on that occasion as on other occasions. I realised that if the Germans come over they would have us, the refugees, exactly where they would have wanted us to be - on the Isle of Man where we can't get out. And, fortunately of course, as history showed, it did not happen. It was an interesting time. Our particular house had – I'm not quite sure what they were called – the senior house person who was a German non-Jew called Kaiser. And then we had another inmate, who was a Jewish man, who was also called Kaiser. And the Jewish

Kaiser became great friends of ours after the war. The German non-Jewish Kaiser was a very reasonable...I wouldn't like to say that he was a Nazi, but the people said that he was a terrible Nazi. I don't think it was true. He could have been but he was a very decent, fair fellow who kept in the background as far as he could. Adjoining the neighbouring house there were two non-Jewish men, whom I had met at my cousin's – Fritz Ury's house – about three or four days previously. They were businessmen who dealt with the firm of Etam for delivery of silks, cloths, I don't know what else. They came from Austria and southern Germany, charming men. There was no question of anti-Semitism at all. And I had associated myself with these two people. Every day we became practically close friends throughout the whole period on the Isle of Man.

Tape 3: 12 minutes 41 seconds

BL: What were your daily activities? Do you remember?

EH: Daily activities were virtually nothing really. We were cleaning out rooms. We had I think two persons were detailed to take care of the kitchens, which they wanted to do because they knew that operating the kitchens they would never be hungry. There was no need to worry about this anyway. Apart from keeping one's bed tidy, unless one was on special duties to collect rations from a depot on the fringe of the camp, one was totally free to enjoy the summer months and do whatever one wanted to do. Food was adequate. Meals were reasonably good, and of course one had no responsibilities. It was an unnatural time in a way. What was interesting of course to see was that all sorts of businesses grew up presumably in all interment camps. Within four weeks we discovered that the gardens of various other houses along the road with wonderful views over the sea, were fitted out like Austrian cafes with tables and chairs, coffee cups and bakeries. You had to pay a small amount of money for a cup of coffee, perhaps a penny, and one of one of those typically Austrian cakes were perhaps tuppence or thrupence, and you lived the life of a prince there.

BL: Do you remember any cultural activities?

Tape 3: 14 minutes 51 seconds

EH: Cultural activities -Yes. We had a peculiar man – that was perhaps one of the not so pleasant things in our house - an artist, he was alleged to be an artist. I would not have said that about this person. He was called Bilbo. I don't know if you ever heard of that before. Bilbo was an obese, smelly type of person who organised an art exhibition in the interment camp. There was one house where there were rooms available which were suitable for an exhibition. And we had of course artists there. There were painters. There was one chap who had a studio in a loft of one of the houses who, for a very small amount of money, would sketch a portrait for you. I've got this sketch somewhere here. I think I paid about five shillings perhaps or something like that. It was a ridiculously small amount of money. The art exhibition - I took part in the art exhibition. I was very interested in that and I managed to get my so-called diploma thesis drawings up from London where my cousin's wife was helpful. She sent them by post rolled up and the whole of this consisted of approximately twenty sheets which were pinned up on the screens for the art exhibition. That was about the only cultural activity in which I took a part.

BL: Who took your portrait? Do you remember?

EH: I don't know whether there was a name called Scheck. It was on a grey paper in chalk, white chalk. My wife will probably remember this sketch. It's still somewhere. I remember it was slightly damaged when I last saw it. But there were a lot of artists there. There were engineers. I made friends with an engineer from Vienna. He wanted me for some task which I've forgotten. It involved a survey of something of the camp. That was toward the end of my interment at Onchan.

Tape 3: 18 minutes 3 seconds

BL: During that time did you correspond with your future wife?

EH: Oh yes, I'm sure we did write. I'm sure my wife has forgotten about that but we did correspond. Very much so. Yes, I have certain memories of the interment camp. I had reported earlier that I had applied for enlistment to the Pioneer Corps before my internment. That was in the recruiting office in London. And this enlistment instruction to what they called 'embodiment' – instruction to report to the recruiting centre somewhere again in Finchley Road – was sent on to me by my cousin in London. I received it one day at the interment camp and I thought: 'Well I'll have a go'. And I took this...I made an appointment with the commandant at the interment camp. I saw him and showed him the instruction to report at such and such a time and such and such a date, and told him: 'There you are. I've got to go'. So he said: 'My dear chap, you must be joking. You might as well throw that away. You can't go. You've got to stay here.' That was roughly about three or four weeks before the question of internment of friendly aliens was raised by Eleanor Rathbone in the Houses of Parliament. And I think it was within two or three weeks after that that the enlistment or recruitment for the Pioneer Corps was taken up and inmates of interment camps could re-apply, which I did, together with two others.

Tape 3: 20 minutes 31 seconds

BL: And when did you?

EH: Well, I'm fairly vague on that because that's where there's a gap in my memory. It could have been September or October 1940 that we were told to pack our things and catch the boat on such and such a date to Liverpool. And from there we went by train to a place near Bradford. I think it was Shipley near Bradford in Yorkshire, where I recall we were registering with a lieutenant who was Jewish, a very friendly chap. So friendly in fact that he suddenly – he suddenly said to us: 'Oh my god, I forget that I'm an officer. I mustn't be so friendly with you.' He was like a boy.

BL: What was your first job for the Pioneer Corps?

EH: Well, the first job was two months of training at a training centre in Bradford called Lister Lane School, training, and from there of course there was no job. It was literally training morning and afternoon. Marching up and down, going to the swimming baths once a week for bathing. It wasn't easy and of course night duty – I had to be on guard all night or part of all night for a certain period of about three

hours at a time. I remember once when I was on duty it was dark. It must have been about nine or ten o'clock at night. Somebody appeared from the town, the city, at the gate of our camp and asked for me. And I was on duty and then I discovered it was my cousin, Fritz Ury.

Tape 3: 23 minutes 0 second

He said, well he's in Bradford for two days can I join him for dinner? I think it was the following night which was possible. Then, I remember, he pulled out his wallet and he said: 'You must be short of money'. And I think he gave me ten shillings or something like this which I've never forgotten, which was a godsend because we were paid very little. I can't remember how little. But I found it pleasant. I enjoyed the training period. It was good to be out of the interment camp. Although it was very pleasant in the interment camp, it was an unnatural way of life.

BL: And from the Pioneer Corps you went to the British Army?

EH: No it was the British Army.

BL: Yes but then when...

