

IMPORTANT

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Interviewee Surname:	Leavor
Forename:	Rudolf
Interviewee Sex:	Male
Interviewee DOB:	31 May 1926
Interviewee POB:	Berlin, Germany

Date of Interview:	12 February 2004
Location of Interview:	Bradford, West Yorkshire
Name of Interviewer:	Rosalyn Livshin
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**REFUGEE VOICES:
THE AJR AUDIO-VISUAL TESTIMONY ARCHIVE**

INTERVIEW: 49

NAME: RUDOLF OSCAR LEAVOR

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2004

LOCATION: BRADFORD, WEST YORKSHIRE

INTERVIEWER: ROSALYN LIVSHIN

TAPE 1

Tape 1: 0 minute 37 seconds

RL: If you can tell me first your name?

ROL: Rudi Leavor.

RL: And what was your name at birth?

ROL: Rudi Librowicz. We changed our name in 1956 or thereabouts.

RL: Did you have any other names?

ROL: Oscar, my second first name is Oscar, named after one of my ancestors. In fact, Rudolf is named after my grandfather, my paternal grandfather, he was called Rudolf.

RL: Did you have a Hebrew name?

ROL: Rafuel Ben Tzvi. My father was called Tzvi Ben Rafuel. Tzvi means a deer, D-double E-R. But he was also D-E-A-R.

RL: And where were you born?

ROL: I was born in Berlin, Germany.

RL: And when?

ROL: The 31st of May 1926.

RL: How old does that make you now?

ROL: 77.

RL: Your parents, where were they born?

ROL: My father was born in 1890 in Inowroclaw or Hohensalza, it was either a Polish name or a German name, depending on who was in charge at the time. Officially it was called the Polish Corridor. My mother was born in Munich in 1901 but she lived for most of her life, before she was

married, in Frankfurt am Main.

Tape 1: 2 minutes 11 seconds

RL: What was your mother's name?

ROL: Schwab. Louise Schwab.

RL: Looking at your father's family first, can you give me information about his family background?

ROL: His father was a very orthodox person, in fact, he was a Moyl for his community, and, in fact, the president of the Jewish community in Inowrocław. My father's mother was Berta, she was not particularly orthodox, but obviously fitted into the system. My grandmother, that's my father's mother, had six sisters and a brother, and they had families. My grandfather had, I think, two brothers but they disappeared from the scene somehow. My father said one of them emigrated to America and another one might have emigrated to Belize. But I'm not in touch with them, I have no idea where they are.

RL: And how many siblings did your father have?

ROL: My father had three sisters, Hede, Grete, and Elli.

RL: And what happened to them?

ROL: Hede married a colleague of my father's - my father was a dentist - and they emigrated to Palestine before the Second World War and stayed there, they had no children. Grete was not married, she died in Berlin after the war. And Elli married a gentile and they had two children, they're my cousins, and they're still in Berlin to this day and I see them every two or three years or so. Elli, having married a gentile, was her salvation, because they all four of them hid on Elli's husband's parents' farm near Berlin and were out of the way of the Nazis and survived.

Tape 1: 4 minutes 39 seconds

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

ROL: Oh, very orthodox. And when my parents set up home, they married in 1924, they had an orthodox household. But it was not what we would today call ultra-orthodox. It was orthodox and they had milchig and fleischig, and we went to synagogue as and when we could, we walked, the synagogue was within walking distance. And we certainly had a Seder and Rosh Hashanah and all the festivals. I was a fairly regular synagogue-goer, attender.

RL: Which synagogue did you attend?

ROL: This was a synagogue, which was founded in Grunewald, where we lived in Berlin, a suburb, about 1924 or thereabouts, in an old dance-hall, which was converted into a synagogue, and this was called the Grunewald Synagogue, about a mile from where we lived. The rabbi was Dr. Emil Bernhard Cohn, who was a bit of a controversial figure I understand, but he was given the job of rabbi. He gave excellent sermons, which even I, as a child, was able to understand. Sometimes they were a bit above my head but, on the whole, he had the knack of saying things in a fairly easy way, which as I say, I, as a child, could understand. He and his family emigrated to Los Angeles, where, unfortunately, in the 1950s, he was killed by a hit and run driver. But two daughters and a son survived. The son became a rabbi in New York but he succumbed to a bout of influenza. But I'm still in touch with his two daughters, one of whom lives in Los Angeles, and the other in San

Francisco.

RL: You said he was a bit of a controversial figure. Why was that?

ROL: I don't quite know but it had something to do with politics and Zionism. I think he was a great Zionist and, at the time, Zionism was not particularly fashionable. I think that's what the trouble was.

RL: Going back to your father's family, he was born in the Polish Corridor. When did he move over to Berlin?

ROL: Well not to Berlin, he studied dentistry in Munich and later in Berlin, yes. He studied to become a doctor, which he was in the First World War but, after the First World War, he branched out into dentistry and that was in Berlin then. And settled in Berlin in the early 1920s.

RL: You said he studied as a doctor first of all. What was his war-time experience?

ROL: Well, he was a doctor in the German army. And indeed he won the Iron Cross second class for some bit of bravery, I don't know what it was, he never talked about it. And, after the war, everybody who fought and was in the war, got a medal for being in the war.

RL: Did he ever talk about anything to do with the war?

ROL: Well, there was one experience when he was in an area where soldiers who had been injured in the battlefield were sorted out as to where they would be treated, whether they were a severe casualty, where they were to be taken, into a proper hospital or a lesser injury, which would qualify them to go to a local hospital, or treated on the spot, or indeed sent home if the injury was very severe. And he went round from bed to bed and looked at the injuries, rather than the faces or name-tags, and he looked at one person's injury, which was very light, and the face looked at him and said to him, "Don't you recognise me?" And it was the son of the local butcher in Inowrocław. And so they had a little bit of a discussion. Now, the injury meant that he could be treated on the spot, but my father sent him home, which caused a little bit of discussion at the time. So, after the war, when his mother sent him out to buy meat, which was scarce, he went to the butcher and he would get the best cuts.

Tape 1: 9 minutes 34 seconds

RL: Any other stories that he would tell?

ROL: No, I can't think of anything else. But I might mention a propos this, the fact that he was a doctor. He put his life on the line for Germany during the war. And looking ahead a little bit to the Nazi era, that wouldn't have saved him from the persecution that was eventually unleashed on the Jews.

RL: Do you know what kind of schooling he had as a child?

ROL: I have no idea. I can't tell you.

RL: What kind of Hebrew education?

ROL: Well, his Hebrew education must have been very good. Because he was very knowledgeable in Jewish history, he knew Hebrew fluently, he knew all the prayers, all the festivals, a very learned person, he took after his father, who was a very learned person, I understand. Of course, I didn't know my grandfather, my paternal grandfather, he died in 1911. I was born in 1926. So I never

knew him.

RL: Did his his mother continue to live in Inowrocław?

ROL: Yes, and of course her other sisters lived there. They migrated to Germany when my father settled there. Of course, they might have thought that he was going to come back there after his studies. But he didn't, he stayed in Berlin, which I think, on the whole, was a wise move. But they all followed, they all followed. There were six sisters altogether and one brother.

RL: And what happened to those sisters?

Tape 1: 11 minutes 25 seconds

ROL: Hulda married, but the marriage didn't last long, I understand that her husband was a toper, a drunkard and, after two years, they divorced. Tanta Eta, Aunt Eta, she never married. Aunt Siechen didn't marry. The youngest of the sisters was Fredericke, married and had two daughters, of whom one still lives in Israel today. Who else? Oh yes, Aunt Hanisch, she married and had two daughters, but her husband, Aunt Hanisch's husband, died shortly before the war. But the other three ladies, Aunt Hanisch and her two daughters, perished in Auschwitz.

Tape 1: 12 minutes 25 seconds

RL: The previous one that you mentioned, who had two daughters, did both of those daughters survive or just the one that still lives in Israel?

ROL: No. Where Fredericke, the youngest of my grandmother's sisters, she had the two daughters, of whom, as I said, one lives in Israel; the other stayed behind and married fairly late, about 1939, '38 or '39, and had a child, called Daniel. And those four, that is the daughter, her husband, Daniel, and her father, Artur, who is the husband of this youngest sister, they were taken away to Auschwitz and perished.

RL: What was the daughter called?

ROL: Evi. The little boy was called Daniel. Fortunately, one of my grandchildren is also called Daniel. Whenever I see him I think of the Daniel who died.

RL: Coming to your mother's family, can you tell me about her family background?

ROL: Well, my mother's father, whom I knew, was also very orthodox, and he was a recognised leader of the Jewish community in Frankfurt am Main. Her mother died fairly young, similar to my father's father, who died young. But my maternal grandfather emigrated to Palestine in 1934. He came to Berlin to say his goodbyes and then went on. And one little story, well, two little stories, I remember. He, like myself, was very interested in trains and, just at that time, a new train was built in Germany, called 'Der Fliegende Hollander', the Flying Dutchman, which was a diesel train, going from Berlin to Hamburg and back. And he said 'Let's go and see this train'. So, he took me on the underground and we went to the station, we knew when the train would arrive and we stood on the platform as this new train, which looked completely different to anything we'd see before, arrived very slowly into the station. But a more important aspect arose. At the time that he came to Berlin to say his goodbyes, it was the time of my mother's birthday. And I was very musical, and my music teacher, my piano teacher, had taught me a particular piece of music to play for my mother's birthday, and it happened to be on a Saturday. Now, my father's practice went on to Saturday morning but, after lunch, I sat at the piano and played this piece of music for my mother. And my grandfather was very cross. He said to my mother, in my presence, "You shouldn't have let the child play the piano on Shabbat". And she said, "Well, it's my birthday, he learnt the piece specially for me", you know, "it's not such a big deal". And there was a bit of a discussion. Well, of

course, in the end, my grandfather couldn't win the argument, I had played and that was a fact. And he rose from the table and he said, "Ich halte meinen Shabbat. Ihr könnt machen, was ihr wollt". That means, "I keep to the Sabbath. You can do what you want". And he walked out of the room. But we parted in good company, it was just on the spur of the moment he said this and, half an hour later, it was forgotten. But I remember that very well.

Tape 1: 16 minutes 30 seconds

RL: Was he emigrating on his own?

ROL: Yes. His wife had died. But his daughter was already there, that's my aunt, my mother's sister, Hennie, she was born in 1899 and, very rare for girls, especially Jewish girls, I suppose, she studied at university and got a degree in Chemistry. And she lived in Dresden, where she married the son of the Chief Rabbi of Dresden. Her husband was called Leo Winter, and her father-in-law was called, I can't remember his first name, he was called Leo Winter. And they had one child, who is my cousin, and who still lives in Israel now, Gabriele. And they had emigrated before, and lived in Haifa or Tel Aviv, I don't know where, and he went out there in 1934 to join them. He died of old age eventually. But, even there, he was a respected member of the Jewish community, a very learned Melamed, teacher, learned person.

Tape 1: 17 minutes 40 seconds

RL: Was that side of the family Zionistic?

ROL: I don't think so, I think it was just an escape, but they went anyway, so I suppose, by definition, they would be called Zionist.

RL: How many siblings did your mother have?

ROL: Just the one sister.

RL: Just the one sister. And did your mother ever think of emigrating at that stage?

ROL: Not in 1933 or '34, but something happened later, which prompted them to do so, to emigrate anyway.

RL: Do you know what kind of education your mother had?

ROL: No formal education, apart from the normal school, but she didn't go to university. But she immersed herself in social work. There was a very famous Jewish social worker in Frankfurt, called Bertha Pappenheim, and she joined her group. And I can relate one story, it was part of my mother's jobs to fetch girls, who became pregnant, when they shouldn't have become pregnant, to Frankfurt and live in Bertha Pappenheim's home. And she would go on the train, and they would, she would come home, and, on the train, people would give her funny looks, because the girls that would be with her on the train was obviously pregnant, and they would throw her funny looks to say, "oh yes". But that was her job and she did it.

RL: Was this before she was married?

ROL: Yes.

RL: What else did she do?

ROL: Just that, it was a full-time job. No, she did other social work; it wasn't just bringing pregnant

girls home.

RL: Do you know what kind of Hebrew education she would have had?

ROL: Oh, very little I think, even though her father was very orthodox. She could read Hebrew, but she herself wasn't particularly orthodox, I mean, not very orthodox, she was orthodox, as people were in those days, it was the natural way of things.

RL: Do you know how she met your father?

ROL: Her mother and she, my mother, went for a holiday in Baden Baden, in the Black Forest, in Germany, and my father happened to be there as well, on holiday, and my mother sat on the promenade, on a bench, and my father took a walk along the promenade and saw her and, when he'd done a few yards, he turned around and looked at her again and walked backwards and forwards a few times, and I suppose must have started a conversation. And when my mother told her mother that she had met this young man, her mother said, "I'm sure you looked at him with longing eyes", implying that she shouldn't have done that, but she said no, she hadn't done.

RL: And when did they marry?

ROL: In 1924.

Tape 1: 21 minutes 6 seconds

RL: Were you the first child?

ROL: I was the first-born, yes.

RL: And after marriage, where did they live?

ROL: In Grunewald, they rented a flat in Grunewald, and my father's practice was in one of the rooms and the dining room served as a waiting room during working hours and we had our meals there at other times.

RL: What had made him to turn from being a doctor to becoming a dentist?

ROL: No idea. I don't know. I don't know.

RL: What is your earliest memory as a child?

ROL: Probably when I was four and my fourth birthday was coming up. I often think about this, that's why I'm so ready to be able to recall it: my mother said, "What do you want for your birthday?" And I said, "I'd like a tram, a model of a tram". And she said, "What colour do you want it?" And I said, 'Yellow and orange'. And so, on my birthday, they produced this model of a tram about half a meter long, made of wood, and it was painted in yellow and orange, and I was thrilled to bits about this and it must have been my first conscious experience that I lived.

Tape 1: 22 minutes 49 seconds

RL: And you were still living in the same flat?

ROL: Yes, until we emigrated, yes.

RL: What area of Berlin was it, what kind of area was it?

ROL: Well, if I say it was a fashionable area, people ask me, "What is fashionable?" It's a better kind of area to the southwest of the centre.

RL: Can you describe the apartment?

ROL: The apartment itself, coming from the front door was the entrance hall, and my father's practice would be the room on the left immediately, then there would be the waiting room-cum-dining room, and then the corridor would make a kink, a right-angled corner to the right, and all the other rooms would come off of this lengthy corridor, which I'll describe later, as something happened, and then there'd be the kitchen and a small room and a large room for my sister and myself and my parents' bedroom.

RL: Did you have help in the house?

ROL: Yes, we had a maid, a Christian maid, who lived in. Her family came from Poland, well, no, it became Polish later, after the war. It was Germany and the town was called Schneidenmühl, and it did become Polish later, and the town was renamed Pila. And she was a country girl, I suppose, very loyal, and she helped in the house. But, when the Nuremberg Laws were passed, she was forbidden to remain in the house because my father was a danger to her, being Jewish, and she was Christian, and so she had to leave, and there were tears all round when she left.

RL: What floor was the flat on?

ROL: The second floor.

RL: And how big was the block?

ROL: The block had probably four floors altogether. The fact that it was on the second floor was a bit of a disadvantage because when I had a-, I was given a bicycle for one of my birthdays and had to carry this up and down two floors and the bicycle was heavy for a small boy.

Tape 1: 25 minutes 4 seconds

RL: And what kind of people were your neighbours?

ROL: I didn't really know them, and my parents didn't know them either. They were middle class professionals. Oh yes, on the first floor below us was a professor, I can't remember of which subject, but he was a professor and had at least one daughter.

RL: Did you have any Jewish neighbours?

ROL: No. Not in the house, no.

RL: And what about in the neighbourhood?

ROL: I think there was a couple on the other side of the street, who were Jewish, the Sterns, but we were not particularly friendly. We were friends, but not on visiting terms.

RL: Was your father active at all in the community in Berlin?

ROL: In the synagogue, I don't think he was on the committee, not that I would know of, but he certainly helped on occasions. But he was a member of the B'nai B'rith Lodge in Berlin and, in fact, he was the last president before it was dissolved in 1937. And my mother was the treasurer of

the ladies' lodge. Do you want me to expand a little bit on this?

RL: Yes please.

Tape 1: 26 minutes 30 seconds

ROL: This was 1936 or thereabouts. And the maid, this Erna, was getting me ready for school one morning before my parents got up, this was a routine, and the doorbell went, it must have been half past seven, a quarter to eight, which was unusual, patients normally don't come at that time. And the maid went to the door and two men came in and said they wanted to speak to my parents. And she had no choice but to say, "Well, they're asleep in the bedroom". And they said, "OK, we'll go and see them there". And, as they came up the corridor, I happened to come out of my room and, as it was the custom in those days, if you saw somebody you'd shake hands, and I shook hands with them and said, "Guten Morgen", and they took my hand and said "Guten Morgen", and this was routine, it was nothing special. Anyway, I went to the kitchen, to have my breakfast, or whatever, and these men went into my parents' bedroom, who were still in bed, and told them to get up, and come with them. The maid saw what was going on and hurried me off to school. So, what happened then, I only learnt later, when I came back, these were two men were from the Gestapo, Geheime Staatspolizei, the Secret Police, and they arrested my parents to take them down to the lodge, to the B'nai B'rith Lodge headquarters, which was in the centre of Berlin, Kleiststrasse Zehn, Kleiststrasse ten. And, when they got there, the other members of the lodge were already there, or some came later, and they were all lined up in a row, standing, and nothing happened. There was no food, no water and, when somebody wanted to go to the toilet, they had to raise their hand, and sometimes permission was given to go to the toilet, sometimes not. And one of the men standing in this row was Rabbi Doctor Leo Beck, who was head of the Rabbinical Institute in Berlin, a very learned, very respected, very revered rabbi, who survived the war and later came to London. In the afternoon, I think the Germans must have been waiting for orders because nothing happened whilst the people were standing there, they were told to disperse, to go home, and not to congregate outside. Now, they knew that my mother was treasurer of the ladies' lodge, and she had been told when they left the flat to take the money with her, which she did, I don't think it amounted to very much, perhaps in the English equivalent a few pounds, which they forced her to hand over, and she had the presence of mind to ask for a receipt, which they gave. Anyway, they came home, and that was the impetus which made them decide to leave, it was time to leave, it was a red light.

Tape 1: 29 minutes 39 seconds

ROL: But after the war, when Konrad Adenauer instituted a system of restitution for Jewish people who survived, my mother put in this receipt, which she kept, and she was one of the first people to receive this money and, in fact, she handed it over to the Leo Beck Lodge in London. And they know about it now because I spoke about it fairly recently with one of the committee members and reminded them of this. But, after that, my parents - my father came to England five times, my mother three times - they went from one consulate to another in Berlin, to try and get entry visas into different countries, but England seemed to be the most likely place to go to. And so England it became.

RL: We'll get on to that.

ROL: Yes.

RL: Did the lodge in Berlin have a name?

ROL: Yes, Rabbi Akiva Eger Lodge, and thereby hangs a tale as well, because very good friends of my parents were called Eger, and Mr. Herbert Eger was a direct descendant of this Rabbi Akiva Eger. And this, well, the Egers, the couple, came over before the war to become wardens of the

hostel that the Jewish community founded in Bradford for Jewish boys who came over without parents.

Tape 1: 31 minutes 14 seconds

RL: So that was their Lodge activities. Was your mother involved in any other organisation or any other kind of work?

ROL: Not that I know of, not that I know of, no.

RL: What would they do for entertainment, if they wanted to go out?

ROL: Well, they would go to concerts, or the theatre, or, in those days film was something new, at first silent films, and then, even newer, talkies, and they would entertain people at home, they would go to other people's houses for dinner. Of course the maid would be at home to look after the children, my sister and myself. And they'd go to balls. I remember my mother and father going to one particular ball, my mother had a very beautiful dress on, it would be very unfashionable now, it was white with silver sequins, and I said to her, "You look lovely". I was only five or six, paying her a compliment.

RL: And what about holidays?

ROL: Yes, we would go on holiday. Mostly to the seaside, to the Baltic coast, the Baltic Sea coast, there was one place called Arendsee that we went to two or three times. This Eger family, whom I mentioned earlier, they had a little house by the sea, in Kölpingsee, also on the Baltic coast, and we went there once or twice as their guests. Those were the only family holidays I can remember. 1935/'6, and '7, I was sent away to a children's holiday home near Dresden, where my aunt had lived, in the Harz Mountains. That happened twice, I suppose they, I don't know, perhaps they could not afford to go on holiday altogether, or, for whatever reason, I was sent away to this children's home for two or three weeks.

RL: In terms of social circles, who did they mix mainly with? Were they Jewish people, non-Jewish people?

Tape 1: 33 minutes 51 seconds

ROL: Well, they certainly mixed with both, there were Jewish people, non-Jewish people. There was one particular couple, who was not Jewish, with whom they became very very friendly indeed, and she became my music teacher. She was a pianist, and played the viola, and she taught me the piano. And she was one of the influences on my being musical, apart from my parents themselves, they were very musical. I can say that this Christian couple were perhaps their closest friends, and they got on very well, and they had three sons, of whom the younger one still lives in Munich today, I'm in touch with him.

RL: Did your parents play any instruments?

ROL: Oh yes, my father played the piano very well, exceedingly well. My mother sang soprano. She didn't have a very powerful voice, but a very good voice and they liked doing music together, and of course that was the other big influence on me, liking music so much. My father played sonatas of Schubert, Beethoven, all the Chopin pieces, and, whenever a Chopin piece is played now, I would know it by heart. He played the most difficult pieces of Schubert and Beethoven with no difficulty at all.

RL: Did he ever play publicly?

ROL: No, no. He played for himself. I don't think he even played for guests and visitors when they came over. He just played for the family. And I'd listen to him. Sometimes I would sit under the piano and listen.

Tape 1: 35 minutes 39 seconds

RL: And what did you like to play?

ROL: Well, I learnt the piano, as I said, but I was very lazy, and I didn't like practising, I liked to play without practising, and I didn't practise, possibly because I knew my piano teacher was a friend of the family, and I knew she wouldn't chide me, but anyway I didn't practise. I then took up the violin because I thought perhaps I could do better with the violin but that was even worse. I didn't practise the violin either, and so I had to give those up. And I knew I had a bit of a voice, but that only came later, the voice bit.

RL: Did you belong to any children's groups or clubs in Berlin?

ROL: In Berlin? No, I can't recollect that I did, no.

RL: Tell me about the school that you went to.

ROL: When I was six, I joined an elementary school, the Dreizehnte Volksschule in Schmagendorf, that's the thirteenth school in the district called Schmagendorf, where I had a very happy time. I was there for four years, from 1932 to 1936. My first schoolteacher, my class teacher, was a Fräulein Rage, Miss Rage, and, when Hitler came to power, she had a nervous breakdown. Now, whether this was because of Hitler coming to power, or whether this was because she was already of a disposition to have a nervous breakdown, I don't know, but my father always said it was because of Hitler and the Nazis coming to power. Anyway, the class teacher for the next three years was a man called Butske, who was, like Fräulein Rage, very kind to everybody, including myself and the three other Jewish boys in the class. Perhaps even more so, knowing that we were Jewish, he went even more so out of his way to be kind to us. And this happened all the way up to 1936, when I left.

RL: How did you get on with the other children in the class?

ROL: On the whole, very well. I was never a socialiser, so I didn't make friends easily. I made friends with the other two Jewish boys in the class. In fact, there was a third Jewish boy, but we didn't know about him until very much later. And I was friendly with those, but not with-, yes, I was fairly friendly with two or three others, yes, who were not Jewish, and there was never any trouble, except on one occasion: I was probably seven or eight, and I came home, I walked fairly quickly, and, as soon as I got home, my mother said would I go out and fetch some meat, some mince meat, from the butcher? And, as I went out, two of the other boys who were in my class, not Jewish, met me, they were just coming home, so we stopped for a moment, and they said, "Where are you going?" And I said, "I'm fetching some mince meat". Now, the German for mince meat is 'Hackefleisch'. So, immediately, one of the other boys gave me a plaster across the cheek and said, "That is 'Backefleisch'". He was making a pun on the word of course. And he gave me a swipe across the face. Now, it was completely unexpected, so, it hurt anyway, but it hurt more because he was one of my classmates, with whom I was on speaking terms, not particularly friendly, but friendly. Anyway, it hurt that he should have done that to me, knowing that I was Jewish. Anyway, compared to what happened later, this was nothing, nothing at all.

Tape 1: 39 minutes 49 seconds

ROL: Something else happened whilst I was at school. No, this was when I went to the Jewish school, so I'll leave that for the Jewish school. Yes, the other story is the indoctrination that the Nazis had of the children. I would be 8 or thereabouts, and the teacher said, this Butske, this kind teacher, said, "When you get home, ask your parents to bring five pfennig the next day". He didn't say what it was for. I went home to my parents and said, "We have to bring five pfennig". As I didn't know anyway, when they said, "What's it for?", I said "I don't know". So, they gave me five pfennig, which wasn't a great deal of money, and the next day the teacher produced a diamond-shaped board, a good meter high, shaped perhaps like a kite, and, on this board, there were hundreds of little holes, and, on the desk, on his desk, were hundreds of little nails, which were coloured red, white and black, and the boxes were numbered one, two and three. And some of these holes were numbered 1, 2, and 3 in fields. And each boy would come up and pay his five pfennig and select any colour that he liked from those three. And, with a little hammer, which he was provided, he would hammer these nails in the relevant hole. And, when it was all done, this diamond showed a red field with a white circle in the middle, and a black swastika in the middle of the white circle. And the teacher had to explain that this was the new emblem, the new symbol of the political party that was in power. Well, for an 8 year-old boy, it made no impression whatsoever. I should have said that when I came up to give my money he said, "You don't have to do this". He sent me back to my seat. But, as I say, the significance of this only came later, and they were trying to indoctrinate children into the system. Another thing that happened there, which showed the kindness of the teachers: twice, about twice a week, the Jewish children of the whole school would have a Jewish lady come in to give them religious education. And, for that, the school provided a room, which was half way between two of the floors of the school. All the classrooms would be on one floor, on the second floor and then, in between, there'd be one room that went off the staircase. And, on this particular occasion, I missed the floor. Instead of going to the room between the second and third floor where the lesson was, I landed at the room between the first and second floors. As soon as it happened, I realised what had happened, and, just at that moment, the Deputy Headmaster of the school, called Herr Sy, came up the stairs, leading a string of pupils behind. They were going somewhere or other. And he saw this single boy standing by the door, which was locked, and he stopped the line of pupils, and he said fairly gruffly, he said, "Where are you going?" So I explained that I was going to the Jewish lesson, that I'd missed the floor that I was just about to go upstairs to the next floor. And, as soon as he realised what the situation was, he said, "Well, OK, run along then". And that was that. He changed completely from being a gruff Prussian person to a kind person, who wanted to show that he was kind to Jewish people. I appreciated that. That I realised at the time that this was the situation.

Tape 1: 44 minutes 21 seconds

RL: And, you know, the story of the swastika, had any kind of indoctrination been introduced into the content of lessons, for instance in history lessons or anything like that?

ROL: No. No. I don't recall having a history lesson at the elementary school at all. Reading, writing, a bit of geography perhaps. I don't recall learning any history.

RL: And at what point did you have to leave that school?

ROL: Well, when I reached ten I had to leave anyway because the school finished teaching children at the age of ten, but I couldn't continue there anyway or any local school because Jewish children were not allowed to go to a non-Jewish school. So my parents chose the Große Hamburger Strasse School in the centre of Berlin, which was a very good Jewish secondary school, and I went there for eighteen months.

RL: And what can you tell me about that school?

Tape 1: 45 minutes 42 seconds

ROL: Well, I used to have to go by subway train. One little story that comes to mind is that, as it was a Jewish school, there was no school on Saturdays, but we did go to school on Sundays, and I had my satchel on my back, went through the barrier to show my pass, to go on the platform, and the ticket collector called me back and said, "Hey, where are you going?" I said, "I'm going to-" - because he saw the satchel, which was unusual - I said, "I'm going to school". He said, "Only Jews go to school on a Sunday". Now, that hurt as well, of course, I sort of walked on. Of course, compared to what happened later, it was nothing. But it was a sign of the times. But I was very happy in the Jewish school, it was a, when I say a different milieu, of course it was, but I was happy in the elementary school as well. So it was no change as it were.

RL: Who was the head of the Jewish school?

ROL: A man called Stern, Dr. Stern, whose nickname was Bobby. Now, his deputy was a man called Feige, which, unfortunately, in German, means coward, but I don't think he was a coward, but, anyway, that was his name. And he was half-Jewish and, during the time that I was there, Bobby Stern resigned and made Feige the head because he thought it would be better for public relations to have a man at the head of the school, who was not fully Jewish but half Jewish.

RL: What kind of Hebrew tuition did you have?

ROL: Well, at the school there were certainly lessons both in Jewish tuition and Hebrew, and the festivals, so that was good.

RL: Had you done any Hebrew tuition before?

ROL: Oh yes, at the synagogue, from Doktor Korn, the Rabbi, and he had assistants as well, in the synagogue. So I was quite good at reading Hebrew that was no problem.

RL: How often did you attend those classes?

ROL: At the synagogue? Perhaps once a week, yes, I think once a week, something like that.

RL: And were they mixed classes?

ROL: Oh yes, yes, this was at the synagogue. Yes. Yes. I remember one story I can tell: one of the teachers at the Jewish school was a man called Amolsky and he was terribly crippled, so much so that he couldn't use public transport to go to school, nor could he walk, and he always arrived by taxi. Now, my train from my station, where this happened with the ticket collector, the trains there ran at eight past eight in the morning, and at eighteen past eight, and at twenty eight past eight. Now, the eight past eight train got me to school too early and the twenty eight past eight too late and the eighteen was just right. Now, on this particular day, I missed the eight eighteen, I had to wait for the eight twenty eight. So I got to the other station and then ran all the way from the station to the school and, just as I arrived, this Amolsky arrived by taxi, and he took us, he was going to take us for the first lesson. Now, I could have run up the stairs and taken my place long before he went up the stairs himself. But I just couldn't do that. So I helped him on the stairs, for which he thanked me a thousand times. And, of course, I got to the classroom late. He would have given anybody who came late a black mark, and I can't for the life of me remember whether he gave me a black mark, I suppose he didn't. But I remember that to this day.

Tape 1: 50 minutes 6 seconds

RL: Did the school put on any plays or concerts?

ROL: No, but my parents were members of the so-called Kulturbund, a cultural organisation in Berlin, and for one of the performances for Hanukkah, now it must have been 1936 because for Hanukkah '37 we were already in England, they arranged a Hanukkah party in the theatre, a pantomime with children producing and singing, dancing. And the daughter of this Mr. and Mrs. Eger, who were very close to my parents, and I, sang the song from Hansel and Gretel by Humperdinck, "Bruderchen, komme tanz mit mir" – "Brother, come dance with me". We sang that as a duet. And it's just a few weeks ago that this girl, who still lives in Harrogate, near here, sent me a copy of the programme of that performance where she and I are mentioned. And, from this programme, I gather that my sister sang a song as well. If I was eight or nine, she must have been five, or thereabouts, so she must have been very young when she performed her song.

RL: What was your sister's name?

ROL: Winnie. Well, the anglicised version is Winnie, after my mother's mother, who is called Ervine, so my sister was called Laura Ervine, which, anglicised, shortened to Winnie, which is how she's known now. She lives in Golders Green in London.

Tape 1: 51 minutes 51 seconds

RL: Is that the only concert that you participated in?

ROL: As far as I remember, yes, that's right.

RL: What do you remember about the celebration of festivals in your home?

ROL: Well, we certainly had Seder for Pesach both evenings, to which we would invite relatives, and Rosh Hashanah, we would invite relatives. My grandmother, I should have said that my grandmother and her sisters lived about a mile away from where we lived, and my grandmother came to our house on Erev Shabbat, every Friday evening, as a visitor. And she walked all the way and walked all the way back. So she was a weekly visitor. The other aunts and visitors would come on special occasions. My father would lead the Seder by himself in Hebrew. Later, when I take the Seder, a lot of it will be taken in English. And it's only then that I realised what it's all about. But that's another subject.

RL: You mentioned how in elementary school you had to attend on Saturdays. Did that cause a problem?

ROL: Yes. No, not at all. There was no school on Saturday morning, and I usually went to synagogue. I was a more frequent attender than my father, who worked of course. I used to walk to synagogue myself.

RL: I remember you mentioned that for one Rosh Hashanah you made a special Rosh Hashanah card for your parents.

ROL: Now, it was a custom in Germany, and I haven't come across it in this country, that children would make a card for their parents for Rosh Hashanah. It would be a size A4 and would be pre-processed and all the child would have to fill in were the names of their parents and themselves, and perhaps a little word, like a birthday card that's pre-printed. And, on this occasion, it was the last Rosh Hashanah before we emigrated; I decided that I would make one myself because it was very important. And the message I was going to write was very important. So I made it myself and I still have it, except that I've sent it to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, but I've kept copies myself.

RL: There's a copy on the chair next to you.

ROL: Yes. I'll find it.

RL: I think I'd like to show it and if you could maybe read it out to us as well?

ROL: Yes. This is the front of it.

RL: What are the numbers on it?

ROL: It's the year 5698, the Jewish year.

RL: And what did that correspond to?

ROL: 1937, it must have been, because it was the last Rosh Hashanah we spent there. This is the second page, again 5698, "L'Shanah Tovah Tikatevu", "An meine lieben Eltern" - To my dear parents - "Rosh Hashanah". This is just the same and inside I wrote, and this is the German: "O Herr, lasse das neue Jahr, gerade dieses Mal, mit reichlichem Segen über uns kommen, und mögest Du, O Ewiger, unsere Verwandten schützen, während unserer Abwesenheit. Euer euch liebender Sohn, Rudolf". I'll translate it first and then make a comment about it: "Oh Lord, let the New Year, especially this time, spread over us a plentiful blessing, and may you, Oh Eternal One, protect our relatives while we are away. Your loving son, Rudolf". Now, this blessing, if you like, was extremely formal, words that I sort of picked up from going to synagogue, from prayer-books. I was able to formulate my own little wish in the sense of a prayer and the importance that I gave to it is that I signed it with my proper first name, Rudolf, and nobody ever called me Rudolf, parents, friends, relatives, but, on this occasion, that's what I put.

RL: Can you show it to us, the German?

ROL: The German, yes. Now, unfortunately, the wish that I expressed wasn't fulfilled completely because several of my relatives perished in concentration camps.

RL: We'll just stop here because this tape is about to end.

Tape 1: 57 minutes 37 seconds

TAPE 2

Tape 2: 0 minute 13 seconds

RL: Now, you were just telling me about a family tree that you had to draw up at elementary school. Can you tell me a bit more about that?

ROL: Yes. One day, the teacher, this very kind Herr Butske, distributed blank forms for the parents of the children to fill in their family tree, and the idea was for the Germans to find out if any of the children had Jewish blood in their ancestors, because one of the lines said "What is the religion" and it had spaces for names and where people were born and where they died and when they died, but one indicated what the religion was. So I took this home and my father duly filled it in. I must have taken it back to school but we were given it back to take home, it wasn't kept. I don't think they had photocopies in those days. At any rate, it came back to the home, and it's here. And this is the original family tree going back to my great grandparents on both sides, which of course has proved invaluable in tracing my relatives. On the front it says "Family tree for Rudolf Oscar Librowicz" and it is complete, up to my great grandparents. It even mentions my sister, born in 1930.

RL: You were going to say something about your paternal grandfather?