EH: It was the British Army because we went of course from the training camp in Yorkshire, we went to Berkshire at Didcot for work. It was loading and unloading trains, all sorts of things which, when you consider that many of the colleagues or fellow soldiers were academics, including rabbis and I mean rabbis – there were several rabbis in our unit - teachers, it was a pretty soul-destroying job. However, one had certain privileges. I was able to travel to Oxford where my old uncle was evacuated to, and I think it was – yes, she came - I wouldn't like to say my fiancée because we were not engaged. We were never engaged; we were only married. She visited me in Didcot which was a dreadful place. We had a dreadful time in winter. The whole of the army camp was a sea of mud. And that was actually again worth mentioning. There was a bright spark in my company who discovered that I was an architect. And he said: 'You know we could put ourselves together.' This camp was full of mud and water. Every time you went from your Nissen [hut] or your billets to the latrines you had to wade through mud. You had to put gum boots on and it was horrible. I was terrible. It was really pretty bad.

Tape 3: 26 minutes 7 seconds

He said: 'Have you any idea how we can get rid of the mud?' I said: 'Yes, but it will take a pretty long time'. It was December 1940. 'We must dig trenches. Firstly, we must survey the camp, get levels and then I'll prepare a drawing and I'll prepare a drawing of trenches which have to be dug' - by hand of course. We had no machines. That's what we did. I borrowed drawing equipment from an engineering unit for which we as Pioneer soldiers worked. We did the rough work for the engineering units. And I prepared the drawing of the trenches with levels and produced the drawing. I took this drawing to the – not to the camp commandant - I took it to the sergeant major. And I said: 'Look we can get this camp drained completely within two months and make it absolutely dry. He said: 'How?' I said: 'Look at this drawing.' Now the man couldn't read any drawings. I said: 'First of all, I need

equipment. I need a level and ordinance level for taking measurements and heights and so forth'. And he arranged everything. He said 'Heyman...' and when I started I said: 'You have to put soldiers on as digging teams. They've got to be dug.' So after six o'clock or five o'clock in the afternoon, when we officially finished our Pioneer Corps work, these poor chaps were put onto digging trenches with the exception of this bright spark who got the idea and myself. We were merely walking around with drawings, which were completely useless really, and saw these fellows cursing, sweating, and digging trenches. I think within a week this bright spark and I were promoted from private soldier to lance corporal by the sergeant major who was looking forward to see the camp drained of mud. To cut a long story short, the camp was completely without water and mud by the end of February. But I can tell you, it would have been totally dry even without our digging the trenches because the weather had changed. That was of course a good lesson to me of showing a certain amount of initiative in this otherwise useless army camp.

Tape 3: 29 minutes 11 seconds

BL: And from there where did you go?

EH: From there I wrote to the architect who employed me in Salisbury in 1939. He was by that time a major for the Air Defence of Great Britain. How I discovered this I don't know. I wrote to him and said, 'There are two chaps in my army unit: myself - I've got a diploma in architecture, and he, my friend, he had to break off - he was a student of civil engineering in Bristol, but he couldn't complete his studies. Can you do anything for us?' Within twenty-four hours he arranged with my unit for my colleague and myself to be detached. And I joined him in his office in Gloucester where I was concerned with preparing drawings and surveys for searchlight units in the Gloucestershire area. And the same job was given to my colleague, the civil engineer. That was a wonderful time. The first few nights I slept under the drawing table in the office and then I was given a boarding-out allowance, which was quite adequate to go into any boarding house in Gloucester. And I had a wonderful time; I thoroughly enjoyed it and learned an awful lot about surveying sites. And it was that particular period we worked in Gloucester and my colleague worked in Cheltenham and I think it was also then that my...Lillian visited us or visited me in Gloucester or Cheltenham on an odd weekend.

Tape 3: 31 minutes 32 seconds

I had my meals - breakfast, lunch and dinner - in the Church Army canteen that was run by voluntary organisations, cheap. I could even save money from the living-out allowance which I had from the army. And from there... yes, one day I was called into my - that major's - office, Major Potter. And he said: 'Heyman you're posted; you've got to leave'. That was terrible because I always hated changes. And yes, I had to leave. The whole of this wonderful episode in Gloucester came to an end. I was posted to the Greenford Ordinance Camp in Greenford, Middlesex, in London and I arrived there. The first thing they did: they detached my one and single stripe as a lance corporal because a lance corporal in the Army was not what was called substantive. If you changed units you lost it and reverted to a private soldier and in that Greenford Depot I was allocated to a drawing office. But it was an ordinance depot and it dealt with engineering not with architecture. And I was put on a drawing board - an upright drawing board - and I was told by a very nice sergeant senior

draughtsman to prepare a scheme of alterations to a machine gun, which I couldn't do. I said: 'Look I can't do that. I'm not trained as an engineer. I've trained as an architect.' He said: 'What's the difference?' I said: 'Well, that's the trouble. The War Office cannot distinguish between an architect and an engineer. They think a draughtsman is a draughtsman, and that's not true.' Anyway, they decided to get rid of me and I'm jumping months now.

Tape 3: 34 minutes 34 seconds

First of all, I was informed by my previous unit that I could apply for a commission. The War Office needed certain professional people, including engineers, mechanical engineers, surveyors and architects under Army Council Instruction 244. I'll never forget it. And I applied. I was called to an interview with a unit which was equivalent to a battalion called the Ordinance Corps. The unit commander, the lieutenant colonel, he said: 'Well, what's your profession?' I said: 'Architect.' 'When will you finish your studies?' I said: 'I have finished my studies.' And I produced my Certificate, my Diploma, and he said: 'Right, I'll note it. You're qualified – off you go.' And by that time I had found a niche in what was called an engineer's office in the ordinance camp where they dealt with alterations of buildings, repairs and so forth. There was one officer there, a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, a Clerk of Works and a Scottish surveyor who was called Jock. And, when I discovered this office, I went inside and said: 'Could you do with an architect?' And the Clerk of Works said: 'Yes! Wonderful!' And I knew why because he couldn't draw and he had to do drawings himself. And he thought it was just a godsend to have an architect there. I was allocated a place, a little office in a Nissen hut with a drawing table – not an upright board - and the usual instruments: pencil, rubber, decent set-square. And I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had to survey a few buildings occasionally to take measurements. I felt I was back in a civilised life instead of vegetating in an engineering office where I was called 'useless'. And then it was June 1942. I was called into the office and I was told: 'Heyman, you realise you are still on the strength of the Ordinance Corps, although you are working voluntarily in an engineer's office, but you are on our strength and you are not fulfilling the work. Now we have to select certain people for draft.'