ROL My paternal grandfather was called Rudolf, after whom I am called Rudolf, he was the owner of a shoe-shop and, in fact, he supplied the German Army in the First World War with boots. This is in Inowrocław, and I have a receipt that he would give people when they bought something, a blank receipt, with the name of his shoe-shop and his own name on the top, and indeed a picture of the shop, in the street where his shop was. Now, the father of my grandmother, he was called Louis Markus, he died a year after I was born, so he knew me, and when, well, some time between the time I was born and that he died, he said, it was told to me, "Ich hab ihn wenigstens noch kriechen sehen". It means "At least I have seen him crawl". That's one of the sentences that's been passed down through the family. Now, I've visited several graves where these people are buried in Berlin, but perhaps we'll come to that later, in Weissensee Cemetery.

Tape 2: 3 minutes 39 seconds

RL: Now this was done in your elementary school. You said you had a little story about that.

ROL: After I'd left elementary school and was attending the Jewish school, I visited the area where the elementary school was, not to visit the school but for some errand or other, and by chance I met my late class teacher, this Herr Butske, and we met in the street and of course I stopped and talked to him and he asked how was I getting on and everything, and an acquaintance of his came past and, as he came past, this friend gave the Hitler salute, "Heil Hitler", which Herr Butske should have returned. But he went like that with his hand, to say he wasn't going to give it whilst he was talking to me, which I thought was very decent of him. Because this was 1936 or '37, he could have been arrested for doing what he did. But he did it anyway.

Tape 2: 4 minutes 48 seconds

RL: Have you any idea what happened to him?

ROL: No. I tried to trace him after the war, but unsuccessfully. I looked down the name Butske in the telephone directory and rang one or two people, but they all said they were no relation. They said they had been telephoned before by ex-pupils, but there was no relation. Well, by now, he would certainly be dead.

RL: Just coming back to your love of music, when did that start or how did that start?

ROL: Well, I said earlier that my parents had a great influence on my love for music because they were both very musical. My father played the piano, my mother sang, so I often heard both piano music and songs being sung. And the other influence is this Christian lady, who was also a good friend of my parents. But the other influence was this musical box, which had been handed down to the family from my father's side, which is here, and which I've had renovated only recently. If I can put it on my lap, this is what it looks like. And I liked playing this. Certainly, when I was ill, I would have it in my bed, when I was ill in bed, I would have it on my lap and I'd play it endlessly. And, if you like, I'll play it for you. This is the mechanism for winding it up.

Tape 2: 6 minutes 40 seconds

[Plays the music box]

ROL: Now, it plays six tunes, which I know inside out, front and backwards, and I sometimes play it now and it's a great joy to me too. And these tunes, and I don't know what they are, no idea what they are, also instilled in me also this love of music. I just loved listening to this. This was made [unfolds piece of paper and reads]: "This antique musical box, made in Geneva, by Aimee Rivenne, about 1880, and distributed by the National Fine Art Association in London". So, it's now two

hundred and twenty three years old, one hundred and twenty three years old. Oh dear, my arithmetic!

Tape 2: 8 minutes 19 seconds

RL: And, besides those influences, the teacher, was there? At the Jewish school?

ROL: Yes, the teacher at the school, where I was for eighteen months, was called Alfred Löwi. He was of very short stature, which gave him a slight inferiority complex, which, in turn, bred a slight superiority complex, and he would be a very strict teacher, and would lose his temper very quickly, which only happened when boys - there were no girls in my class at that time - when boys wouldn't sing the right notes. He would sometimes erupt into a fury. But he taught us to sing. Now, I discovered later that he told one of these great-aunts of mine that I was his best pupil. But there was another boy who also sang very well. And, when he asked for someone to demonstrate how a particular tune should go, he would ask either this other boy, called Gunter Unger, or myself, to show the others how it was done. Unfortunately, this other boy, who, with his parents and brother, emigrated to New Zealand, he also studied dentistry and, shortly before he was going to join his father's practise, he went out on a sailing boat with twenty other boys, and a storm sprang up and the boat was crashed against cliffs and they all perished. But I, only two or three years ago, got in touch again with his brother and we've met. He has come to England and Germany. But I found out after the war that this Alfred Löwi was transported to Auschwitz, where he perished. Now, if I can just go forward a little bit, this school had to close in 1942, the Germans closed it down. But the building survived any bombing or the fighting in Berlin. And the Russians, who were in charge of East Berlin, it was in East Berlin, used it as a book-store, they sold all sorts of different things. But it wasn't damaged at all. Now, when the wall came down in 1989, of course the Western powers found that this school was still standing and the Jewish community decided to open the school again as a secondary school, which they did in 1992. Curiously enough, they chose a non-Jewish headmaster, Dr. Uwe Mull, who was a very good headmaster, and I thought that this was very, very good that a Jewish school in Germany should choose a non-Jewish headmaster. At any rate, they found that not only was the school building undamaged, but the piano, which was used by the teacher, this Alfred Löwi, was still there. Now, that needed some restoration, because it had been played by people with other than musical ability, so that was restored. And, although I didn't go to the opening of the school, I went a couple of years later to a reunion of old boys, and there must have been twenty-five or thirty old boys, from all over the world, who came to the school for this reunion.

Tape 2: 12 minutes 14 seconds

I went on another occasion, and played on this piano - I don't play the piano well, as I mentioned earlier - but I sang. And I sang a Schubert song, "Das Heideröslein", "The Heather Rose", and played a few chords on the piano, so at least I could say that I played on the piano that my teacher played on. Now, some years later, about 1995 or thereabouts, I thought it might be a good idea to name the music room after the teacher, Alfred Löwi. A friend of mine, who actually lived in Berlin after the war, on the Eastern side, in the Eastern sector, I said to him it would be nice if we could find a photograph of this Alfred Löwi. And he found somebody in New York, whom I also knew, and he indeed had a photograph, a usable photograph, of Alfred Löwi, which was sent to Berlin. And a lady artist drew a photograph, drew a painting, should I say, of Alfred Löwi. And the room was going to be named the Alfred Löwi Room, with this painting hanging. And, shortly before that, a lady rang up the school and said, "I am Alfred Löwi's niece". And she lived in Hamburg and was herself an Auschwitz survivor. In fact, she was chair-person of the German Auschwitz Survivors' Association. And they promptly invited her to come and open the room, which she did. Now, unfortunately, I couldn't come, for whatever reason, but I've been since and seen the room with the plaque, "Alfred Löwi Musikzimmer" and I'm rather proud of that.

Tape 2: 14 minutes 27 seconds

RL: Now, coming back to Berlin in the thirties, were your parents interested in politics, in the political situation?

ROL: Not at all. They were integrated into German society and I don't think politics came into it. If they did discuss politics, it wasn't done in my presence. I was young at a time when they might have discussed politics, not in my presence. They would talk about the situation of the Jews and the fact that the Nazi party was anti-Semitic, basically. But, apart from that, I don't think, well, there was only one party in power anyway. There was no opposition as such, no official opposition.

RL: Did they read any newspapers?

ROL: They got, I think, the Frankfurter Allgemeine, as far as I remember, but I certainly didn't read the papers, but they would have done, yes.

RL: Did they have a radio?

ROL: Yes, we had a radio, which we only acquired about 1934/35, something like that. And I happen to remember the first broadcast that we listened to, which was from the harbour in Hamburg, where a ship siren was broadcast, and it was a great event that we could hear this in Berlin a couple of hundred miles away. Yes.

Tape 2: 16 minutes 7 seconds

RL: Living in Berlin, did you see much activity of the military and Hitler?

ROL: Yes, to the extent that the SA, the Brown Shirts, and the SS, the Black Shirts, would march occasionally on the main road, quite near our house, and they looked quite fierce. And they had strong uniforms, boots that went up to their knees, armbands, leather belts, possibly truncheons tucked under their belts. And they would march along, singing songs. And they would put the fear of God into me. The first, once or twice this would happen, the first times, this was an event to go and see. Later on, when they marched, I retreated into the flat and didn't want to know. It was frightening, just to see them marching.

RL: How often did it happen?

ROL: Oh, I can't remember. Every few weeks, or perhaps every few months. I can't remember.

RL: Was it dangerous at that time?

ROL: Not in 1937, no.

RL: Did you hear of any shops being daubed?

ROL: No, that came later, in 1938, with Kristallnacht.

RL: Nothing before that?

ROL: No. No. I can remember a little story when I went to the hairdresser, to have my hair cut. I always went to the same one. And, as I was having my hair cut, a customer came in, and he gave the Hitler salute. And the hairdresser saw the reflection of this man in the mirror. And he said, "Oh you gave the Hitler salute with your left arm". And he said, "No, I gave it with the right arm". And I think he said something to the effect of, "Only Jews give the salute with the left arm". One of those funny situations.

RL: Did you notice a change in attitude of the people around you at this time?

ROL: Not in 1937, no. On the contrary, I was at a party of one of my non-Jewish friends from the elementary school when, for some reason, some of the boys were a bit rough with me, I don't think because I was Jewish but, anyway, they were, perhaps they didn't like my face, or whatever, and I started to cry. And the mother of the boy, at whose party I was, took me on her lap and cradled me and comforted me, you know, "Don't cry, it's not so bad". I happened to know she was Catholic, I just knew some people were Jewish and some people were Catholic, and I happened to know this boy was a Catholic. So no, we left in November 1937, and I didn't notice anything untoward.

Tape 2: 19 minutes 35 seconds

RL: And your father's dentistry practise, did that suffer in any way up to the point of leaving?

ROL: Not at all. On the contrary, he had several patients, who were officers in the army and the police, and I remember on one occasion he asked these patients to come in uniform, so that I could see him in uniform, for whatever reason, I don't know. He had a few words with me. And many patients, including the officers in the German forces, whatever, didn't like it when my father left. They said, "Please stay, we need you". My father said no, he's going.

RL: How strong was the support for the Nazis in your locality?

ROL: Yes, I don't know, I don't know. Certainly, later on, it appeared they were all behind the Nazis. And, of course, after the war, they would all claim that they were not, when they found out what the Nazis did. But it was difficult to tell. But I certainly couldn't tell at my age. But I felt nothing untoward and neither did my parents, until the episode with the Gestapo, who came to get them in the flat.

RL: Which year were the Olympic Games?

ROL: 1936.

RL: And what's your memory of that?

ROL: Hotels in Berlin were few and far between and many people wanted to come. So an edict went out that people who had a room to let should let it to guests from outside to stay for a week or two, or a few days, and those people who had guests like this had to show the Olympic flag from their balconies. Most flats had balconies and we had a flag, which, only a few months ago, I sent to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, so I'm afraid I haven't got it, but I still had it up to-. In fact, it's on permanent loan. I didn't want to give it to them outright, so it's on an annual loan.

Tape 2: 22 minutes 15 seconds

ROL: Well, yes, it follows, because we flew the flag, we had a couple staying with us from another town. And I remembered at the time what town it was but I can't remember now. In fact, they took me to a football match, which I wasn't interested in at all. In fact, I'm not interested in sport now. But it was good fun to go anyway. I mentioned that I had two cousins living still in Berlin. And one of them lived on the road on which the Olympic Stadium is. And, when we pass, they always say, "Oh, this is where the Olympic Games took place", and we can look in. It's a bit, it needs restoration, I think they're going to restore it soon.

RL: Were there many people from abroad in Berlin at that time?

ROL: I have no idea.

RL: Did you come across any foreign visitors?

ROL: No. Not at all.

RL: Can you tell me what preparations your parents had to make and how they managed to gain entry into England?

ROL: Yes. I mentioned earlier that my father came to England five times to get permission from the Home Office and my mother three times before they eventually got permission from the Home Office to come. We eventually got permission from the Dental Board, as it was known in those days, to get permission to work as a dentist. He would have come anyway. But it was better to come as a dentist. And he always told the story of when he got permission from the Dental Board, when the clerk at the Dental Board said he had got permission to work here, my father said, "Where do you suggest I can work?" and the clerk said, "Anywhere except London and Manchester", because there were already, in his words, refugee dentists in London and Manchester. So my father said, "Where can I work?" and the clerk metaphorically stuck a pin into the map of England and, as Bradford is fairly central, it landed in Bradford. The clerk said, "Go to Bradford!". My father said, "Thank you very much", jumped on the next train to Bradford, where, fortunately, a very distant relative of my mother lived, made contact with him, and he introduced him to the local rabbi, and he in turn introduced him to another person called Harry Cramrich, who was the Yugoslav vice-consul in Bradford, who was Jewish and - incidentally we're still in touch with his grand-daughter, Fay Cramrich - and this Harry Cramrich had access to diplomatic bags, which were not opened in transit from one country to another, and so he arranged for my father to transfer money from Germany to England, in advance of our coming, in these diplomatic bags arranged by Harry Cramrich and the Yugoslav Embassy in Berlin. In Germany, in Berlin itself, they found a man called Schindler, but no relation to the man in Schindler's List, who was a teacher of English, and he came to my parents' house to teach them English. And the arrangement was that some other people would come, some eight or ten people, as pupils of this man, Schindler, and that's how they learnt English. They didn't know English before. I learnt English in school, so I was a little bit ahead of them, in English.

Tape 2: 26 minutes 13 seconds

ROL: They would meet at my parents' house and other people's houses as well, they were taking turns. And this Schindler would take parties of this group of people to England on their visits, to try and get permission to come here. And he would put his badge with a swastika in his lapel, when he came to the border with Germany and wherever, and he would show that he was a member of the party, and, "These are my pupils", without saying that they were Jewish. And that's how he would come to England with his German pupils to learn English, but, in reality, they would try to reconnoitre how to get permission to come to England.

RL: Did your parents come with that group?

ROL Yes. They went with him. Whether they went together, I don't know, but certainly they went with him, yes.

RL: Did you know anyone in England at all at that stage?

ROL: Yes, this distant cousin of my mother's, he lived in the vicinity of Bradford anyway, and his parents lived in London. So they certainly contacted those people. So there was some contact and they got introductions from one person to another. The local rabbi here, Reve Iselstam, he introduced my parents to various people. Certainly, when we came, when we arrived, we went to

the synagogue straight away, and we got to know people straight away.

RL: When they came over and tried to gain permission, how long were these visits each time?

ROL: I honestly can't remember. I just don't know, I'd be guessing now. But they'd be several days, perhaps a week or so. Again, whilst my father was away, patients would ring up and say, "I want an appointment". And the receptionist would say, "I'm sorry, he's not here". "When is he going to be back?" And she would say, "I don't know". It was difficult because he would have to earn a living as well as reconnoitre where to go.

RL: Did he ever tell you of any difficulties he would encounter while trying to get permission to get to England?

ROL: No. The only difficulty he had was to get a succession of no's, from the Home Office, saying he can't come. How eventually he got permission, I just don't know. But I remember, I knew of course that my parents came to England these various times, but I do remember the time when he told me that we were actually leaving. We were at my grandmother's and her sister's flat, for a visit, which was nothing unusual, and after tea-time, coffee-time, my father kept pacing up and down. That I realised was unusual. And I was sitting on the settee. And, as he passed me on one of these occasions, as he was pacing up and down, he bent down, lent down, and whispered in my ear, "We are going to England". I knew what that meant: that we were going to emigrate, that I realised at age eleven. And that was the first intimation that I had that we were going to leave.

RL: How did you feel about that?

Tape 2: 30 minutes 4 seconds

ROL: Well, I realised the necessity for it that was for sure. But I also realised that we had several dear relatives, who were elderly, but not all of them, this Ewi, the daughter of my grandmother's younger sister, she was certainly not elderly. And there was no discussion as to whether they would be able to emigrate, if at all. I realised straight away that we would have to leave these people behind. On the other hand, the excitement of travelling, and seeing another country, was the opposing factor. I'd learnt English at school but England wasn't a concept for me. English was a language. The English teacher, although, as far as I know, he didn't explain that there was a country where people spoke English. But when my father lent down and said, "We're going to England", it immediately, the term England crystallised, "Oh, that's where they speak English!". And I realised the importance of having learnt English at school.

RL: And what was the family allowed to take with them?

ROL: Well, we were fortunate. We left in November 1937, we could take all our belongings, except valuables. Money we couldn't take, except ten marks. But valuables, like rings, ornaments, we could take, providing it was declared to the customs, and when these big boxes were loaded outside the flat with our furniture, there was a customs officer who checked every item that went in, and we had to declare, my parents had to declare valuables. I don't know if my parents had to pay tax on those but anything that was taken out had to be declared. But, fortunately, we could take all our belongings with us, as opposed to Marianne's parents, when they came in 1939, they couldn't take anything, hardly, hardly anything, just one or two small possessions.

RL: So how long was it, from your father telling you, that you did actually leave?

ROL: A few months. He must have told me in summer time, and we left in November. It must have taken a few months to wind down, to give notice on the flat and to wind the practise down, and to arrange for the transport of furniture.

Tape 2: 32 minutes 53 seconds

RL: Were other families leaving?

ROL: Oh, yes. I remember at the Jewish school, when a boy was going to leave, he would announce that he was going to leave, and of course he would write his address on the board, for us to all copy it down and try and keep in touch. And I remember doing this myself, when it was my moment of glory as it were, to write my new address on the board for people to copy. It just occurred to me, it's not a propos of what I just said, I was made monitor in the class in my Jewish school. And I remember one of my duties was to pick up the paper in the playground, where boys had dropped the paper into which they had wrapped their sandwiches. When they had eaten their sandwiches, it was my job to collect the paper there. And I remember, once or twice, some boys would, when I'd collected the papers, they'd take the papers out and put them back on the ground for me to pick them up again. I thought it was very poor, I didn't think it was right for Jewish boys to do. But another time, there was a very hot day, exceedingly hot, and opening the windows didn't help, on the contrary, it allowed the heat to come in. And the headmaster decided it was too hot for the school to continue and everybody could go home. So the messenger from the headmaster's office came into our classroom. For some reason, our classroom was picked out to distribute notices to the other classrooms, and the teacher at the time said, "Who wants to do this?" And, of course, everybody put their hand up, but he chose me to take this notice out to all the classrooms, saying it is now "Hitzefrei", that's because of the heat everybody could go home. That's my other moment of glory.

Tape 2: 35 minutes 4 seconds

RL: Can you describe to me the day of departure? Can you take me through that time?

ROL: We were going to take a ship from Bremerhaven, which is on the coast on the North Sea, to Southampton. The ship would leave some time during the day, I suppose, so we decided, my parents decided, I suppose, to leave Berlin on the previous evening and spend the night in Hamburg and then take a train to Bremerhaven, which is only half, or three quarters of an hour, or so. So we went to the flat of my grandmother and her sisters, to say goodbye there, we arranged that they shouldn't come to the station. The husband of the younger sister of my grandmother, the younger sister of these sisters, she was married to this Arthur Blumenthal, they had the two daughters of whom one was Ewi. And, for some reason, they had fallen out, this aunt, who had fallen out with my parents, I have no idea what the reason was. They weren't on speaking terms, but they were on speaking terms with his wife, which was the younger sister. But, before they emigrated, they decided that they would pay him a visit to make things right, and we went to his flat, to say goodbye, a few days earlier, and he knew we were coming and, of course, he realised this was the right thing to do. And the conversation was not very flowing, so the only thing he could say that was important, he said: "And you really want to emigrate?" My parents said, "Well yes, yes". And so we said goodbye to him. And it was, I suppose, a slightly facetious thing to say. Anyway, that's what I remember. And he, unfortunately, and his daughter, and child, Daniel, perished in Auschwitz. But then, we did go to my grandmother's and her sister's flat to say goodbye and the scene was not very nice.

Tape 2: 37 minutes 46 seconds

One of these aunts, this Tanta Hulda, who survived and lived with us until she died later, she anticipated there might be food shortages, and said, "If we, that is the sisters, were to write to you and mentioned that we have no yellow silk", she said "gelbe Seide", "would we send some, that means that there is no butter, butter meaning food, please send food". And that was the only thing that was said that I remember. And we said goodbye and we went to the station, where friends of

ours had gathered, not relatives, friends. Oh, there were thirty, forty friends. This was the usual scene. I had been to the station when friends of ours had emigrated before us. And, well, we said our goodbyes, the train was there. It was a terminus, so the train didn't come from anywhere else, it was standing there, for us to get in. I remember we travelled second class, which was a big thing in those days, we would never dream of travelling second class anywhere in those days, we'd travel third class, there were wooden benches, but on this occasion we did. And, as the train drew out, one lady, who was the mother of one of my friends, and her children, stood at the top end of the platform, as far as she could go, so that she could be the last person to wave us goodbye. That's how we left. We went to Hamburg, stayed in a hotel overnight, and then took the train the next day to Bremerhaven. Again we had a compartment to ourselves, by chance. And they had a system of checking passports and customs on the train, which was quite advanced in those days, it was the boat train. And they looked at the exit permits, and realised that we were Jewish. And said to my father, "Would you come with us?" And so my father had to go with them. And, a few minutes later, the train stopped at a station, and I was frightened that they would take my father off the train. And, as the train started again, I said to my mother, "Where is Daddy?" And she was just as nervous about it as I was. And she said, "He'll be alright, he'll be on the train. Don't worry". And she was talking more to herself than to me. Anyway, he did come back to our compartment. These people took him to another empty compartment and searched him to find out if he had anything on him that was forbidden to export, money, but on that occasion his conscience was free. He didn't have anything. And we got to Bremerhaven. We boarded this huge ocean liner. Neither I nor my parents had seen a big ship like that before. And we checked into our cabin, and went to the dining room, where there was a small orchestra playing and they played the tune that my father and I had played as a piano duet, on the piano, for friends and relatives - we did occasionally play for people. And, of all the tunes they could have played, they played that particular tune, which made our stay on the ship a bit easier.

RL: What was the tune?

Tape 2: 41 minutes 57 seconds

ROL: It was called "Dornröschens Brautfahrt", "Cinderella's Bridal Journey", by a man called Max Broder, very nice tune. It came from a very light musical operetta that we'd been to actually, in Berlin, and my father bought the music for piano duet and we played it together. And, as we entered the dining room, the orchestra struck this tune up. And then we got to Southampton.

I: What was the name of the ship?

ROL: Deutschland, Germany. The next morning, as we approached Southampton, my father stood, he gathered the family at the stern of the ship, he still had some duplicate keys of the flat in which we lived in Berlin, but he would have had to leave some keys with the owner of the flat. But he had some, well, he had a second set of keys, he had them in his pocket, and he threw them ceremoniously over the side of the ship, into the wake of the ship, as if to say that this was the end of our relationship with Germany. The ship anchored somewhere outside Southampton harbour, it was too big to go in, unlike nowadays when ships can go in. And small tenders came from the harbour and took people from the big ship onto the small ship to go in. And we were on this small boat, a couple of hundred people possibly. And my father overheard two young girls, saying some derogatory things about Germany, and my father said, "Remember, you are still on a German boat, don't say things like that". And they kept quiet. And then we took the train from Southampton to London, where again we stayed a few days in a hotel, before coming to Bradford. When my father got his permission, he came to Bradford and met one or two people here, as I mentioned earlier. He found a house, a couple of miles outside Bradford, which he wanted to buy and the owner wanted to sell, and my father said, "Right, I'll be back in November, please have the house empty so that we can move in". For some reason, no deposit was paid and apparently there was no legal document. At any rate, when we came to Bradford, we went to this hotel, and we went to this house and we

found the people still living in the house with all their furniture, so my father said, "We're wanting to move in". And they said, "We didn't think you'd come back". So the little bit of money that we were able to bring out, one way or another, was eaten up within the first few days paying the hotel bill, which my parents didn't reckon with, until these people made arrangements to find another house and to move out. And, whilst we were living in the hotel, my mother got a little ear infection, which didn't help matters, and we had to get a doctor in straight away to cure this, before the days of antibiotics. So that was our entry into England.

RL: What were your first impressions of England?

ROL: Favourable. It was a new, they were new surroundings, it was exciting, something I hadn't seen before, everybody spoke English. Yes. Reve Iselstam, the local rabbi, introduced us to other people, and my parents, although my father had to start up building his practice from scratch, they decided they would send me to a good school, which was the Bradford Grammar School, which cost a good deal of money in those days, it costs a great deal of money today as well, but it was a lot of money for them to fork out straight away. But I remember the rabbi's wife took my mother and myself to the school to introduce us to the headmaster, and he was very kind. Funnily enough, we realised he was going to ask to see my reports from my previous school. Now the system of marking in Germany was the opposite of marking in England. So in Germany if you had a '1', it was the best, and a '5' would be the worst, and for your subject you would get a 1, 2, 3, or 5. Now my marks were a 1 to 2 or 2 to 3, so they were good marks. And when the headmaster saw these, he will have thought, "Well, 1 out of 10 is a pretty bad mark", or 2 out of 10, and we had to explain it was the other way round. Anyway, he accepted me and I soon found my feet.

RL: How did you manage at the beginning with the language?

Tape 2: 47 minutes 39 seconds

ROL: I could speak a little bit of English, but, of course, it was school English, but it was enough to get by. And my sister, she hadn't learnt English at all, and she went to a different school, an elementary school, where, again, the headmaster was extremely kind to her, and she picked up English in a few weeks, no problem. One little episode I can remember is that: in Germany, boys wore plus fours and they were called knickerbockers. So my parents thought that in England all boys wore knickerbockers because it was an English term, so my mother arranged for me to have a set of plus fours made specially and when I went to school the first day I wore these plus fours, and I was the only boy in the whole school who wore plus fours, and I was immediately the centre of attention, of unwelcome attention, and the headmaster called me to his office. He probably telephoned my mother and said that ordinary trousers were alright.

RL: Where was the house?

ROL: In Shipley, not far from here, a couple of miles north of the centre of Bradford. And Shipley was separate from Bradford, it was a different locality, it was a different system of organisation. It was only in 1971 that the two merged in the general reorganisation of local authorities in this country.

RL: And where did your father set up his practice?

ROL: In the house, in the same house. The ground floor had the surgery and the waiting room, which again doubled as dining room, and the kitchen and living room, the sleeping quarters were upstairs.

RL: And how did he begin building his practise?

ROL: Well, there were inevitably difficulties. I remember, as professional etiquette, he had visiting cards made immediately and he went round to the local dentists to introduce himself. But only one of them actually allowed him into his practise and shook hands with him. The others even refused to see him because they thought he was going to be a threat to his own practise, perhaps they thought he brought more modern things, more modern methods of treatment, which they didn't know. They saw him as a threat. But patients came and stayed, and he soon became very busy. But it was, as they say, a hard slog to earn enough money to support a family immediately. In Berlin, it was different. He was a bachelor when he started, and then he married, I came along two years later, there was a gradual increase of expenditure, and here there was a lot of expenditure straight away. I'm sure he got into debt, which he cleared.

RL: Did he bring equipment with him?

Tape 2: 51 minutes 0 second

ROL: All his equipment, yes.

RL: And did that differ, do you know, from what was being used in this country?

ROL: Again, I don't really know. I didn't see anybody else's surgery. He looked after our teeth. But the equipment was bought in 1922, so it was probably a bit old-fashioned already then.

RL: And how did he manage with English?

ROL: Well, this Mr. Schindler taught him English in Berlin, and so, when they came to England, they could at least make themselves understood. My father had a very strong guttural German accent, my mother slightly less so, but, within a few months, both were fairly fluent in English. Although in the family and with other friends, who came from Germany, we spoke German, which was bad because we should have spoken English to practise more, but that was a small point. We caught up on the English fairly quickly.

RL: Were there other refugees in Bradford?

ROL: Yes, there were quite a few, who came before us, and some came after us, and of course we became friends with these people because we had the same backgrounds and had the same difficulties, language, or otherwise, job. There was another dentist, we weren't particularly friendly with him, we saw him occasionally, but we didn't socialise with him particularly, but not for any particular reason.

Tape 2: 52 minutes 50 seconds

RL: What was his name?

ROL: Birkenrut.

RL: And what other families do you remember, refugee families?

ROL: Oh, there was a family called Schloss, a family called Reiss, Heimann, two families called Heimann, strangely enough, there were plenty of Fischer, Kellner.

RL: What kind of occupations were they in?

ROL: Some of them joined the wool trade; of course Bradford was the centre of the wool trade for the world, no longer, unfortunately. Some were in property; some brought a lot of money from

across the water and had property. Wool trade, yes. One or two, yes, we had one or two doctors. We arranged for the gynaecologist, who assisted my mother in my birth and my sister's birth, to come to England. And he lived in Bradford as well, for a time. That was a nice touch.

RL: How did that come about?

ROL: Well, he was also Jewish and he had written to my parents because they made an application to the Home Office. When people were already living in England, it was easier for them to apply for others to come providing they made a guarantee that they wouldn't fall a burden on the state. And my parents, although they had little money as it was, gave guarantees for various people, so they got a few people out this way.

RL: Who else do you remember that they helped?

Tape 2: 54 minutes 53 seconds

ROL: They helped another family, who later emigrated to Australia. There was Mr. and Mrs. Eger, who were the very close friends of my parents in Berlin, Jewish. He was a lawyer and he could no longer practise his profession. And in 1939, or thereabouts, the Jewish community in Bradford, like others in this country, opened hostels for children, and the Bradford community decided to have 25 boys, where the boys managed to escape from Germany and Austria, Czechoslovakia, without their parents, and these boys came to England, to Bradford. And, at first, they had an itinerant rabbi, who was the manager of the hostel, and he said he didn't want it long term, he said he wanted it short-term. My parents applied for this couple to come, and they came with their two children, and eventually it was dissolved, a year or so after the war, but they were the wardens.

RL: Where was the hostel?

ROL: Half way between Bradford centre and Parkfield Road, not far from where we're sitting now. And I'm still in touch with, well, the parents have died, but I'm still in touch with their two children – Kurt, who lives in London, and the girl, Hanne, who is the one that I made the dance duet with in the Kulturbund, she lives in Harrogate and we see her fairly frequently.

RL: Is she married?

ROL: She's married, but widowed and divorced. Divorced first and then widowed.

RL: And what is her name?

ROL: Simmons, Ruth. Well, in Germany, she was called Hanne, now she's adopted her other name, Ruth Simmons.

RL: I was going to ask you to tell me a little bit more about the hostel but I think we'll keep that for the next film because this is about to end, so I think we'll just stop there.

Tape 2: 57 minutes 18 seconds

TAPE 3

Tape 3: 0 minute 10 seconds

RL: I was just about to ask you about the boys' hostel in Bradford and if you could tell me more information about it?

ROL: Yes. Word spread that a lot of boys and girls had arrived in Dover, where they had to leave their parents behind, and these children had nowhere to go, and Jewish communities, all over the country, set up hostels to take these children in. And two or three people from the Jewish community here in Bradford travelled to Dover, literally to select 25 boys. They decided, for whatever reason, to only have boys here, and they did select 25 boys. What their criteria were for selecting them, I really don't know. At any rate, they selected 25 boys, and they came to live in this hostel. And it was a large house with many rooms, I don't know what it was before, but, anyway, it was turned into a hostel for these boys, and Mr. and Mrs. Eger eventually came to be the managers, the house-parents, parents in loco parentis.

RL: And did you have any contact with the boys?

ROL: Yes, my father was, in fact, on the committee that ran this hostel, and certainly, on Friday evenings, these boys would be invited to people's homes for Erev Shabbat, and for Seder. And one of these boys, who was a frequent visitor to our house, was Albert Baxman, and he still lives in the neighbourhood and we see him occasionally. But we knew them all by name. My parents were, of course, very good friends of Mr. and Mrs. Eger, and we visited them, and they came to our house, and, when we were at their house, we would see these boys and we'd get to know them all by name. Unfortunately, one of them was killed in a cycle accident, which was very tragic. I mean, an accident, a fatal accident, is tragic anyway, but, under these particular circumstances, in which he was rescued, as it were, from Germany, and other people stood in place of the boy's parents, for one of these boys to be killed like that was particularly tragic and everybody was very upset about it. His name was Terkfeld, Terkfeld.

I: And what was the age range of the boys?

Tape 3: 3 minutes 0 second

ROL: About sixteen when they arrived, so this would be 1939. Yes, about sixteen, seventeen.

RL: They were all a similar age?

ROL: Yes, within a couple of years, yes.

RL: And what did they do?

ROL: Well, they went to school and they went to evening classes, to night school. And to learn a trade, which all of them did, one way or another. I don't recall that any went to university but they all learned a trade anyway and they eventually moved out and eventually the hostel was closed.

RL: Can you recall any names of the boys?

Tape 3: 3 minutes 51 seconds

ROL: One was called Schani Grunhut, another was called Lutz Zeisner, this Albert Baxman was another one, Alfred Helfgott, who became active in one of the political parties in Israel later. I can't just think of any more at the moment.

RL: And do you know where they went to once the hostel had closed?

ROL: Well, Albert still lives in the vicinity, so does Lutz Zeisner. Schani Grunhut lives in Leeds. Oh yes, another was called Felix Hutterer, he lived in London, he died a couple of years ago. Jeffrey Phillips lives in Dublin. I can't think of anybody else right now.

RL: And who was that on the committee, who was behind that?

ROL: This distant relative of my parents, through whom my father got introductions when he first came to Bradford, Michael Rolm. He played an important part in my life later. My father was on the committee, certainly the rabbi and his wife. I think a Mr. Jerome was on the committee. I can't think of anybody else.

RL: Did these boys come after Kristallnacht, was this part of the Kindertransport?

ROL: They came in 1939, so it must have been after Kristallnacht, yes.

RL: How did you react to the news of Kristallnacht, obviously you were here, but-

ROL: Well, in those days I didn't read the newspapers at all really, so I don't recall learning about it at the time. My parents didn't talk to me about it, not that they wanted to keep it a secret necessarily but they just didn't talk about it. I assume it was reported in the papers but the reality of it and the tragedy of it came up long after the war, when it was reported at great length and people started talking about the Holocaust.

Tape 3: 6 minutes 21 seconds

RL: Did your father try at any stage to get any members of the family out?

ROL: Yes, he certainly-. The first person he applied for was his mother but she said she wouldn't come unless her sisters came as well, which meant a new application for the sisters. And, for some reason, the whole thing failed, I think because of the outbreak of war. Inevitably, these applications did take a long time, although, as I said earlier, once a person got here, it was easier to get permission but, nevertheless, because of this hitch on the part of my grandmother, that she made a condition that her sister should come, inevitably there was a delay and that made the whole thing fail. He did get permission for the two adult daughters of one of the other sisters, the unmarried ones, and he got permission for them to come, as domestic help. And they said they wouldn't come as domestic help and they paid the ultimate price, unfortunately.

RL: Did your father have to register with the police?

ROL: Yes. At the outbreak of war, we were officially enemy aliens, naturalisation came very much later, certainly after the war, and we had to register with the police. Now, a lot of so-called enemy aliens were of course interned and were transported to the Isle of Man. My father, fortunately, was not so interned. What prevented him from being interned we shall never know. Mr. Birkenrut, the other dentist, was interned, and I remember my father going up to his practise once or twice a week to see to his patients whilst he was away. But we were very lucky in that respect. Marianne's father was interned from London but, fortunately, he got out.

Tape 3: 8 minutes 17 seconds

RL: Before we go on, I would like to go a little bit to your schooling, you mentioned your plusfours, how did you get on with the other children at the school?