Tape 3: 37 minutes 55 seconds

And 'for draft' meant to be sent overseas. And I was told: 'We would send you - we are selecting initially people who are not married and we will be sending you to the Bahamas.' Now my geographical knowledge of the earth was not very brilliant. I wasn't sure where the Bahamas were, but I had an idea they were really quite attractive. But I didn't want to go away because I didn't want to leave my future wife. So I said, 'Well thank you for telling me.' I saw her within a day or two and said: 'We've got to get married – immediately- because otherwise I'm going to be sent on draft.' And we did get married in Hammersmith in July '42. And that was wonderful. I had what was called a 'Sleeping Out' pass. We were living in a little room in Ealing. I travelled back to the ordinance depot every morning, I think about 6 o'clock in the morning to be on parade at 8 o'clock or something like that or 8.30. And everything was fine until I was called into the company administration office again. I was seen by the same corporal who was actually - he was a Jewish refugee. He said: 'Heyman I'm so sorry but we now take married people.' So my heart dropped. He said: 'Well there we are. I'm afraid tomorrow you will be joining a queue. You have to be medically

examined and then you have to draw your tropical kit.' And all this happened the following day and I was given two weeks embarkation leave. And I drew my tropical kit. I had my medical examination and I was preparing myself for leaving the camp with my total equipment, army equipment which was standard. If anybody changed unit you had to carry your total equipment with you, including a rifle. And I left the camp and suddenly heard - I thought - my name being called out:

Tape 3: 41 minutes 2 seconds

'Heyman...Heyman!' I thought well this is...this can't be me. I heard it again. I thought, this does sound like my name. So I walked back again. It was a big camp the Ordinance Depot in Greenford, and I went to the company office again. And the same corporal said: 'Heyman, hand in your tropical kit. Report back to your engineering office.' I said: 'What's the matter?' He said: 'You're not going on draft.' 'Why not?' 'Well we made a mistake. You are in for a commission and we overlooked that. We can't send anybody overseas who is in for a commission.' Now, that was quite incredible.

BL: What does it mean to be in for a commission?

EH: To become an officer. To go in for officer's training. And that's what happened. I think within two or three weeks I was sent to what was called the Pre OCTU – the Pre Officers Cadet Training Unit in Kent, which was for two months, a rough and terrible time, hard. And from there, after that, I was sent for officers' training. But the training camp in Lincolnshire was full. But it was a training camp for Pioneer Corps. That I didn't know. I had applied for a Royal Engineers transfer as an architect and I discovered that I was sent on to an officers training course for the Pioneer Corps. And I joined this in December 1942 in Beckenham in Lincolnshire and part of the course was finished in the end of February 1943, and I was commissioned and my first job was into a Pioneer Corps unit – in Warwickshire – 77 Company, which was interesting because there I met in among my platoon, which I was looking after, two people, which was quite astounding.

Tape 3: 43 minutes 40 seconds

One was a former teacher at my Grunewald Gymnasium in Berlin, a teacher called Mr Samuel. He taught German literature. He was a private soldier. And the other one was a former fellow classmate when I was about twelve, thirteen years old also at the Grunewald Gymnasium, a refugee. They were all refugees; there were rabbis. You had all the professions there, but not the technical professions. Academics and of course non-academics. And that was a very interesting period for me. And it was in July... in June 1943, I was sent to an engineering training camp in Elgin in Morayshire in Scotland, prior to being transferred from the Pioneer Corps to the Royal Corps of Engineers. I was there for 2 months, after which I was posted to my first engineering unit in County Durham. And that was still 1943. And at the end of 1943 I was posted to an artisan works company - that is a building company in Yorkshire. And with that company I stayed until October 1945. We went to France from there in July 1944, the usual Arromanches and so forth. The work consisted of building roads, bridges, particularly bridges over canals, and this was - that's where I learned an awful lot, not only technically but also in man management.

Tape 3: 46 minutes 23 seconds

And the soldiers consisted of all building trades, including carpenters, plumbers, electricians, bricklayers and also of course painters and labourers - all Yorkshire people with the few exceptions of Irishmen. I don't think they ever knew that I was foreign born. I remember the elections in 1945, immediately after the collapse of Germany after the armistice, when I had to give lectures to my men in politics in preparation for them to understand what the elections were about. And I knew I wasn't allowed to vote but they were - these soldiers were voting. And that's of course, as I said earlier on, when in July 1945 I had special leave to go to Amsterdam to hear the terrible truth about the fate of my family.

BL: So for how long were you on the continent?

EH: From July 1944 until July 1946. The company - we built bridges across the Rhine. I had a wonderful time; I mean it was instructive. I learnt a great deal and more authority, responsibility at that time than I ever had since in my professional work.

BL: So you did go back to Germany - then?

EH: Yes.

BL: What was that like to come back as a British soldier?

Tape 3: 48 minutes 40 seconds

EH: Yes. Not easy. It was not easy, particularly since I was always - being German speaking - I was always sent in advance. Before we went to Germany I was stationed in Ostend, Belgium. And I was sent in advance to Germany to prepare the unit. My Company was supposed to be moved to Germany and I was supposed to prepare the billets for 250 men and six officers, which was quite a responsible job. But it was also interesting because it was new to me how to deal with the Germans, the population and so forth. I'll give an example. I prepared billets for 250 men in Osnabrück, which is in Westphalia, north Westphalia. And as soon as the billets were prepared... This was a very hard job to organise German labour to repair a complete building in a matter of two weeks, which they were ordered to do or else. As soon as I reported that the building was ready for occupation, I was given instructions to immediately move from Osnabrück to Düsseldorf and prepare new billets in Düsseldorf. They changed their plans. And when I arrived in Düsseldorf I had to report to the town major. I think he was a British officer. I think he was a major. And I said: 'I am here to prepare billets for my unit who are at the moment in Ostend. And he said: 'Well that's all right Heyman. I'll give you an interpreter but you will prepare yourself that your unit will be under canvas because everything is destroyed.' So I was given an interpreter. I believe he was a communist who survived underground in Düsseldorf and he was delighted to be my interpreter. I didn't need one but he was a native of Düsseldorf and I said: 'Look, I want billets for 250 men - for the soldiers and for the non-commissioned officers, if possible in a block of flats where the ground floor consists of a restaurant with kitchens.'