ROL: I was a bit of a novelty, I think. A friendly novelty, although they poked a bit of fun at me the first day, but, after a few weeks, the novelty wore down and I took my place amongst the others. In fact, I'm still in touch with some of my classmates from the year 1937-38, no, correction, I went to school in 1938, we came to England in November 1937, so I didn't go to school until January '38. And for the first six months I was in a particular class and I'm still in touch with three or four of those boys, one of whom I only rediscovered a couple of years ago. But I'm, funnily enough, not in

touch with any of the boys of my later years at the school, but they were relatively happy years. Within a year, as a friend of mine keeps reminding me when I see him, I became top in English in the class, which was a- I mentioned earlier my moment of glory in my Jewish school in Berlin - this certainly was my moment of glory in my English school here, that I became top of the class in English.

RL: Were there other refugee children in the school?

Tape 3: 10 minutes 33 seconds

ROL: Not that I can remember. The son of the minister, of the rabbi, was in the school, in my class for a short time. I can't recall any other. Well, he wasn't a refugee anyway, but he was a Jewish boy.

RL: And did you have any Hebrew education here?

ROL: Well, for my Bar Mitzvah, I certainly went to my minister for Hebrew lessons, specifically for the Bar Mitzvah, learning my various portions and Haphtarah. Those lessons were given by the minister. He wasn't officially a rabbi, he acted as a rabbi, but the Semicha that he got from the Jewish College in London was only as a reverend, but that's only a minor detail, as far as my story is concerned.

RL: And how did you celebrate your Bar Mitzvah?

ROL: Well, my Bar Mitzvah came in May, or in June, 1939, when we'd been in the country just eighteen months and money was still very tight. But my parents decided that they'd have a celebration anyway and invited people, on the Saturday evening, I think it must have been. We had it in the home and there must have been twenty or so and, on the Friday evening, we had close family and the brother of these six sisters that I keep mentioning. The brother had lived in Stettin in Germany, he had managed to escape with his wife to London before the war, and he came for my Bar Mitzvah. And, in those days, travel wasn't easy, and he was elderly then, both were, and they came. The big thing about the Bar Mitzvah was not so much who was invited and who came, but the fact that I was able to use a Sefer Torah, which was a family heirloom, which was specially written for my father's Bar Mitzvah in 1903. The Bar Mitzvah was in 1903, but the Sefer Torah was written during the year or two prior to that, by a Sofar, a writer, or scribe, of Sifrei Torah. And, as I said, my grandparents lived in Inowrocław, in the Polish Corridor, and this scribe lived on the other side of the border, eastwards in Russia, Poland, I don't know what it was, in a place called Bromberg. And he wrote each section of the Torah and brought it over to, you know, Inowrocław. And my father would often tell me that his father would pay the scribe in gold coins for each section of the Torah that he brought across. And when, eventually, all the sections were there, then he would sew them altogether, which was the normal way to make a Torah. And my father would read his portion from this particular Torah. Fortunately, we were able to bring this Torah with us when we brought all our possessions out, and I read from this Torah, and so did my two boys when it was their turn to become Barmitzvahed, and this Torah is still in my possession.

Tape 3: 14 minutes 24 seconds

RL: Was this sent across with the furniture at the time of your move?

ROL: That's right, yes.

RL: And it's still in your home?

ROL: Yes, including all the silver.

RL: After the outbreak of war, did anything change at all for your family?

ROL: No, except the ever present threat, which was present for everybody in this country, which was the threat of bombings. Fortunately, Bradford, perhaps, for whatever reason, wasn't a strategic destination for bombs and we had very little of this. Can I just refer to the Bar Mitzvah again? I have a letter written by Ewi, who is the daughter of the youngest sister of my grandmother, written just at the beginning of June 1939, just before my Bar Mitzvah, and she writes, and her husband, whom I didn't know, because they got married after we left, her husband wrote, and Aunt Hulda added a little note and my grandmother wrote a little note, and this, of course, is of great sentimental value to me. And again, after having made copies, I took this to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, fairly recently. This Ewi and her husband and their son, Daniel, were taken to Auschwitz, together with Ewi's father, where they perished. Hulda survived Theresienstadt concentration camp and lived with us until she died at a very good age, but my grandmother was also taken to Theresienstadt, where she died of malnutrition and general hazards, such as cold or whatever, but not a deliberate physical death.

RL: Were you in touch with the family at all at the beginning of the war?

Tape 3: 16 minutes 50 seconds

ROL: Through the Red Cross we were able to write occasionally but I think they were postcards rather, would take a long time to reach, and I think the last correspondence took place about 1940. Then nothing else and, of course, we didn't know their fate until after the war.

RL: With the beginning of war, were the schools evacuated? Were the children evacuated?

ROL: Yes. Bradford Grammar School, part of the school, was evacuated to a place called Giggleswick, which is a place here, north of Bradford, but, for some reason, I wasn't part of those, not because I was Jewish, but simply because part of the school went there and I was not in that part. But they went there.

Tape 3: 17 minutes 50 seconds

RL: Who did you play with at the school in Bradford, who were your school friends?

ROL: Well, I was always a bit of a loner. I didn't make friends easily. And I don't recall that I had any particular friends. There was one boy, who was marginally interested in trains, like I am, and his father bought him a train set, and this was in 1938-39, so I went to his house and I pleaded with my parents to let me buy some trains as well and they said. "No, I'm afraid not, money just doesn't reach to that". So I went to his house once or twice to play. He was pleasant enough but he wasn't a particularly good friend. But I once invited another boy to come to my house and we looked at the stamp collection that my father had, and it turned out to be a bit unsuccessful, and we didn't keep in contact. So I concentrated on school work, home work, violin lessons as they were then, which were no more successful than my piano lessons earlier, so I can play a little bit of piano, a little bit of violin, but not good enough, even for my own standards.

RL: Had you brought a violin with you?

ROL: I can't remember. I think we bought one here. I think that must have been the case, yes.

RL: And who did your parents mix with, who was their social circle here?

ROL: Mainly the other refugee families. There were one or two English friends, non-Jewish friends,

very few and far between, and I think they made them from being patients of my father's and I know one shouldn't make patients of friends, and friends of patients, a professional relation. At any rate, they did, and one or two of them became very good friends. But I think all their energies were devoted to working and bringing up the children, rather than socialising.

Tape 3: 20 minutes 18 seconds

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

ROL: Not that I can think of. At school every boy had to belong to what is known as a particular house, which were divided into red, green, blue, pink and so on. And I belonged to Red House but this was mainly for sports facilities, rather than for socialising. Red House would compete against Blue House and I was a member of Red House but only on the sports field. As I'm not interested in sport, and I wasn't good at sport anyway, this division into colours, it didn't affect me very much.

RL: How would you spend your spare time, or if you wanted to do something after school hours, or during the holiday?

ROL: I think I listened to the radio, listened to music, which was my downfall, in inverted commas. When I had to study at university, if there was a good music programme on, I'd listen to that instead of doing my university work. We would play games, we would play monopoly, it was a favourite with us. We still play it with our grandchildren. Yes. We weren't short of things to do but sport didn't enter into it. Yes. We would go for walks on the Moors, we have both Woldale and Airedale very close, a few minutes drive, or bus ride, as it was in those days, or train ride. And we'd walk across the Moors, from one valley to the other that was a regular pastime.

RL: Did you ever, during the war years, meet any hostility, or did your parents ever comment?

ROL: The only occasion where this occurred is that my mother volunteered for nursing, not in hospitals so much, but social nursing, perhaps sewing parachutes, or doing some kind of war work on a voluntary basis, and, one day, she was told that she was no longer needed, that she was an enemy alien. And that hurt her terribly. Of course, we understood the situation, but we were still enemy aliens. That's the only occasion that I can remember that there was some kind of hostility.

RL: And the war itself, how did you manage in terms of the rationing and the other restrictions?

ROL: Well, we had a ration book and we did the same as everybody else. Was it one egg a week per person and one ration of meat? And my mother cooked as best she could. There was-. She would often refer to her time during the First World War, when there was a real shortage of food and people went hungry, which we certainly didn't.

RL: Was there any bombing in this area at all?

ROL: There was, there was a little bombing. The nearest bomb fell about half a mile away from our house, we could hear it, another fell in the centre of Bradford, but that's all, but of course there were plenty of warnings of air-raids and we would sit in the hall, not that that would give us particular protection, but, at any rate, that's where we gathered, and we had a cellar but we didn't sit there, first of all, because it was very uncomfortable, but if, God forbid, a bomb hit the house, we would be buried alive, so whatever protection we thought we had, we had in the central hall.

RL: And when did you finish school?

ROL: In 1943. I was fortunate enough to get a place at the dental hospital in Leeds. I was very fortunate indeed. At school, at the grammar school here, I was in a general stream, but then I went

into a classical stream and learnt Latin and Greek, which I enjoyed tremendously. I was very good at them, I liked those languages, and English, French. So I had four languages and mathematics, but history was a no-go thing for me, it was no good. But after the School Certificate, as it was called in those days, O' Levels, I had to change, if I was going to become a dentist, and had to go to the science side, physics and chemistry. Now, for some reason, the physics and chemistry teachers didn't realise that I had not done physics and chemistry in the preceding three years. And I was, I found myself in very great difficulty catching up with the others, until one day I asked a very elementary question to the physics teacher and said, "Can you explain the difference between ohms and amps and volts?" And he said, "Crikey, don't you know?!" And I said, "No, I don't". And he went into the whole history of why I didn't know. And for a whole term I fumbled my way through physics and chemistry for that matter, not knowing what it was all about. And then the teachers took some interest in my case. But those two years between the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate were difficult for that reason. So I was a bad pupil, whereas before, in Latin and Greek, I was a good pupil and now I was a bad one. And that somehow stayed with me when I went to university. I did Physics and Chemistry there, and Zoology, but I was a bad pupil. I couldn't settle down to being a good pupil again, I'd lost it. In addition, I was listening to music, not doing my work. So I had a rough time at university from the academic point of view.

Tape 3: 27 minutes 17 seconds

RL: What had made you want to do dentistry, to switch to science, when you had been happy in the classics?

ROL: Well, we discussed at home what I was going to do when I grow up and the only thing that seemed sensible was to follow in my father's footsteps. It was very little discussion actually. They couldn't see, and neither could I, what I could do with Latin and Greek. There didn't seem to be an opening for somebody who did Latin and Greek, but dentistry was a good thing. So I thought, "Well, it's fair enough". Now, 'cause I had to go for an interview to the dental hospital before I was accepted, my father went first, by himself, to introduce himself to the professor, and they hit it off very well, and the professor asked him questions about certain aspects of dentistry that perhaps my father knew about from Germany. And so the professor said, "OK, send your son along", that's me. So I went along. And of course he couldn't ask me any questions about dentistry because I didn't know anything about it. And he said what had I done at school. And I didn't want to talk about my physics and chemistry, because that was a dead duck, but I said, "Well, I did English and Latin and Greek". And he said, "What books did you read in English?" And we happened to read Julius Caesar for our School Certificate. And he said, "What did Mark Anthony say in the market place?" And it's the only speech that I ever learnt by heart. Learning poetry for me was an anathema. I just couldn't learn poetry, but this one I did. And I said, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears, we have come to bury Caesar, not to praise him". I reeled off the whole thing. And he was very impressed. He said, "OK, start in September". I thought, "Well, that's a bit of luck".

Tape 3: 29 minutes 27 seconds

RL: And how did you get on there?

ROL: Well, with difficulty. Out of nine examinations over the whole course, I passed three after the third go, another three after the second go, and the other three the first time round. But not in that order. If I hadn't passed the final exam at the time that I did, I would have had to go into the army, leave the university, and go into the army. As a private, as a nobody. Fortunately, I did pass. I spent six months doing postgraduate work at the Eastman Hospital in London. I then had to go into the army, fortunately as a dentist.

RL: And how did you get on with the other students?

ROL: Well again, as I said before, I'm a bit of a loner, I didn't mix particularly, partly possibly because I lived at home with my parents, so I had no time to socialise after lectures. I did make one or two friends, but no close friendships. By chance, one of the people I associated with, not a dental student came to live down the road just here, a few houses away, and we became very friendly, with his wife and the children, but that's a coincidence.

Tape 3: 31 minutes 5 seconds

RL: Did you come across, at that point, any discrimination?

ROL: Never. Never.

RL: Were there other Jewish students on your course?

ROL: Yes, mainly in Leeds. Leeds has a very large Jewish community. Certainly, in those days, I think there were, I think, 35 000 Jewish people in Leeds. Now it's down to about 20 000. But on my course, and adjacent courses a bit above me, there were several Jewish boys. But, again, I didn't mix freely with them. When lectures were over at five o'clock, I used to get on the train and come back home and do my work or listen to the radio.

RL: Didn't you join any associations?

Tape 3: 31 minutes 58 seconds

ROL: Yes, I joined the Jewish Students' Association; I joined the Music Society, of course. And I was a student there for seven years, seven because I failed so many examinations, so my course was long. And, for the last three or four years, I presented gramophone recitals in the union, at first only once a week, but then twice a week, and it was a lot of energy on choosing the records, and speaking about the music for a minute or so before putting the records on.

RL: Was this part of the Music Society?

ROL: It wasn't actually, although it could have been. But it wasn't. It was an independent thing. My predecessor for the gramophone recitals started and I took over when he left. But it wasn't officially part of the Music Society.

RL: And what year did you qualify?

ROL: 1950. October 1950.

RL: And, all this time, was your father still working as a dentist in the house?

ROL: Oh yes, yes.

RL: Did your mother do anything?

ROL: Yes. Before we left Berlin, she realised that getting an assistant for my father to work in the practise might be difficult, so she helped my father in the practise in Berlin for some weeks to learn the trade, as it were, and she became his assistant, a dental nurse if you like. She also learned some dental mechanics, making crowns, bridges, dentures, which she did. It saved a lot of money. Instead of having to send work out to laboratories, to make these things, she did these things in the kitchen. So my parents were pretty busy.

RL: And what was your sister doing?

ROL: Well she went to elementary school and got a place at the grammar school, Bradford Girls' Grammar School. And the day she left school, when she was seventeen, she got engaged. But that's a special story. We were friendly with a family called Fleinger in Bradford. Doctor Fleinger was a teacher of English in Baden Baden, incidentally in the same town where my parents had met, but that's a coincidence. But he and his family came to live here and, on the day of my birthday party, in, I can't remember which year it was now, perhaps 1946 or thereabouts, Doctor Fleinger and his wife went to a garden party at the school, where he was a teacher of German now. And, waiting for the bus, a car swerved on the wet road and pinned his wife against the lamp post and severed a leg and she bled to death. And my mother went to see them, bringing food, and occasionally my sister went along, she would be sixteen, seventeen, and they had two sons. And my mother thought it would be a nice idea if the elder son of the Fleingers' and my sister would see each other more often, which they did. And they eventually got married. So out of tragedy came something good.

RL: And how old was your sister when she married?

ROL: She married, I think, in 1950. She was twenty. She was born in 1930. She was twenty.

RL: Did she do anything after school?

ROL: Yes. She studied Physiotherapy in London at the Middlesex Hospital, which she practised for a time, including after she got married, and she didn't particularly like it, although it was a job for her to do. But, one day, she got a phone call from the hall porter of a big hotel in London, in the West End of London, to say that one of their clients wanted a massage in his room. And then realised that he wanted a certain kind of massage and she said that's not for me. Now, just around this time, there were terrible floods in Florence, Italy, and a lot of art treasures were damaged and they didn't have conservationists to repair the artefacts. And she went to evening classes in London to learn conservation for antiquities, and eventually qualified, stopped doing physiotherapy, and got a job at the British Museum immediately and eventually became head of her department for Eastern Antiquities. She's now retired.

RL: What was her name?

Tape 3: 37 minutes 14 seconds

ROL: Fleming. They changed their name from Fleinger to Fleming. And she and her husband, when they got married, moved into a house in Golders Green, and they still live in the same house. I like to say that I've only ever lived in three abodes. One is the flat in Berlin, one is when I lived with my parents, and, after I got married, we lived with my parents for a year or so until this house was built and then we moved into this house where we are sitting now. So, both my sister and I have a record of very few abodes.

RL: How long was it after the war finished that you learned what happened to the family in that period?

ROL: Well, my Great Aunt Hulda, one of the sisters of my grandmother, she survived. In fact, she left Theresienstadt before the end of the war, because an American Jewish organisation made contact with some very high up people in the Nazi regime, offering them gold in redemption for people, which they accepted. They paid over the gold. This was the beginning of 1945. And they released about a thousand people from Theresienstadt; put them on a train to Switzerland, to Engelberg, in Switzerland. And this aunt then came to us later, later that year, and stayed with us until she died, aged 89. And she must have told my parents a bit about what was going on. And, in retrospect, of course we should have asked a lot of questions about what went on but we didn't want to upset her. I don't recall that I was present anyway at any of these discussions. But this great aunt

must have told the bare essentials about what happened in Berlin, and that my grandmother died in Theresienstadt. But, of course, nobody spoke about the Holocaust then, and it wasn't called the Holocaust then anyway. Nobody spoke about it for years and years. And it was only now, we're now in 2004, it was only twenty, twenty five years ago, at most, that people started talking about it. It was a closed subject for many years because it was too horrible.

Tape 3: 39 minutes 56 seconds

RL: How did the family feel about the creation of the State of Israel in 1948?

ROL: We listened on the radio when the United Nations vote came through, that the majority of countries voted for the existence of the State of Israel, and we realised at the time this was a great thing. My own personal reservation was that it was going to be called Israel. I still have this feeling that one shouldn't push Jewishness too far, and thought it was the wrong move. Of course, it was the right move, in retrospect. Of course, we had relatives, who lived in Palestine before the war, and for them it must have been a great relief. And then, of course, the terrible aftermath, the immediate aftermath of the creation of the State of Israel was quite dreadful, as indeed it still is.

RL: We got to the point of you qualifying. What happened after that?

ROL: I did six months research at the Eastman Hospital, as I mentioned, in London, it was just to get a bit of practise in really. I don't think I learnt anything particularly of great importance but I mixed, this was the only dental hospital in London that only took in graduates, so I mixed with those who were already qualified. So, I suppose a bit of knowledge must have rubbed off onto me. And then I had to go into the army, as a dentist, fortunately, the first nine months of which I spent near Aldershot, and that time was relatively happy for me, and then I was posted overseas, which was Austria. When I registered with the army, they asked me if I spoke any languages, and I said German, so they did send me to Austria. I could converse with the local population, if and when it arose, but, as such, it didn't have any great benefit for me that I spoke German.

Tape 3: 42 minutes 20 seconds

RL: Whereabouts in Austria were you?

ROL: Well, I was a mobile dentist and I was stationed for a few weeks at a time in Ferlach, in Vienna, in Graz, Klagenfurt, and Zeltweg, a little place in the mountains, and Graz, everywhere where there were British troops.

RL: And what rank did you have?

ROL: I came in as a lieutenant, but, after twelve months, everyone, doctors or dentists, were promoted to captain. So that was OK that was alright.

RL: And what kind of memories do you have of that period?

ROL: Quite happy, specifically because, when I was in Vienna or Graz, I was able to go to the opera and go to concerts. In Vienna, the British troops were stationed in the Schönbrunn Castle, and they employed a lady, an Austrian lady, who looked after the cultural side of the soldiers, arranging tickets for concerts and the opera, and I was a frequent visitor to her office and she got me tickets at a reduced rate to the opera and I went a lot. And my fellow officers asked me, "Where have you been?" "Where did you go last night?" "Where did you go again?" "You're never here." And I'd say, "I saw Lohengrin", or whatever. Yes, that was fun. I did have some friends, whom I got to know in Vienna at the time that I was there, they were friends of people that we knew here. And I was invited to their flat on a Sunday morning, and the previous evening I'd been to a dance, and I

got home to the barracks very late, at two in the morning, so I'd had very little sleep. I had to be at their place at half past nine or ten in the morning, and I had to take a tram to get there, so I had to get up fairly early. And they said, "Would you like to go to a concert?" And I said, "Yes". And I was a very keen collector of records, I still am. And one of the icons of orchestral music in those days, and still is, is the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and he said, "It's the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra playing". I said, "Yes, I'll come". And, unfortunately, I was so tired that I kept falling asleep during this concert, and I was very cross. I don't know what my friends thought, but I explained to him that that was the reason why. But I went to concerts later without falling asleep.

Tape 3: 45 minutes 22 seconds

RL: Did you make contact at all with any of the Jewish community in Austria?

ROL: Yes. In Vienna, I went to a service. Curiously enough, just after King George VI died, I felt the necessity to go to synagogue. And the synagogue was in the Seitenstettengasse, I think it was called. And I went to synagogue and we all had to wear black armbands. I went in uniform. And I said Kaddish for the King at the end of the service, and, at the end, afterwards, I went to the rabbi, introduced myself. He said, "Yes, Shabbat Shalom, goodbye", and that was that. That was my contact with the Jewish community in Austria.

RL: How long were you there?

ROL: For fifteen months, until I was demobbed in June or July, 1953. In fact, I liked being in the army so much that I asked to have my two years compulsory National Service extended by a month and then another month, and I was in there for two extra months.

RL: And what did you do?

ROL: I used that to take my leave, to have that time that I was in the army, so I got paid for it. So I went on a trip to Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey, by train, flying in those days was not the usual thing to do. And I went with the medical officer of the unit where I was stationed. In fact, he didn't get his visa in time, we had to get visas for all three countries, and he got his late, and he caught me up in Belgrade. I went to the station every morning to see whether he was on the night train, and, on the last day that I was going to be in Belgrade, he appeared. So he missed out on a few days in Belgrade. But, when I came back, and we joined the Reform Synagogue in Bradford and the Rabbi asked me to give a talk on my journey, which I did, to the congregation that is, which I did. And this talk was reported in the National Synagogue Magazine, under Bradford, and this was seen by a girl, whom I fleetingly got to know in London, but nothing special, but she wanted to meet me again, and she said would I give this talk to her B'nai B'rith group in London. And I said yes. So I did that and, of course, she was there. As far as I remember, I was invited to dinner to her parents the previous evening, and, at this talk at the B'nai B'rith, Marianne was there and my eye fell on her rather than on this girl. And, after the talk, Marianne said to me, "I've been on a similar journey, although not as far as you". And that was the end of it, I wanted to meet her again. I asked my sister to find out who she is. I didn't even know her name. But my sister found out who she was and I phoned up a week later, I was still in London, and I rang her up and said, "I'm Rudy Librowicz". And she said, "Who?" And I said, "Well, I gave the talk last week". And she said, "Oh yes, oh yes". She'd forgotten all about it. And I said, "I'd like to meet you again". And she said yes. And I said, "Can we meet at Coventry Street Lyon's Corner House?" So she said, "Just a minute", and she asked her father, "There's this chap, who gave this talk last week, and he wants to take me out", now she was seeing somebody else at the time, and she said, "He wants to take me out". And he said, "When?" And she said, "He wants to take me out for lunch at Coventry Street". And he said, "Well, that's the middle of the day, nothing much can happen to you, go". So she came back to the phone and said, "That's alright". So I said, "Well, one fifteen, outside". Now it happened to be Whit Monday and I was with my uncle on Hendon Way, near Golders Green, and I had the car and I

knew my way down Finchley Road and through Regents Park. Now, unfortunately, on Whit Monday, there was a parade of dray horses from breweries, and I couldn't overtake them, and I was late. And I drove along Coventry Street, I would never take my car to the centre of London nowadays, never mind the congestion charge, but I was late, but I went along Coventry Street, and there she was standing outside Coventry Street. Now, she didn't know who she was looking for. She'd put me out of her mind. But I recognised her, and opened the door, "Quick, jump in!" She didn't really know who it was, for certain anyway, but she jumped in, and we went somewhere, I parked the car first, and that's how it started.

Tape 3: 51 minutes 5 seconds

RL: And when did you marry?

ROL: This was June, or thereabouts, and we married in August the following year, but before we got engaged we really saw each other very infrequently, because 200 miles was a lot in those days. We had to go either by train, unfortunately I did have a car, and it was half a day's journey, so meetings were relatively infrequent, but nevertheless we made it. We got engaged around Christmas time of that year.

RL: What year did you marry?

ROL: In 1955.

RL: And what was her background?

ROL Very similar to mine, and that was one of the attractions between us. Her parents and she, she was an only child, is an only child, lived in Breslau, which was in the south east corner of Germany, which is now part of Poland and is called Wroczlaw. Funnily enough, my father's hometown was Inowroclaw, which is 'New Wroczlaw', 'Ino' is new. And Marianne lived in what is now called Wroczlaw. And her father was a lawyer, a judge, a junior judge, but, in 1933, he had to stop being a judge and worked for a Jewish organisation, which he did very well, in fact he was on the committee of his liberal synagogue, which is in Breslau, and helped on High Holy days and so on.

Tape 3: 52 minutes 46 seconds

And he was taken off to Buchenwald, in 1939, I think it was, and his wife, that's Marianne's mother, well, they both knew a dentist in Breslau, who was, by sheer coincidence, a friend of my father's, but that only came out later, and he was already in London, practising. And she contacted him and said, "We need to get an entry into England, in order to get an exit visa from Germany", to get her husband out of the concentration camp, and he guaranteed for them to come, as a domestic couple, and they didn't turn it down, and came across. My father-in-law was released from Buchenwald, and they came across straight away, but they couldn't take any of their possessions with them, or very, very few, but first went to the West Country, near Bath, as a domestic couple.

RL: And were they able to bring their daughter with them?

ROL: Yes, yes, they came together. In fact, they were a domestic couple for the composer, Michael Tippett, who lived near Bath, in Timsbury.

RL: And, by the time you met Marianne, what was her father doing at that point?

ROL: He had had various jobs, he was promoted from being a domestic to being a lorry driver for a furniture company, but he lost that job for damaging too much furniture. He may have been a good driver, but a lot of furniture was damaged. And he started studying accountancy, which was a difficult course to take and to pass, but he did it and persevered and became an accountant. And

they moved to London, to Belsize Square, Belsize Park. And he had a fairly good accountancy practice. And Marianne's mother worked for URO, United Restitution Organisation, which dealt with applications from refugees for restitution from Germany, started by Konrad Adenauer.

Tape 3: 55 minutes 28 seconds

RL: You mentioned earlier that the talk you gave was at the Liberal Synagogue in Bradford.

ROL: Reform Synagogue.

RL: Sorry, Reform Synagogue, had you changed synagogues?

ROL: We had indeed, we had indeed. The story is that the Reform Synagogue wasn't doing very well in Bradford, the Orthodox was doing very well. And my parents got friendly with two of the leading members of the Reform Synagogue and they came to my parents and said, "You must join the Reform Synagogue, because if you don't and other people don't, the synagogue is going to have to fold". And it pricked my parents' conscience; they didn't want the synagogue to have to close its doors, so they joined the Liberal Synagogue. I remember I wasn't keen on this. I had been a member of the youth group in the Liberal Synagogue and I didn't particularly like the services. And came the High Holy days, which was the first time that we went to synagogue as a family, after I came out of the army, and my parents said, "We have joined the Liberal Synagogue and we think you should join as well". And I didn't want to. And we walked, in those days we walked to synagogue, two miles, and the two synagogues were fairly close to one other, one on one side of the main road, and the other on the other side of the main road. And, as we walked, I knew that, as we came to the dividing line, I would have to make up my mind. And this point came closer and closer and I didn't know what to do, whether to stick with my parents and join the Reform, or dig my heels in and stay with the Orthodox and, at the point when the road went off, I decided to stay with my parents and they heaved a sigh of relief. And I must say I've been very happy in the Reform, I became Chairman eventually, and I am Chairman now, that's the second time round.

Tape 3: 57 minutes 36 seconds

RL: Who were the people your parents were very friendly with and who asked them to join?

ROL: One was the son of the first rabbi of the synagogue. The first rabbi was called Reverend Strauss, but this man changed his name to Stroud, and he became a fairly prosperous man in the textile trade in Bradford. And he was one of the senior people. And the other one was a solicitor called Ralph Yavlon, and Ralph Yavlon and Ollie Stroud were good friends, they all became friends with my parents, or my parents became friends with them, and they asked them to join the Reform Synagogue.

Tape 3: 58 minutes 39 seconds

RL: I think this film is about to end, so we'll stop there.

TAPE 4

Tape 4: 0 minute 13 seconds

RL: So, we've really got to the point of your marriage, and where you married and where you went to live after marriage.

ROL: We got married in the Liberal Synagogue in St Johns Wood because my parents-in-law were members of the Belsize Square Liberal Synagogue. The rabbi of that synagogue had initially said

that he would perform the wedding and, a few weeks beforehand, he rang my parents and said that he was going on holiday and couldn't do it. So we asked the Reform Synagogue minister in Bradford, Rabbi Dr. Bienheim, if he would come to London to perform the ceremony but, for some reason, we chose the Liberal Synagogue in St Johns Wood, rather than the Belsize Square Synagogue, which was very nice.

RL: And did you go away after?

ROL: Yes. We spent our honeymoon in Copenhagen. We both liked travelling, so we thought we'd go abroad. I always had a fascination for Scandinavia. And I always liked travelling, so instead of flying, again, in those days, 1955, flying wasn't the usual means of getting around, so we took the ship to Hoek Van Holland, and then a long distance train to Copenhagen, which took the whole day. It was very nice. We visited, went across to Sweden for a day, went to Elsinore, where Hamlet was placed, went to the Tivoli Gardens, of course, where, as soon as we entered, they played Grieg's piano concerto, which was a bonus. I didn't expect for a classical piece of music to be played in the Tivoli Gardens, but we should have known better.

RL: Is she a lover of music?

ROL: Yes, but more of light music. Gilbert and Sullivan are her favourites and Strauss. I go in more for Mahler and Brahms.

RL: And where did you go to live?

ROL: We lived with my parents, in the attic, until this was ready. We did look around for different houses and none of them suited us particularly, and there was a builder here in Headon, and we made enquiries, and we decided to have a house built. It wasn't much more expensive than buying a second-hand house and we could have exactly what we wanted. The builder showed us a plan and we were able to modify it in various regards and we could have exactly what we wanted.

RL: And what did you have built?

Tape 4: 3 minutes 23 seconds

ROL Originally, it was a five bed-roomed house, not that all the bedrooms were very large, but, anyway, it was five bedrooms and lounge and dining room, but, when we were expecting our fourth child, we decided to build on, and we built an extra lounge, and this sun lounge, in which we are sitting, and an extra bedroom and a balcony outside the bedroom, which we have never used.

RL: And what were you doing work-wise?

ROL: This is where this distant cousin from Bradford comes in, who was the first contact for my father, when my father came here. He had a textile factory in a little place called Heckmondwike, which is between Huddersfield and Bradford. And he wanted to expand and wanted to buy up a row of houses next to his mill, one of which belonged to a dentist, who was ready for retirement. And, whilst I was still in the army, this cousin, Michael Rolm, asked through my parents whether I would be interested in working part-time in this practise, the other part being working with my father, so I said yes. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. So, I started working in this practise, which was completely run-down and had very old equipment, so it didn't, in fact, cost me anything, and Michael Rolm said the first year was rent free. So I started this practise in Heckmondwike, part-time there and part-time for my father. And that worked very well, until the practise in Heckmondwike grew to such an extent that I spent more time there than part-time with my father, until eventually, many years later, I stopped working for my father and worked full-time in Heckmondwike.

Tape 4: 5 minutes 26 seconds

RL: And how long did you work there?

ROL I retired about five years ago, not because I wanted to retire, but the National Health Services Regulations were framed a year or two previously that principals, and I was a principal, couldn't work above a certain age on a sliding scale, and, as I reached that age in that period, I had to sell the practise or stop working altogether. So, I was able to sell the practise, but I did continue to work as an assistant to the new incumbent for a year or two, but it became a bit too difficult, and I wanted to spend more time with the family and at home, so I stopped working altogether.

RL: And did you join or belong to any organisation?

ROL: Yes. It started off by me joining the choir in the synagogue, where I was the only tenor. Although I sang in tune, I didn't sing very well, and one of the members of the congregation, Rita Morris, was a professional pianist and singing teacher, and she sang herself, that was her profession, but she also taught, and I approached her and I said to her, "I know I'm singing in tune but I can't develop the quality. Can you give me singing lessons?" And she said yes. So I went to her once every two or three weeks for singing lessons, and, within a few weeks, I'd found out what I was doing wrong, I was able to sing properly. And eventually, spread over the years, the choir numbers diminished, either by people moving away or, sadly, dying, until eventually now I'm the only person who sings in synagogue. But I thought I was singing well enough to try and join one of the local, large, Yorkshire choirs.

Tape 4: 7 minutes 37 seconds

My first idea was to join the Bradford Festival Choral Society, but they rehearse on a Friday evening, so that was out. So the nearest one was in fact in Leeds, so I made an application to join, and they said I had to take an audition, a test. Having had such bad experiences at university, for passing examinations for dentistry, and when I passed my finals I thought I'd finished with examinations, here was another one, the audition. I didn't know exactly what this entailed but I thought I was good enough to face whatever was thrown at me. Anyway, I passed, and they said, "You can join the choir and sing second tenor". I was a bit disappointed that they didn't say first, but I thought, 'OK, second tenor'. A few years later, this choir, the Leeds Philharmonic, introduced re-auditions every three or four years and, at one of these, the examiner said, "Why are you singing second tenor in the choir?" And I said, "Because the secretary told me to join the second tenors". And he said, "Well, from now on, you're first tenor". So I was very pleased about that. I thought, after all these examination failures, here's one that I passed with flying colours. Recently, I joined the so-called Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association, which was started about six years ago in Leeds. And I thought, when I first got the invitation, I thought, 'No, I'm not going to join, I'm so busy with other things, I'll give this one a miss'. Although the ideals of the organisation were to my taste, I thought I'm not going to tie myself down. And then, at one of the next talks, a friend of ours, Wover Ginsburg, was going to talk about his experiences in Dachau concentration camp.

Tape 4: 9 minutes 50 seconds

And I thought, 'Well, I'll go along, just to support him'. And it was a double bill. He talked and then another lady talked. And I think she was born in a concentration camp, and survived, her mother survived. And she told the story in her talk, of a five or six year-old Jewish girl, whose parents survived concentration camps, but one day this five year-old girl asked her mother, "Why don't Jewish children have grandparents?" And it really shook me to the core this question, and I said, "Right, I'll join". So, after the second or third meeting, the chairman said to me, "I want to propose you to be vice-chairman". And I said, "Why?" And he said, "Because I say so". So I became vice-

chairman. And I only came off last month. At the AGM, I said, "I want to hand over to somebody else". So I was vice-chairman of the association. Their ideals are, first of all, to keep the memory alive amongst those people who were actually witnesses to the Holocaust, to educate the general population, in schools, and adults, and to start an archive of experiences, exactly like the one we are doing now. And this association is starting an archive at Leeds University. I think it is unique in this regard. I know the AJR is doing it and Spielberg is doing it but, of British associations, this particular association is unique in this country to do this, this work.

Tape 4: 11 minutes 50 seconds

RL: And, as vice-chairman, what did your work entail?

ROL: Well, I slid into the position without really knowing what it entailed and I didn't pull my weight properly. The then chairman, who handed over to another person, a lady, they were more in the middle of things, and they did all the work. Where I eventually pulled my weight was to propose lots of thanks to speakers when they came and apparently I did that very well because people keep asking me to do it. Anyway, I was able to raise, by one way or another, a good sum of money towards this archive, £890, but this was a series of coincidences that I was able to raise this money.

RL: And have interviews been done with the money, how is the archive being formed?

ROL: Indeed interviews are being done, by one or two people in Leeds.

RL: And so the archive is being held at the university?

ROL: Yes, but they have written depositions, and audio tape depositions. I don't know if they have video depositions, but they certainly will get round to it.

RL: And how many members are there?

ROL: About eighty now, it started off with very low numbers.