Tape 3: 51 minutes 44 seconds

He said 'Mr Heyman I know exactly the place.' And he...I was still in my car, in a jeep. He took us to a place which was just on the fringe of Düsseldorf in perfect condition. Occupied, totally occupied block of flats with a restaurant, a closed restaurant, on the ground floor with kitchens at the back. And next to it was another small block of flats. So I decided to requisition that. I went to the town major and I said 'Haus Sterneck with a restaurant' or whatever it was called, 'I want to requisition it.' And I was told: 'How much time to you want?' I said: 'Twenty-four hours to get all the German residents out.' And, in the meantime, that order was given by the town major by a special despatch rider that was done through the Germans' organisation. And, in the meantime, I looked for officers' accommodation and that was not difficult. There were so many elegant town houses there. So I went into one town house with my lance sergeant and his rifle. I rang the bell, somebody opened the door, saw us two in uniform. I was a lieutenant, my lance sergeant had three stripes. And, as soon as he saw us, he said: 'I'm British!' And I looked at this thing and couldn't make head for tail of it. It takes me a while before I realise what I'm looking at. And I thought, well: 'Thank you very much'. I thought I'm not going to have any problems. I want to requisition a house. I'm not going through any house where there is a claim for British nationality.

Tape 3: 54 minutes 6 seconds

I went into the next house which was Freilicht Glasstrasse [?] 21 and there was a young woman just about a little older than I was, and I said: 'Can I have a look at your house please?' And she said: 'Of course, yes.' And I saw there was a little boy next to her. He was about six years old. She showed me the house was divided into 3 flats, independent flats with a staircase, beautifully furnished, wonderfully fitted out with paintings on the walls, kitchens in the basement. And I said: 'I'm afraid I shall have to requisition your house.' And she said...she was prepared - the Germans - it was the end of July, not July...when was that? Can't remember now what time it was in 1944. She said: 'Would I be allowed to do the cooking for you because I'm an expert cook?' I said: 'Most certainly.' Because that meant for her that she would have the rations to feed herself and her little boy and, when I saw that little boy, I was reminded of my nephew who died. His name was also Peter.

Tape 3: 56 minutes 2 seconds

And so it was. The company moved in. Yes, the following day I had a look at the block of flats which was supposed to be evacuated and there was a most horrible picture which presented itself to me. There were women, and women only, carrying furniture down the staircase because they were supposed to take everything out. And downstairs were a large group of men. They were their husbands and relatives. I thought it was a most terrible situation that these women...there were women and children. I said to the man: 'What are we doing here?' 'We are waiting until they get the furniture down.' I said 'Until *they* get the furniture down?' that was done in German of course. I said: 'What are you doing here? What are you waiting for?' I said 'You will take over now. The women will come out. You will all go up and you will have twelve hours to get the furniture out.' And that happened. Twelve hours later I was back again and they had it all out - the furniture. They had carts with horses. There was no motor vehicle there at all. They had no fuel. And I inspected the flat. I went right up to the top and went through each flat. And women were cleaning up

with buckets of water and I praised them. I said: 'You are doing a wonderful job and you're so clean and everything.' And it was absolutely fantastic for my soldiers to move in with their sleeping bags of course. And one of the women said: 'Eine deutsche Frau wird immer ihr Heim ordentlich und sauber zurück lassen.' That means in English: 'A German woman will always leave her home in a clean and hygienic condition.' I've never forgotten that.

BL: Mr Heyman we need to change tapes.

Tape 3: 58 minutes 38 seconds

End of Tape Three

TAPE 4

Tape 4: 0 minutes 7 seconds

BL: This is Tape Four. We are conducting an interview with Mr Ernest Heyman.

BL: You were talking about the time you were in Germany as a British officer. Did you ever let anyone know that you were a German refugee?

EH: In Germany, no. No, my unit, my army unit knew of course, my fellow officers. Incidentally of course my company was disbanded in October 1945 and I was not due for release until some time in 1946. So I was transferred from Düsseldorf to the general staff of intelligence which is not terribly far, about 60 miles north of Düsseldorf. And there I was involved in totally different work. I was promoted to captain as a general staff officer and was concerned with the reintroduction of a democratic administration system together with two or three other officers.

BL: What did that involve?

EH: What it involved? Studying lists of proposed candidates for the local authority of civil servants as it were for mayors, town clerks and their deputies. And I had... once it was an interesting task. I was once asked to interview Konrad Adenauer, who used to be Lord Mayor of Cologne – long before Hitler. He was thrown out so far as I know by Hitler. And he was proposed to be Mayor of Cologne again.

Tape 4: 2 minutes 42 seconds

And I had a report from what was called the Field Security and also a branch of the intelligence corps and, based on that, I was asked to interview him and to confirm certain aspects of his politics. And he wanted to have nothing to do with any part of Germany apart from the Rhineland area. He didn't want anything to do with Baden Württemberg, with Bavaria. Northern Germany was to him like the red rag, Prussia. And I regarded him and reported that he showed very strong separatist feelings and he was not given the task of Mayor of Cologne. The people who were proposed for these posts... We introduced really the British system of local government and that is still in operation now, certainly in the British zone of Germany, the former British zone. A large number of candidates were put forward in lists who were... That was at the time a – so far as I know it was - a Labour government after the elections in '45. They were

communist left-wingers, which was bitterly regretted later on when Parliament swung over back to Conservatism. And I can't say that I enjoyed this particular work. But it had to be done and orders are orders. Later on, when I finished this particular duty, I was given the task to go down coal mines in the Rhineland area, of which there are many, and to report on the political atmosphere of the miners and their families, their wives.

Tape 4: 5 minutes 32 seconds

And this task involved going down to the coalface, which again I never had done and again it was interesting. I can't say it was terribly enjoyable. Cleaning up after being at the coalface was virtually impossible even if you spend a whole day in the shower. It's unbelievable really what it entails, what it involves. That task was completed – when I say completed I spent about two or three days at the coalmines and then returned to my office, or not to my office, to an office in Iserlohn. It's a large room with a large circular table with approximately ten chairs around. In front of each chair was a typewriter and I was given, allocated, one of these seats by the typewriter. I had to write my report and that was interesting, report in English of course. So, that I did really until it was my release date, which was some date in July 1946.

BL: Just to ask you something - so you interviewed Konrad Adenauer?

EH: Yes.

BL: In English or in German?

EH: In German.

BL: In German. So you blocked his appointment?

EH: Well, it was not so much blocking... the recommendation was already against... The recommendation of what they called Field Security Reports. Everything went through Field Security first. I must admit I never met anyone from Field Security. I only had the reports and, based on these reports, and having studied the reports, I was not entirely happy because I was very young and Adenauer was not a youngster any more. And I suppose, intellectually, far above my level. This was one of the things which one had to experience, that you had to undertake work which really was well above your own level. And it had to be done. And it was not always appreciated. I seem to remember that Adenauer was not entirely happy with me. Whether he objected to the uniform or whether he objected to the age or apparent age – it could have been both.