Tape 4: 13 minutes 24 seconds

RL: And where do these people live?

ROL: In Leeds mainly, but in surrounding areas, near Halifax, Bradford, York, Harrogate, all over Yorkshire, but we take people from anywhere, they don't have to live in Yorkshire.

RL: Has this been the first Holocaust group that you have become involved in?

ROL: Yes. It was started by Heinz Skyte, who was the Chairman of the Leeds Jewish Welfare Board. When he retired, either somebody suggested this to him, or he thought of it himself, that it would give him something to do, to start an association of survivors. And it has flourished. In fact, I might say now that we got some funding from the AJR to fund this project.

RL: So, besides the two organisations that you've mentioned, did you belong to anything else? Anything in your profession, or-?

ROL: Oh yes, I was a member of the local dental committee. This was the-, the local dental committee was the lowest rung of being involved in local dental politics. It would be a collection of ten, twelve, fifteen dentists, who would help to regulate, one way or another, National Health Service dentistry. Now they would have an input to the next tier of committees. And, in fact, I

eventually rose to sit on the National Committee that dealt with the National Health Service aspects of dentistry, called the-, not the General Dental Council, that was a professional body, the Dental Services Committee. I've been off it for so many years; I've forgotten what it's called. And we would meet in London four times a year at the headquarters of the British Dental Association and discuss various aspects and make recommendations to the Department of Health, which would occasionally be listened to, not always, but we certainly had an input into the review body, which decided on the rate of pay of dentists. Well, it was the doctors' and dentists' review body and we would have an input on the dental side.

RL: How many years were you active in this capacity?

Tape 4: 16 minutes 3 seconds

ROL: About ten, something like that. We had a three year term, so it was either nine or twelve years, one or the other, I can't remember.

RL: And, in terms of the Jewish community, obviously you've mentioned your involvement with the synagogue. Was there any other involvement in any capacity or in any way?

ROL: I don't think so, not that I can recall. When I joined the synagogue, after a few months, I was voted on to the committee, just as a committee member, but eventually I was given, in fact, I was given the job of looking after burials, after bereavements. And, well, I was put in charge of the cemetery, put it that way, and we would have our own resident rabbi to take funerals. And, eventually, we were no longer able to afford a rabbi, the synagogue had lower numbers, and the synagogue could no longer afford a rabbi. We had visiting rabbis, and these would occasionally come in. But, one day, somebody died and our, the visiting rabbi, whom we would have normally had, was in London, at a meeting. And I couldn't get hold of him. I rang the London house where he was but he didn't come to the phone, for whatever reason, I don't know. So I said to the people, the bereaved people, "Look, I can't get hold of the rabbi, would you mind if I took the service?" They said, "No". They had no option. They said, "Alright". So I took the service and, ever since then, I've taken most of the burials in our synagogue, the most recent one a couple of weeks ago. And I keep getting complimented on it. I sing a bit. I sing the 23rd Psalm, and the El Mali Rachamim, and say the proper prayers, and people say I do it very well. So I found a niche.

Tape 4: 17 minutes 55 seconds

RL: Where is the cemetery?

ROL: It's in a place called Schoolmore, about two miles from here.

RL: And is this specifically a Reform cemetery?

ROL: No, it's part of the general cemetery, we have an enclosed part, which is ours, where we can do what we want, within reason. If we want to bury somebody, we have to go to the local registrar and make all the arrangements. That's the old part, and we could see that the old part was getting full, and so, twenty, thirty years ago, we bought an adjacent part, not actually adjacent, but about 100 yards or so of the old part, so we have two, two cemeteries.

RL: How big was the Reform community when you first joined and what is it like now?

ROL: There would have been 100 families of the Reform Synagogue and perhaps 250 families of the Orthodox Synagogue. The position now is that the Orthodox would have probably about 60 families and the Reform 40. Unfortunately, the Bradford Jewish community is a dying community, and, in ten, twenty years time, I think, both synagogues will no longer be here. And it's exercising

our minds in the Reform Synagogue very much. The Reform Synagogue in Bradford was the third Reform Synagogue to be built in England, the United Kingdom. The first one was West London, in London, the second one was Manchester, in Jackson's Row, but that was bombed during the war, but rebuilt after the war, and Bradford was the third. So Bradford has moved up to be the second one, the second building. So it's a very fine old building, near the centre of Bradford, and we are considering what to do with the building when the people have gone.

Tape 4: 20 minutes 35 seconds

RL: The other refugee families that you mentioned coming to Bradford, which communities did they join?

ROL: Some would join one and some would join the other. I think the majority would join the Orthodox Synagogue, not that they were particularly orthodox. I'm talking about the refugee families. I mean, my parents were orthodox but not ultra orthodox, and, in fact, in Berlin they would certainly have a kosher household. In England, they still had a kosher household, but certainly during the war, when food was scarce, it was difficult to keep a really strict kosher household and, after the war years, it was kept in spirit rather than in actuality. We did not eat Chaza or eels. But we then did buy meat, which was not kosher. In any case, the only kosher butcher in Bradford had given up, so we would have had to go to Leeds or, for that matter, Manchester, to get kosher meat. The difficulty there was too great; it was too much of an encumbrance.

RL: Do you feel that your religious beliefs have changed over the years at all?

ROL: Well, that's a very difficult question to ask to anybody. My father was a very, very firm believer in the existencrlstrong beliefs either way. And I suppose I was brought up in my father's line, but, over the years, I suppose I'm not alone in this, one begins to have doubts one way or another, and we shall never know what the true position is until after we die, and, by then, it's too late to do anything about it. That's the short answer. The long answer I don't think we've got time for.

Tape 4: 22 minutes 54 seconds

RL: Coming to your family, can you take me through your children, and their education, and what they went on to do?

ROL: Yes. Well, Anthony was born in 1959, and, as he was the first-born boy, we had a Pidyon Ha Ben ceremony. We got a Kohen, called Maurice Schaffner, who only died about six months ago; he became a solicitor, and became a prosecuting solicitor for the West Riding of Yorkshire, a very nice man. And he was the Kohen, who redeemed Anthony with a piece of silver. And his name is Moshe Ben Rifoyl. Our second son was born three years later; he's called Jonathan, so naturally his Hebrew is Yonatan Ben Rifoyl. Anthony went to Nottingham, I think it was called Trent University, just south of Nottingham, and studied European Studies, which was mainly French and German, but also a bit of Politics and bit of Economics, where in fact he met his wife. She was on the same course. And they qualified together and they hit it off and they're happily married. And they had one son, Louis, and one of my great-grandfathers was called Louis, so there was continuity there.

RL: So who did Anthony marry?

ROL: A girl called Judith. Asquith was her maiden name. And Anthony, after one or two jobs in management, as he had a degree, is now a middle management person with a firm called Dupuis, in Leeds, part of the Johnson and Johnson Empire. His firm specifically makes artificial joints for

people, for humans. I mentioned humans because our younger daughter does something else for animals. But Judy has recently become a full executive director of the holiday camp, called Centre Parks, which is a very flourishing concern, with headquarters in Nottinghamshire. So they have very good jobs. Jonathan studied hotel management and started work as a waiter on the Queen Elizabeth II cruise liner. He got this job partly because, in his year out from college, he was a waiter at Claridges in London, so that looked very good on his CV. So, anyway, after three months being a waiter on this ship, they saw his potential and made him a petty officer, which was the lowest. He has climbed up steadily until he is now Chief Purser on the new cruise liner, the QM II, which was put into service only in January last month. He has just today come back from the first long tour of duty on the ship, he flew in from Miami. He married Lucy, again a girl he met on the course at Bradford College, they were put together doing their practicals, they were paired off indiscriminately, and these two happened to be paired off. And, although they were friends, there was no closer friendship between them. And they did get engaged about ten years after they first met. This is, well, by design, not-. And they have three children, of whom James is the eldest. I should have said Louis is ten, this is from Anthony, and James is nine, Rebecca is seven and David is four.

Tape 4: 27 minutes 27 seconds

RL: What's Lucy's maiden name?

ROL: Hansar. She is of a mixed marriage, from a Ukrainian father and an Italian mother. A lot of both Ukrainians and Italians came here after the war, as economic migrants, and certainly worked their way up, as opposed to some economic migrants, who come to this country nowadays. Anthony lives about 35 miles away from here, Anthony and Judy that is. Jonathan and Lucy live in Queensbury, which is about four miles from here. Deborah, our elder girl, married a Ged Cunningham, Gerrard Cunningham. Deborah was born in 1968. I should have said, yes, Jonathan was born three years after Anthony in 1962. Deborah and Ged live in Ligid Green, not far from the Jewish cemetery. And they have two children, Daniel who is six and Alex who is five. Now, you will recall that the youngest of my relatives, who died in Auschwitz, was called Daniel, so I'm rather pleased that I still have a Daniel in the family. Whenever I see him, or think of him, I think of the dead Daniel. Deborah studied nursery nursing, and is now a supply nurse, nursery nurse, and is called to different schools in the morning when they want her and does a day's work or a week's work when they need her. Ged works in a factory that makes packaging and cases. Lucy, she didn't get her qualification in hotel management, Lucy is Jonathan's wife, because she failed to hand in her thesis at the end of the course. She worked on it, she had it, it's just that she missed the deadline and has never caught up on it, but she knows a lot about catering and is a very good cook, as indeed is Jonathan, as indeed is Anthony.

Tape 4: 20 minutes 56 seconds

RL: And what was Ged's background?

ROL: A broken family. He has three brothers and a sister, where the biological father apparently beat the children up a lot, and his wife, and she divorced. The mother then married another person, who was very kind, and he unfortunately died when he was very young. And she then got another partner, who also died very young. She is now living with her sister on the coast, on the east coast. But Ged had a very rough time, he didn't go to college, he didn't learn anything, but he's found his feet in the family, he is accepted as valuable a member, as the others are, and as a very assiduous worker, and loves us and his family.

RL: Where was Anthony's wife from?

ROL: From Yorkshire. They lived in the Harrogate area, anyway. Lucy was born in Bradford. She

lost her mother very young and her elder sister, just at the time when her mother died, had left to college, and so it was left to Lucy, who was thirteen, to bring up her younger sister, who was aged eight or so, and it put a severe strain on the whole family, on the father, who was a bus driver, and the two girls, to manage as best they could. And the youngest, our youngest, is Caroline, who studied Chemistry at Newcastle Poly, Polytechnic, as it was then, it's known now as part of the university, I think it's now Northumbria University. Out of her three year course, two years were studied at the poly, but then it became a university. So she got the best of both worlds. The poly had a lot of tutorials, which universities didn't have, and then she became part of the university and had a university degree. And she's had two or three jobs in laboratories, mainly in the pharmaceutical field, and her last job was as manager of a laboratory of a pharmaceutical firm in Skipton, which made, or makes, medicaments for the veterinary profession. But she just had a baby three weeks ago, called Sophie.

RL: And the father?

ROL: She married Rob, Robert Brown, who was also born in Bradford, and he's got two degrees, one in Chemistry I think, I can't remember what the other one was, but he does research on water and soil, he tests water and soil for different organisations, and works in Bradford.

RL: As children growing up, did they belong to any clubs, or-?

Tape 4: 33 minutes 40 seconds

ROL: All four of our children took the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme, first the bronze, then the silver, then the gold, and each of them got the gold award. Now, I forget where Anthony got his award, whether he was in London or Bradford, but Jonathan went to Buckingham Palace to get his award from the Duke of Edinburgh, but Marianne went, as the parent. Then, Deborah and Caroline got theirs, and, because two children got the award, both of us could go as parents, so again the Duke of Edinburgh presented them with the award. They were all members of scouts or guides, and, again, they took their various qualifications and certificates and got awards. One or two of them got an award from the Lord Mayor of Bradford and went to City Hall.

RL: Were they involved in any Jewish activities at all?

ROL: Yes. Anthony went over to Leeds once or twice, to join, to take part in Jewish activities, but he didn't care for it very much, and didn't go again. Added to that was of course the fact that he didn't have a car, and it meant catching a bus into town, and then a train from here to Leeds, and then another bus over the other end. It was, the Yiddish word is a 'schlep', and he didn't like it anyway, so he gave it up.

RL: Did they have any Hebrew education?

ROL: Oh yes, the successive rabbis of the Reform Synagogue gave them Hebrew education. I don't think much stuck with them like it did with me. Each of the four children played the clarinet in the school bands or orchestras. And each, when they left school, stopped playing the clarinet. And, in the same way when they stopped having Hebrew lessons or Jewish education lessons, the enthusiasm evaporated and they had other interests, like studying. So the Jewish and musical studies, if they are called studies, fell by the wayside.

RL: Did they show much interest in your background and, you know, in your story?

Tape 4: 36 minutes 24 seconds

ROL: Not particularly. And it is a fact that none of them wanted to become a dentist and, as the

conditions in the National Health Service weren't particularly conducive to a very good life, although I made the best of it, and I'm not grumbling, but I couldn't really recommend it to them as a vocation, and they didn't particularly feel that they wanted to become dentists, so I didn't push it. What was the question?

RL: I was thinking in terms of your refugee experience. Did they take interest in it?

ROL: Oh yes. They didn't, about which both Marianne and I are a bit surprised, that they haven't probed into our background. Although the one exception was Jonathan, who went to Marianne's mother, after she was widowed, with a tape recorder and asked her to relate her experiences, and he has this tape, and that is the only in-depth enquiry that any of them have made. Sometimes we talk about it and they listen but they don't probe any further, they don't want us to expand on what we've told them. Which is why I think interviews like this, which are important for all sorts of reasons, and presumably we're going to get a copy, that they will be in our library, that, in the years to come, they will be played by our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren.

RL: What does their Jewish identity mean to the children, would you say?

ROL: None. None. All four of them married out. One of them, I don't want to say who it was, said that religion no longer plays anything in their lives, and the same applies to the other three, although they haven't spoken about it in so many words, but that is the position. They sometimes come to synagogue, for special occasions, like Hanukah, or Purim, or whatever, but only because I ask them to. And, for the Ukrainian Christmas, they go to the church for that, but they have no religious input at all from their parents. And I suppose, this is coming back to your earlier question about my attitude to Judaism, this is the way of the world. Who knows what part religion will play in people's lives in fifty years or a hundred years from now? I don't know.

Tape 4: 39 minutes 5 seconds

RL: How do you feel about that?

ROL: Well, all I can say is that both my grandfathers were very orthodox people. Again, I use the word, they were not ultra-orthodox, they were orthodox, in the way that people were orthodox a hundred years ago. My parents, my father was orthodox in the way that I've explained. Marianne was not, my father-in-law was not particularly orthodox, and Marianne certainly wasn't. And, although we still don't have Chaza in the house, we have the same crockery and cutlery for one or the other, for milchig and fleischig, and I do have milk with meat, not-, whichever way it comes. I don't consciously say, "I can't drink this drink with milk in it because I've just had some meat". That kind of aspect of religion, where it says in the Bible you shouldn't see the kid in its mother's milk, it's passé. I know a lot of people think this is important, I don't think it's important. But it's a question of where do you draw the line and I'm fully appreciative of that. Rabbi Lionel Blum, who was on the radio only a couple of days ago, on the 'Thought for the Day', he was very friendly with my mother. My mother thought very highly of him. He was a very intelligent fellow, I've met him a few times. He once preached a sermon in which he touched on this particular subject and he said, "To one person, one particular aspect of religion is important. To another person, it's something else". One person will take the bus to go to synagogue but not eat treif. Another person will walk to synagogue but he will eat treif. It's just a personal perception. I'm not talking about the very orthodox people. They have their rules and regulations, they keep to them, that's fine, they believe in it, good. But, I have to be careful about how I choose my words, more emancipated people, integrated people, they will choose how to-. I'm a very religious person, in a way. If I take funerals, they say that to attend to the dead is one of the highest honours that you can do, and I do this, when I say frequently, fortunately, we don't have so many deaths, but I do it whenever it occurs. And I'm chairman of the synagogue, one way or another, so I do my bit. But the minutiae of what it says in the Bible, keeping Kashrut and all that, I keep a very open mind about it.

Tape 4: 42 minutes 15 seconds

RL: Are there any aspects of it that you have still kept because of your background or tradition or whatever?

ROL: Yes, well, as I say, I don't eat Chaza. For those who don't understand Hebrew, it's pig meat. Although, for many years, I ate salami without knowing that it contained pig meat, and when I found out, I still ate it because I thought it was silly to have been eating it for years and years without knowing and then suddenly to stop because I found out. In fact, I don't eat it because it contains a lot of fat and I don't want to put on weight, but that's another story. Yes, well, we have Mezuzahs on the doors, and that's how it is.

RL: And in terms of the festivals?

ROL: Well, I do fast on Yom Kippur, which is difficult because I sing all the time, so I have to work hard. The Yiddish expression is 'schwer und bitter'. I have to sing. But, up to now, I've managed to fast. The time will come when perhaps I won't be able to. I used to walk to synagogue on Yom Kippur, well, I used to walk to the synagogue on all festivals, but again, that has subsided. Now, the last twenty years, I've walked to synagogue on Yom Kippur; the last couple of years, as Heaton is on a hill, and I find walking up hills a bit difficult, I've said, "I'm sorry, either I go to synagogue by car, or I don't go". That's the way it is. And I think this system in London, if I can be political, to have the wire around certain areas of Golders Green and Stamford Hill, so that people can use prams or wheel a parent or whoever to synagogue, an invalid chair, I think it is ludicrous to have to invent a wire, or whatever it's called, I've forgotten the name now, that is ludicrous, but I think it's right that people should be able to push a pram or an invalid chair, so that people can go to synagogue, or even take the car, if they can't otherwise walk, that is correct.

RL: Do you still hold a Seder?