Tape 4: 8 minutes 20 seconds

BL: Because later he became Mayor and then later of course Prime Minister.

EH: Later of course, yes.

BL: Interesting...

EH: I had one interesting task and this is really the last one I would want to mention. I was asked or ordered to prepare a survey of the political background of all the police in the Rhineland-Westphalia area. And I remember I was quite concerned... You never knew what you were up against, what sort of instructions you got, what sort of tasks you were allocated. I remember reporting to the head of the person who dealt with the police. The head of the British Army side, a brigadier, who was a very senior man, and I was ushered into his office and I think I must have said something very stupid. I said: 'I'm coming here to seek your assistance. I've been requested to prepare a report on the political background of the police of the whole Rhineland-Westphalia area.' And I had a very sarcastic response. I was a captain. He was a brigadier. I think he was no more than a brigadier but that was a few steps above my level.

Tape 4: 10 minutes 1 second

And in a very sarcastic manner he said: 'So you are going to report on my police? It's interesting.' Now he wanted me to be as small as anybody could be and I was. Anyway, he suddenly changed his tack and said: 'Right, Heyman, tell my assistant what you want.' I never saw him again. 'And you'll be given all the help you need.' I prepared this survey. I had to interview police officers above a certain rank, otherwise it would have been practically hundreds and, a bit like you have questions, I had to prepare the questions I wanted to ask and note the answers. I prepared a report which culminated in the final assessment that ninety-nine percent of the police were former members of the Nazi party. That was passed – after my release from the forces - was passed to Parliament and it created quite a stir in Parliament and severe criticism of the army of occupation for allowing that sort of thing. And yet, if you hadn't taken the existing police whether they were or not members of the Nazi party, you can't just recruit an inexperienced person as a policeman, which is showing now in Iraq. You've got to rely on those who have the experience. But it's unreliable. But there was no major repercussion except that it was severely criticised that those who were responsible in the army – in the occupation area – were criticised, unjustifiably I suppose, for allowing that sort of thing.

BL: So you were released in 1946. Tell us a bit about your post-war life.

Tape 4: 12 minutes 22 seconds

EH: Post-war, when I was in the Army, I think literally throughout the whole of my army career – not sure about internment camp - I always subscribed to a technical journal and at students' rates, which was bearable, reasonably cheap - *The Architects Journal*. And *The Architects Journal* at the end gives of course lots of interesting things for architects and other associated professions. And it always gives opening posts for careers and jobs. And I had this throughout my stay in Germany. It was somehow with delays. I always knew what sort of jobs were open. And I also realised information that, when I was released in Yorkshire, in York, I realised that the county architect in the West Riding of Yorkshire was my former favourite tutor at the School of Architecture, later architect at the Greater London Council, Sir Hubert Bennett. Wonderful man. And it was in July... it was before, roughly in May, I applied for a job. I knew I would be released, was due for release in July, early July. I applied for a job to the West Riding County Council and - he was then Hubert - Bennett replied, the county architect replied: 'Thank you for your application. We'd be delighted to

interview you. Would you please come for an interview?’ and gave me about five days. I was then still in Iserlohn for interview of my finance committee. I wrote back and said: ‘I am sorry. I’m in the Army. I cannot get leave for this sort of purpose.’ That’s all I said. I had a reply, it said: ‘Dear Mr Heyman, I have pleasure in confirming that you have been appointed to the post of...’ such and such. It was a salary of £405 plus cost of living bonus, £465 per year at the head office in the County Hall in Wakefield.

Tape 4: 15 minutes 12 seconds

So I had a job! I filled the post practically on my wedding anniversary. In July I started my first day at the post. So I was prepared and that of course was very orderly and tidy to have a job when you are released from the Army, instead of having to suffer possibly weeks of inactivity while you are searching for a job.

BL: And where was your wife?

EH: My wife happened to be also in Leeds at the time. She managed a shop, in fact an Etam shop, in the centre of Leeds. And she lived in a room in a nice little residential house on a rental basis. We had a room and I cannot remember whether we had means provided or whether she had the use of the kitchen. I can’t recall. I just moved in with her in Leeds. Coming from Yorkshire, York, I was given a - had to hand in the uniform - I was given a horrible civilian suit, scratchy suit, and turned up in Leeds. And my civilian life began. And I was placed, I was put... the country architect was a very inspiring man. I was put on the design and planning of the first post-war school in the whole of Britain in Yorkshire, in a little place called Knaresborough. And it was absolutely heaven to be out of the army. It was such an unnatural existence to be in the post-war Army. There was some interest in the intelligence work, but there were other aspects which were all too artificial. Life was all a matter of drinking at night after duty. We finished duty usually at 4 o’clock and then you met at the officer’s mess and it was drinking, drinking, drinking, drinking. Horrible.

Tape 4: 17 minutes 41 seconds

BL: So you built up a school in Knaresborough?

EH: And a great deal more, yes.

BL: And public buildings?

EH: Local authority buildings. That was the school section you see. I stayed on the school section. Occasionally, I dealt with houses for...police houses. Mainly educational work.

BL: How long did you live in Yorkshire?

EH: Until 1954. But I moved from that job in West Riding of Yorkshire to Bradford City Council. I wanted to increase my income by what today would be a paltry sum, but in those days it was worthwhile. And that was also a very nice office. I had very

nice colleagues. It was a very happy life. While I was there our first son, our first baby was born.

BL: And your daughter was also born in Yorkshire?

EH: She was also born...she was born in '53 very shortly before we moved to London. The reasons for moving to London were several. One was I had after all what little bit was left of my family in London. My uncle was still alive. He was quite elderly. He was born in 1870, and my cousin was back in London. He spent the war with his wife in Nottinghamshire and, perhaps more important than anything else, my wife had a sister, her eldest sister, in a mental home. She could not cope with the fate of her parents. And she became very strange and she was in a mental home for literally the rest of her life. She died about three years ago. She was the eldest sister. The middle sister was in the United States. She also died two years ago.

Tape 4: 20 minutes 14 seconds

BL: What happened to your sister in Palestine?

EH: Yes this is an interesting situation. She was a Zionist. But she wasn't really a Zionist. She was perhaps the least naïve person in my family. She saw trouble for the Jews, but she was part and parcel of a Zionist friends and Zionist company. And of course these people were far more realistic than anybody else. Particularly the sort of assimilated Jews we were, my father particularly. And that is one reason why she had a very strained relationship with my father. But she trained in agriculture. She was totally unsuited really. She arrived and was employed probably in the kitchens of a kibbutz, where she realised that she was useless and they realised she was. And she left and had great difficulties in making a living. She was never particularly reliable on financial things, which caused also problems in my home by the early 1930s, making debts. She was a bit of a problem child, maybe because she was in the middle in between the top and the bottom. But she was a wonderful person which perhaps was not realised by my parents, which I probably didn't realise either until we re-established contact long after the war – not until I would say the end of the 40s or even the beginning of the 50s. She got married to a man who I would say, which is perhaps unkind to say that he was equally unsuited to make a living. He was a journalist. He studied law in Germany. I've never met him personally. I only knew him through correspondence. But, after he died and after my first visit to by that time Israel, I realised that she was a fantastic wonderful person. She had a daughter in 1938 who is a very, very nice person. She has a large family herself now. And my sister died in 1989. I visit her not terribly frequently but every four or five years.

Tape 4: 23 minutes 35 seconds

BL: Where did she settle in Israel?

EH: She settled in Ramat Gan, which is a...it's really part of Tel Aviv. You can't distinguish when you are there and you don't realise that you are now in Ramat Gan. It's really part of Tel Aviv. And her little flat was taken over by her daughter. They live now in the same flat in which my sister lived for many, many years.

BL: So back to London. You came to London, and what did you do professionally?

EH: Professionally? I left the local authority service. I'm still influenced presumably subconsciously by my father's position as a Beamter. So I joined the Health Service, which I must say I thoroughly enjoyed. It has a bit of a social edge to it because you deal with patients and the staff and they're two very important things. And it is a very specialised field. One has to learn an awful lot, dealing with operating theatres, intensive care units and so forth.

BL: What were your responsibilities?

EH: I had my district and small architect's team. My district was Essex, the County of Essex, and I dealt with all jobs from the tiniest ridiculous upgrading of a toilet to a new hospital project on a totally new green field site, which involves many, many different stages of work. And, particularly at the same time, particularly in hospital work - more so on hospital work - to work together with mechanical and electrical engineers. That is vital. If you do not work with your engineering colleagues, you cannot really design or complete a hospital. The engineering is practically more important than the architecture.

Tape 4: 26 minutes 10 seconds

BL: For how many years did you work for the NHS?

EH: Until I retired in 1983, October '83, twenty-nine years. A job for...really a job for life, which doesn't exist any more now. In fact the technical offices of the health service don't exist now any more. They were abolished, I would say, within five or six years after my retirement. It all works now through consultants, which I would say probably makes sense, but it's all more costly because, as you know, in the health service whatever changes are made they always turn out to be more costly.

BL: While you were working, did you think a lot about the past, did you talk about the past to your children?

EH: The children are totally aware of our background, although I would say not of the details. The children know that they had no grandchildren (means grandparents?) but they ask few questions. And I think the reason for that is they have a feeling that this goes very deep into our minds, our background and the loss of the families. They feel that and they know it. And I think that, therefore, even though they are now grown up, even as children they realised: 'Don't ask questions. It will hurt them. It will make them sad.' That's one reason - not the only reason but one reason why I decided to write down what I remember. I'm not a good writer. I wanted to present to my children - to our children - the characters of my family, my closest family, particularly my parents and sisters and also the wider family. I discovered that I'm totally unsuited to write about characters. It may come out in what I've reported. I typed it straight out of the machine. And I have a feeling that I failed to present the real characters of my parents and sisters. And I started an epilogue about six years ago. I was not keen. I wanted to concentrate on the person. And I'm afraid then I suddenly - or not suddenly - gradually lost my eyesight and I haven't really... I had to break it off.

Tape 4: 29 minutes 7 seconds

BL: What sort of identity did you want to transmit to your children?

EH: I wanted to make up for the fact that my parents did not get to know my children. And the other way around as well. My parents, of course it's too late, but my children I wanted to give them a feeling that they know my parents, our parents. And the same goes for my wife; it's a similar situation.

BL: What would you consider your identity today? How would you consider yourself?

EH: I would consider myself a British subject, who has... if it hadn't been for particular external circumstances completely broken off with Germany. I like to consider myself totally British, despite my accent which incidentally... My language has deteriorated ever since I retired. There's no question about it. I am aware of it every day when I open my mouth. The reason is presumably that I have lost the contact with English-speaking people. My children don't even notice my accent except for my son, he is more critical. My daughter doesn't, my granddaughter. They don't realise it any more. They are so used to our language, my accent or my pronunciation. They say: 'No we don't notice any accent at all.' But I am aware of it. I had to do an awful lot of chairing meetings of design teams and project teams. And I'm pretty certain - and I had it confirmed by various people - that very, very few people were aware of my foreign background. And, as I said, early on in the army I occasionally asked my fellow officers... I was once very friendly until comparatively recently with my second-in-command in the engineering unit, a guy named Bill, 'Do you think that any of my soldiers knew that I was foreign born?' He said: 'I don't think so.' But they knew among the officers because they had the whole history of my life.

Tape 4: 32 minutes 4 seconds

BL: You didn't have to change your surname?

EH: I had to change my name. It was put to me in my first unit. I think it must have been...Heywood...Yes it must have been after I was commissioned to Second Lieutenant. I was called into the office. I had a war office instruction in relation to my job. I've been given the opportunity of changing my name in case I come into contact with enemy forces. Some people totally changed their names to a completely different surname and first name. I had no intention of doing that so I just anglicised my name which perhaps, had I been in a different type of unit - a front line unit like tank corps or Royal Marines - if I'd been able to transfer to that regiment I would have chosen probably a total change. So I just dropped one 'n'. I changed Ernst Klaus into Ernest Keith. It hasn't worried me - still the same initials and that I'm keeping now. I mean there's no question of making another change.

BL: How different do you think your life would have been if you hadn't been forced to emigrate?

EH: That's a nice question. My father always said...First of all I must admit I was his special child, which is understandable. After two girls he wanted a boy. And he frequently said, and my mother also confirmed that: 'He would like you to follow in his footsteps' in the same job, which he did. It wouldn't have worked age-wise, but it's possible that I would have entered the same profession.

Tape 4: 34 minutes 40 seconds

Whether I would have chosen the Prussian Civil Service branch... When you had your Diploma in architecture you had to...at least in those days. I don't know what it is like today or what it was even in the 30s. You were either able to go into private practice or you could follow the civil service career path. He chose not to go into private practice. He chose the civil service path. I might have – I might, I might not – have chosen the private practice path. I would think that I wouldn't have chosen any other profession. I wouldn't like to say that I was particularly cut out for architecture except that I was made familiar with architectural work from a very early age. And it always was a pleasure, a very great pleasure for me to be taken along by my father on his journeys, which involved perhaps a short train journey. Then he was collected by a horse and cart to be taken to the...He had to look after the agricultural...I don't know what they call them here. They were state farms, vast places. And he had to look after those or the buildings which were part of it. Racecourses, the state racecourses. And Prussia is so... nothing was private.

BL: What impact do you think, did it have on your life being a refugee or being cut off or expelled from Germany?

Tape 4: 36 minutes 59 seconds

EH: Impact? The impact has shaped our life totally. Whether, or to what extent, it affected my character...I may have become...But this is not only a matter of the political influence in my younger age, it's also the fact that I have got a few years older. I'm probably more charitable now, on the one hand, more charitable towards poverty in Africa and so forth. Yet, at the same time, one despairs about the success or failures of the supporting agencies of Africa. It doesn't go to the right destinations, which is a worry. But then one has one's own family here. I think those who are childless will probably be more charitable in practical terms. What else would one say on how this life shaped us? It has a feeling that after that sort of dreadful experience we've gone through and after the horrible things we read about every day, one can only come to the conclusion: 'It will happen again. It can happen again.' That is my view that it can happen again. And another thing I feel that's perhaps not quite relevant to your question - the human being is a dreadful animal, although I would say that to use the word 'animal' is an insult and that human being is not determined by nationality, or even race. It's the horrible character, the horrible actions which human beings can undertake anywhere, wherever they are, including Jews. It's horrible. At the same time, I have not lost faith in humanity. We just have to work towards the improvement, the betterment of our world population. And of course when you read the paper, when you open the paper every day, you realize it's not happening. It's not happening. We are failing.

Tape 4: 40 minutes 4 seconds

BL: Just to come back to a story which you mentioned in the beginning. You said you went back to Germany and met – in the '80s you said - you met one of your friends.

EH: My first school friends from the gymnasium.

BL: Yes. Was that a sort of reconciliation or what made you...?

EH: It was meant...I'm a very forgiving person. Perhaps again I would probably call it...I am still very naïve. I don't harbour feelings against people. What is done... I mean he...it was an interesting meeting. I arrived in Stuttgart in the hotel and he was sitting in the entrance lobby. And we saw each other and spoke to each other for the first time since 1934. I think it was in the early 90s, 1991, '92, something like that. And... well we spent the whole day together. We had lunch together. We talked. I had been in correspondence with him via Christmas cards, birthday cards, particularly birthday cards because I got to know him on his first birthday after about five days after I joined the school in Berlin. And his mother was a beautiful woman. She was so young compared with my mother. I was really...my parents to me were really like grandparents actually, because I should not have been born at all I suppose. I was the after...it's called Nachkömmling in German. What is it called in English? Can't think of the name now. And she was a charming lady. When I saw them at birthday parties, my eldest sister, Lisbet, took me to his house and collected me again and my eldest sister seemed to me like of the same age as his mother. And, when I eventually discovered his address, my school – the old boys' association - did not know where he was. But they eventually found his address in southern Germany. When eventually I was able to get his address his mother wrote - she was in a residential home by that time - his mother wrote to me in a very nice way.

Tape 4: 43 minutes 0 second

He was... I don't know whether he was guilty of anything. But he tried to accentuate he was in the forces and apparently somewhere in the east but not entirely in Russia. And he tried to convince me that he was also very much against what was going on. I remember him from his school days that he was a person who did not like authority. He was quite rude at times to his parents and he tried to make me understand that he was... on the one hand, he had to be very careful what he said. He was known as an objector. And I wasn't convinced that he spoke the truth when we had ordinary conversation. I thought there was something a little bit artificial about it. And I remember he took me to the airport in Stuttgart, and we were very early. We had a... we spent about an hour before in the café, in the airport refreshment room. And I wanted to ask him a question which I didn't dare to ask him actually for quite a while. But I thought: 'If I don't ask this question now before I fly back to London it will be too late.' And I said: 'Gerhard' – it was his name – 'tell me, why did you join the Hitler Youth in 1934?' And I had an answer which was totally unconvincing. 'Mussten wir ja.' 'We had to.' And I knew full well that that was a lie. But I had an idea, and I had this idea already before I met him again, that there was another reason why he joined that. He was a tall, rather lanky sort of fellow. And in physical exercises, which in Germany was very important, particularly after the Nazis came into power, he was... lacked every bit of skill in light athletics and I don't know what you call the gym work exercise or the horizontal bars which was important. He was

useless. And I felt his father was a retired professional officer of the First World War, a major, a retired major.

Tape 4: 46 minutes 10 seconds

And I don't think he was particularly friendly towards Jews. I met him hardly ever. I met his mother only; the father kept away. I have a feeling that he told his son: 'If you want to become a student and to study law you'd better do something before you will be rejected. You'd better join the Hitler Youth and make it prominent. Show the swastika.' I know full well that when he appeared at the school in the Hitler Youth uniform - brown uniform with a prominent swastika on one arm - that he was the only one who was dressed like that. And when he replied to me in the airport in Stuttgart 'Mussten wir ja' - 'We had to' - I didn't ask any more questions but I formed my own opinion of the answer. And I would still say now that his reports of military activities appeared to be rather forced, did not totally convince me. But I thought: 'well it's not my business.' I wanted to see him again because he is part of my background and I saw him again and, well, I thought I might see him again one day. But, when I wrote a Christmas card - must go back six, seven, eight years - I didn't get a reply. And when I telephoned somebody else answered at that number. And when I asked: 'Do you know of your predecessor on the telephone number - of Herr Gerhard Widde [?]?' 'No, never heard of him.' So I gave up. But I knew that he suffered badly from emphysema and every year he spent I think about a month in one of these North Sea islands which is supposed to be good. You get it on the German health service and they pay for it. And I remember also that he seemed hard up, although he was a doctor of law. I'm not sure whether he was employed or in private practice. But he seemed to me in poor condition both in dress - he pointed out that he was wearing his late father's shoes and even a coat. He was delighted that it fitted him. He took over his parents' flat when his mother moved to a residential home. He took me there. That was in a suburb of Stuttgart. And that was in a dreadfully dusty, dirty condition. Toilets were as if they hadn't been cleaned for years. It was pathetic.

Tape 4: 49 minutes 43 seconds

BL: But it was important for you to make that connection?

EH: Yes, yeah. Yes. Yes but they were a very...He was an only child incidentally. They had a beautiful house. As I said earlier on, I think his grandmother accompanied my parents on a holiday to the Baltic Sea. And she was a very charming lady. And so was his mother. And that was my background.

BL: Speaking of background, what for you now is the most important thing of your continental background?

EH: Well I am...this didn't come out in our conversations. I'm so deeply involved in the affairs of my late aunt who, although she lost her life in Germany in 1943, she is becoming almost, or appears to be becoming, a famous person now in Germany. There is a team of German women. They were all born post-war or practically post-war, who research the person, the life, and the work of my aunt. And I'm terribly deeply involved - I wouldn't like to say every day, but certainly almost every month - in affairs with my late aunt. Questions, this and that, articles, lectures I've given, a

street in Berlin is named after her. And to me this is, in a sense, still my involvement with Germany. It is of course still very painful to me.

BL: Do you have any message for somebody who might watch this film based on your experiences?

Tape 4: 52 minutes 8 seconds

EH: Make the best of the day while you are alive. And enjoy life if you can.

BL: Is there anything else I didn't ask you or you'd like to add?

EH: As you know my reminiscences are literally chronologically given. I didn't want to waste time in grouping subjects together. I went right from birth to, well, not yet death of course. And in fact I stopped at a certain arbitrary date which was when my children were small. I thought, well, my son, if he ever wants to write his reminiscences, he can carry on from there. I stopped in 1955, '56 something like that. I couldn't possibly go on. I wanted really, as I said before, to present a picture of what they missed because they didn't exist, including of course my early post-war career. But, otherwise, I would say we have gone through almost chronologically in a way up to a point. It's really more a matter of what you feel you have not adequately covered.

BL: One thing we haven't discussed is your involvement in the AJR.

Tape 4: 54 minutes 8 seconds

EH: I did say that I joined my cousin, Fritz Ury, in 1956 in the preparation of the Leo Baeck House. And that was the beginning of my involvement. I became a member of the House Committee. My cousin sadly died - he was relatively young at 68 - in 1975. I took over the Chairmanship. But I'm not a good Chairman. I prefer to be a backroom boy. And I've been quite happy to take over the Chairmanship for a limited time for particular purposes, but not appear available constantly because you have to be in a different position. I was pretty tied up with my work. And I was - in Werner Rosenstock's time - I was on the AJR Executive for many years until after my cousin died and I felt that I really can't afford the time. I must admit I'm not overly keen on AJR Executive meetings. They were a little bit on the... not entirely a waste of time, at the time. All this has changed now. It's now a management team and it's all changed. I don't know whether you know any other members of the AJR Executive? They mentioned the other day the death of the accountant, [Arnold] Horwell. He was a member, a trustee of the AJR, and a member of the Executive Committee when I was on the Executive.

BL: When were you on the Executive?

Tape 4: 56 minutes 20 seconds

EH: That was before my cousin died so that must have been before 1975. It's a long time ago. I was still working then. And I think there was a particular reason. Rosenstock wanted to make some alterations to the AJR offices and asked for my opinion on the planning aspect. Yes, but I was a bit concerned. I read in the AJR that

this particular person, Horwell, died. And they mentioned that he was very helpful as a Trustee to the AJR and this and that and so forth. But what they didn't mention was that he was, I think, also a solicitor and accountant. He negotiated with the Treasury the exemption from income tax of the German compensation pensions, which I thought was the most important thing which anybody could have ever done. I must admit I was intending to telephone the AJR head office in Stanmore and ask whether I made a mistake in the person. But I'm pretty sure it was Horwell - Ernst Horwell.

BL: Is there anything else we forgot you want to add now?

EH: I think we've pretty well filled the gap after the various sections of this interview.

BL: I'd like to say thank you very much for this interview.

EH: Well, I say thank you for your patience. I'm at times pretty slow and this is partly due to my age or perhaps to a large extent.

Tape 4: 58 minutes 29 seconds

End of Tape Four

TAPE 5

Photographs

Tape 4: 0 minute 6 seconds

BL: This is Tape Five. We're conducting an interview with Mr Ernest Heyman. Mr Heyman could you please describe this photograph?

EH: I'll try my best. It was taken apparently for my grandparents on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary on the 19th of June 1919.

BL: And who is in the picture?

EH: And in the picture is my eldest sister, Lisbet, and I sit on her the lap or who held me? – can't remember now. I can't see it very clearly. My sister, Lisbet, who was then... 1919...- sixteen years old. My sister ...11 years and I was approximately one-and-a-half, roughly one-and-a-half. I don't know where it was taken. It must have been taken by a photographer. (Sections of the above were inaudible)

EH: This photograph - this was taken – you are aware that I cannot see that far. It was taken of – is it my father or...

BL: Your parents.

EH: My parents. It was taken on the morning, so far as I recall, on the morning of my departure in 1936 for London via Amsterdam, of my parents sitting on the balcony in... That was 1936 so it must have been very early April – 1st, 2nd, 3rd of April and on the balcony of our apartment in Berlin in the Westfälischestr. 42.

Tape 5: 2 minutes 30 seconds

EH: This is, represents my father, taken I guess late 1938 – early 1939, although I must admit, since it's taken on the balcony, it might be more likely that it was taken in the summer/autumn 1938. I also guess that he set up a camera on a table or even on a tripod and arranged to take his own photograph somehow by a delayed time gadget.

EH: My mother, taken in Berlin I guess in 1938. No further comment.

EH: My Aunt, Else Ury, taken approximately 1938.

EH: Taken in Amsterdam in 1938, possibly 1939. My sister Lisbet and my little nephew Peter Yachman[?].

EH: Our wedding photograph taken in London on the 10th of July 1942.

EH: This snap was taken while in the British Liberation Army in North Germany in 1946.

EH: Larry and Janette with daddy in 1957.

Tape 5: 4 minutes 54 seconds

EH: Sister Else and Klaus in Ramat Gan, Israel in October 1988.

EH: This photograph was taken at our diamond wedding in 2002. It shows the wedding pair and Mick and Janette. Can't see anybody else.

BL: And the grandchildren?

EH: Oh the grandchildren are on there too. Plus the grandchildren, Robbie and Danielle.

BL: Yes please.

EH: Taken at our diamond wedding day, 2002, showing the bride and bridegroom and Larry and Kim.

EH: Lilo and Klaus July 1931, and a recent photograph of Ernest

BL: ...and Lilo. And when was the first photograph taken please?

EH: In 1931.

BL: Where – sorry?

EH: In the North Sea in Norderney. Norderney.

BL: Mr Heyman thank you very much again for this interview.

EH: Pleasure. Pleasure.

Tape 5: 7 minutes 6 seconds
End of photographs
End of Tape Five