ROL: Oh yes, well, I go to my sister's to hold a Seder. Our children aren't interested. When my parents were still alive, they came to the Seder with my parents, and, for the first two years after my father died, I had a Seder here and they came. When they got married, their spouses were not particularly interested and Winnie said one year, "Well, come and take our Seder here in London", where there were more relatives. One of their daughters lived there and this cousin, who had the mill in Heckmondwike, moved to London, and so he came, and one or two other people. So I now regularly go to my sister's in Golders Green to take the Seder for them and I read a lot of it in English, so that people know what it's all about. Well, the Manishtana is still said in Hebrew, but also in English.

Tape 4: 45 minutes 31 seconds

I: When did your parents die?

ROL: My father died after his 90th birthday, in 1981, and my mother died of cancer and a stroke superimposed one on the other in 1983. So, my father died at the good old age of 90 and my mother only 92, sorry, 82.

RL: And were they still living in the same place in Bradford?

ROL: Oh yes, in the same house, that wasn't vacated by the previous owners in time for us to move in.

RL: In terms of your nationality, how would you describe yourself?

ROL: Well, we were naturalised, I was naturalised some time after my parents, I think in 1947, and I consider myself British. I don't think I've got an accent, so when I talk to people they wouldn't know that I wasn't English. My patients in Shipley and Heckmondwike wouldn't even know that I was Jewish or not born in England, and to them it would appear that I was British, as indeed I am. Sometimes it crops up, that I have to state on a form, I filled one in yesterday, for travel, 'Where were you born?', 'What was your previous nationality?'. And I put I was born in Berlin, my previous nationality was German, but that's a one-off, I thought this was unnecessary. It was on the form, so I had to fill it in just for travelling to Sicily. But I consider myself British, we have very good Christian friends, whom we see regularly, and they of course know that we are Jewish and our heritage, but to them we are British. No question about it.

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

ROL: I don't think so. If I go round to our neighbours for any specific purpose, like a branch fell down in the neighbour's garden a few months ago and I had to sort that out, and I spoke to them and other neighbours. Actually, most of our neighbours are now Pakistanis. Well, our immediate neighbours, when they come here, the first question when they come here is, "Are you Christian?" Well, we don't lie to them, we say, "No, we're Jewish". And we're still on very good neighbourly terms. But other neighbours, we're British, there's no wall between us, there's no problem.

RL: Do you feel you've got any kind of continental identity?

ROL: Marianne doesn't like me to say this, but Kennedy coined the phrase 'Ich bin ein Berliner' and nobody can take that away from me. I was born in Berlin and nobody can take that away from me and that's it. So I've been back to Berlin several times, principally because I have two cousins, who still live there, and before they died, their parents, who I visited, but I've also been back to visit the school Berlin has invited ex-citizens of Berlin back to see their home town. As indeed many German towns have done, for a visit. So I've been back twice under that scheme. The first time they paid my fare or hotel, and the second time just the hotel. They wouldn't pay twice. Anyway, I've been back twice, and I've been back to the school, and so I've been back to Berlin several times. And it feels my birthplace, I feel at home, but I'm just as pleased to be getting on the plane to come back to Bradford.

RL: And how did it feel the first time you went back?

ROL: Well, the first time was when I was in the army and I was invited by the Jewish organisation within the army to come to a Seder in Hamburg. So I travelled all the way for free, because the army paid for it, from Austria, to Germany and Hamburg, for a Seder. Now, I have to go back a bit. When I first went to Austria, I went by train, from Hoek van Holland to Ferlch in Austria and the train went through Germany. And that was the first time I'd set foot, albeit in a railway carriage, and I felt very uncomfortable. We for years didn't buy anything from Germany, and we hated everything that was German, and we didn't speak German in the street, this was during the war mainly, when we didn't want to be identified as enemy aliens, who spoke English. But I felt very uncomfortable on German soil. There is a story that I can relate: the train changed engines and personnel in Munich on the way, this was a special army train, only for army personnel, and it stood in the station in Munich and, by chance, there was a local train on the next track to mine with no platforms in between and the destination board said Dachau. Now, up to that time, this was 1952, although our Great Aunt Hulda had lived with us, as I said earlier, we hadn't really spoken to her about her experience, nobody knew about the Holocaust. We knew it had happened. But this was the first time that I saw something in black and white that related to a concentration camp. I almost burst into tears when I saw this. I looked into the train and there were people reading their paper, smoking the pipe or cigarettes, talking, and I thought, 'How can they lead a normal life on a train to Dachau?' But, of course, it was a suburb of Munich, and people lived ordinary lives. That was my

introduction to concentration camps.

Tape 4: 52 minutes 21 seconds

Now, when I went to Hamburg for this Seder, it was called the Moral Leadership Course, led by Reverend Ginsburg, I think his name was, and I had a very nice time, and I went by train, and I went through Germany, they paid not only for the ticket but for the sleeper as well and, in the morning, the waiter brought breakfast, and it cost a certain amount of money, and I paid the exact amount, I didn't leave a tip, I didn't tip him, because I thought I'll just pay for what I ate, but I'm not going to tip a German. It's a small thing, but that was my feeling about Germany.

RL: And then on subsequent visits, when you went back as part of the schemes, how did you feel back then?

ROL: It was different. And it was made different, I suppose, because Konrad Adnauer, was it, the first president of Germany, who instituted a system of restitution for refugees? And some people including my parents, got, when I say a lot of money, it wasn't millions, but the restitution was of a good proportion, it was a good size. But I knew that all Germans living in Germany had to pay through their taxes to pay for this restitution. I got some money as well, not an awful lot, but I thought, 'Well, they are trying to make good'. Now, people have refused this restitution and have said, "No money can make good what the Germans did during the war, I don't want blood money". But my parents thought, and I thought, 'Well, if the money is there, we'll take it'. And it certainly helped to smooth over the past, to recognising Germany again. Of course, over the years, the ones who were the perpetrators would have died out or were even punished, one way or another, and so certainly the present generation now, 2004, had nothing to do with the Holocaust, so the situation now is different.

RL: And when you returned to Berlin, did you visit places of your past?

Tape 4: 55 minutes 5 seconds

ROL: Well, the first time, I certainly visited the house where we used to live, which was bombed during the war, and the court house. The flats where we lived had gone and it was now occupied by a bank, just on one level, squeezed between the houses on either side. I went to see my old school, the elementary school, but I couldn't go to the Jewish school because that was in East Berlin. But I caught up on that later, but that's another story. I went to see where my aunt and her husband lived, and their children. They studied after the war. My male cousin became a doctor, in fact a bone specialist, and my female cousin a physiotherapist. And they still live in Berlin today. Now, in 1987, it was my turn to be invited by Berlin. In fact, I asked to be invited because it was the 750th anniversary of the founding of Berlin. And I took the opportunity, with the help of one of my pre-war friends, to visit East Berlin, specifically the cemetery. Because I was involved with the cemetery here, I thought I'd like to visit the cemetery. Before the war, my parents often talked about Weissensee, it was the-, not the only Jewish cemetery, but certainly the largest Jewish cemetery in Berlin. And when somebody died, they said, "Today we have to go to Weissensee". And the name Weissensee, which means 'white lake', assumed an aura, a sort of mystical ambience, it was something which I had never seen, but people had talked about it, and, now that I was in Berlin in 1987, there was a free half-day, so I asked my friend could he help me get to it. So, he said he had to-, he had a car, and so I took the train to the Friedrichstrasse, which was a crossing point, he took the car, of course, we met at the station, and he drove me to the cemetery.

RL: OK, we'll just take a break there, as the film is about to finish.

Tape 4: 57 minutes 31 seconds

TAPE 5

Tape 5: 0 minutes 9 seconds

RL: You were just telling me about your visit to the cemetery, the Jewish cemetery, in East Berlin.

ROL: My friend, who had a car, took me by car from the crossing point at Friedrichstrasse, through East Berlin to the cemetery, where I knew that several of my relatives were buried. And I wanted to look up their graves. We only had perhaps an hour and a half altogether, and it took me some time to locate in the office where these graves were, it's a very large cemetery, perhaps a half mile, and I was very shocked at the state of this cemetery, in fact. It resembled a jungle frankly. Some main paths were discernible, and we decided to try and locate at least one of those graves, which we managed to do with a lot of difficulty, but I did find the grave of one of my great aunts, one of the sisters of my grandmother. I should have mentioned that my grandmother died in Theresienstadt, and we found out later that people's ashes were normally thrown into the local river, so there was no grave for my grandmother.

Tape 5: 1 minutes 27 seconds

But this particular great aunt died and she was buried there and we found the grave, very much overgrown with thorn bushes and ivy, and so I cleaned it up as best I could with bare hands. And then we had to go back, get back to the West. But I was really upset by the state of the cemetery, and I thought what could be done? Eventually, I tumbled into the idea to start a fund for people to contribute money to help clean up the cemetery. Well, it took a lot of thought as to how to set about it. Fortunately, the Lord Mayor of Bradford had connections with the East German Embassy in London, because Bradford was very loosely twinned with a town in East Germany called Erfurt, and he contacted the embassy and they sent up a senior secretary specially to Bradford to speak to me. I told this man what I wanted to do, and he arranged for me an interview with the religious department of East Germany in Berlin, some time ahead, so I went over specially for this. Before I went to the building where the interview was to take place, I visited the Jewish community headquarters in East Berlin, and, fortunately, was able to persuade the receptionist to allow me to talk to the chairman and secretary, because she said they were busy, in a committee, and goodness knows what, and I said, "Well, I'm here now, and I insist on seeing them". So she relented. And afterwards we became very good friends. And I told them of my endeavours, and they said, "Oh, we get one of these every two or three months, and we never hear from the people again". And I said, "Well, you'll hear from me". I went round, fortunately within walking distance to the building where the interview was to take place, and I found three very amiable, very nice gentlemen at the interview, these were all from the communist regime, but in the religious department. And two of them were - had probably studied religion - and were theologians and had a proper interest, but the third one was, I think, a member of the Communist Party, who just made sure that everything was above the law. So I told them what I wanted to do, and they said, "Well, that's fine", and they said, "Let's go out to the cemetery and have a look", where they'd never been. On the way downstairs to take the official car to the cemetery was the head of the religious department, a man called Gysi. I knew the name, I knew who he was anyway, and he knew that I was coming, and he was pleased to meet me and I think he arranged to be at a certain place where he knew that we were going to come down. Because a Swiss dentist, about a hundred years ago or more, was the inventor of a special small machine, called an 'articulator', for making dentures, he was called Gysi, and the machine is called a 'Gysi articulator', and so I knew the name, and this man was one of his descendants. There was no time to talk about this, he just said hello and we went in the car and we went to the cemetery. I took a cap with me, but they went to the local porter's office to get a cap, for which they had to pay a deposit on it. And they were aghast at the state of the cemetery and they said, "Yes, you're quite right, it does need attention". So I went back home and I went to the Jewish organisation again and told them I'd been to the government. And they said, "Well, see what you can do". The government said they would give me all the help they can, they opened a bank account for me, they said any money that comes in, I don't have to pay any tax on, no income tax or any other tax. I think they were genuinely interested in my doing this work, but I think, at the same time, they were looking forward to some foreign currency coming into the country. But I'm being

unkind if I say this.

Tape 5: 6 minutes 1 second

I came back home and started writing to people: the Jewish Chronicle, the AJR, the magazine, and started it off. And it was a letter in the Jewish Chronicle that started it off because it's read fairly worldwide. Contributions came pouring in. A lady who died, a spinster lady in Bradford, who always made out that she was a pauper, left in her will a quarter of a million pounds, and this is going back fifteen years, and I was one of her executors, so I got ten thousand pounds out of her money for this. This was a charity. I registered it with the Charity Commissioners, and so this was a bona fide donation from her estate. The other executors were Lloyds Bank, so I couldn't just act on my own, so it was sanctioned in a proper way. But that certainly gave the funder a boost. And I got several thousand pounds in. I wanted half a million pounds, but I got nowhere near, and I conversed with the secretary of the Jewish community and said, "I've got so much money, make a start", and they did.

Tape 5: 7 minutes 19 seconds

And, of the many fields on the cemetery, I managed to finance the cleaning up of four of them. And, in the middle of these four fields, there is now a plaque that says, "These fields were cleaned up by the Weissensee Cemetery Foundation, based in Bradford". Unfortunately, they didn't put my name on it, so it just says Bradford. So, I said, "Well, OK, I've just done my Mitzvah and that's it". But then, of course, the wall came down, and the West Berlin Jewish community helped, and the cemetery is now in a very good state of repair. In the meantime, I had visited my other relatives' graves on subsequent visits and found them. One was rather hilarious, if I can put hilarity into a cemetery visit. This particular grave, I think it was of one of my great grandparents, was in the middle of these jungle fields, and you couldn't see more than three yards. We knew that there were markers at the edge of this particular field, of all fields, A, B, C, and markers along the other edge, like that - A, B, C here, and 1, 2, 3 there - and one of the ladies from the office of the cemetery stood at number 10 and I stood opposite G. And we said, "Right, we'll walk forward" and we would shout hello to each other, and when we met, that was where the grave was: longitude and latitude! An amazing experience.

RL: Was the stone still there?

ROL: Oh yes, yes, the cemetery wasn't damaged at all during the war. In fact, there was more damage since than during the war. For some reason, Hitler wanted to keep this as a memento of the Jewish population after he had eradicated it.

RL: You mentioned how you had revisited the school, the Jewish school. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

ROL: I've been back a few times. One was the re-union of past pupils, where people came from all over the world, that was the time that I played the piano a little bit and played the Schubert song. And two classes were put together and I was asked to give a talk to them about my life in Berlin, life at the school, because to them it was a closed book. Normally in a school there are decades or even centuries of history to a school but here there was a gap of '42 to '92, fifty years. A fifty year gap, where the school didn't exist. It had existed before and now it existed again. And both the teachers and the children were very interested. After that, I was videoed by one of the teachers for about an hour, again for more experiences. I went back last year for the tenth anniversary of the opening of the school and again a lot of pupils came from different parts of the world, and they had the piano restored again, by Bechstein, the famous piano manufacturers. The piano was, in fact, a Steinway, and they asked Steinway, even more famous for their piano manufacturing, to do it, and they quoted a very high figure, which the school just couldn't afford, so they went to Bechstein to see whether they could do it, and they said yes, they would. By chance, quite a few workers from Steinway had recently moved to the Bechstein firm, so the technicians, who did the restoration

were, in fact, Steinway people, and so it was Bechstein. And there was for the first time a ceremony, and I think it was in September, the piano was used in its restored form and the children sang songs. The ceremony, it was opened by a children's choir from the school, and again it brought tears to my eyes. Here was a Jewish choir, singing in Germany, singing Hebrew songs and German songs, and I thought, 'Well, fifty years ago, they couldn't have done this'. And the school has opened, or re-opened, and here were these children singing freely and with joy. It affected the ex-pupils like myself. And there were several speeches of course, by dignitaries, Jewish and non-Jewish, representatives from the parliament, the Berlin parliament.

RL: Had you re-visited the elementary school?

Tape 5: 12 minutes 42 seconds

ROL: Yes, on one of my previous visits, I visited the school. I had written to the headmistress, as she was, to say that I was an ex-pupil, I'd like to look round. So this was by appointment. And as I walked along one of the corridors, a teacher came out of the room, who knew that I was coming, and she introduced herself and asked would I come and say a few words to her class. And so I was very unprepared for this, I declined, I said, "Well, I'm not prepared, I can't speak off the cuff, but if I come another time I'd gladly do so", not thinking that I'd come even within five or ten years again. But the opportunity arose to come again, so I wrote to the headmistress and I said I want to keep my promise and I'll gladly talk to however many children as you can gather in the school and tell them about my experiences. And it was arranged. Two classes came together. They were the top classes, the ten and nine year-olds, and I spoke in the assembly hall where I used to sit as a pupil. Of course I stood on the stage and that was the first time I made any speech without notes. I had obviously prepared myself. Whenever I've made any speech, and I've made plenty, I always had the music, I say music, the script in front of me, like I said earlier, I can't learn any poetry or anything by heart. Tunes I can remember, yes, but not words.

Tape 5: 14 minutes 21 seconds

But this is the first time I spoke without notes and again it went down very well. The children had no idea. I didn't vilify Hitler too much. I certainly said what he did and what he represented. I said he started off well, building car manufacturing places, like Volkswagen, and building motorways, and then he branched out in not so good directions, like expansion and hating the Jews, and I said that certainly was bad. I didn't give him any appropriate name-calling or word-calling that certainly he deserved. Incidentally, when I write the word Hitler, I always give him a small letter at the beginning; he doesn't deserve a capital letter.

RL: Did they ask any questions?

ROL: Yes, very appropriate ones, very intelligent ones. I was very surprised.

RL: And when did you give this talk?

ROL: About five years ago. Five or six years ago.

RL: Is there anything else about your visits back that you would like to say?

ROL: I went to the re-opening of one of the synagogues in Berlin, which was saved during Kristallnacht, which was saved because the hall porter, who was not Jewish, turned the advancing Nazi hordes, who were advancing to destroy it and torch it, away, saying, "You can't do that here". And they went away and the building was saved. But, unfortunately, it was bombed during the war by a British bomb, only the facade remained, and this was partly rebuilt during the East German regime, when Honecker, the president of East Germany wanted to ingratiate himself to American Jews because he wanted their money. But we went to the opening ceremony when they were going

to start rebuilding the synagogue. But we did go to the opening a couple of years later, when it was only partially rebuilt, and there was a big ceremony when the then President Köhler came, he came to speak, and various other representatives of the German Parliament, the Berlin Parliament, and certainly the Jewish community. And where the synagogue stood, it was left an open space, it was not built on, they just didn't have the money to rebuild the whole structure, and round and round on the roofs of the surrounding buildings, were policemen with guns, for protection, in case of terrorist attacks. And I thought, 'That's a change, fifty odd years ago policemen were there to kill and now they were there to protect'. That affected me greatly as well.

Tape 5: 17 minutes 48 seconds

RL: What was the synagogue called?

ROL: Oranienburgerstrasse. The name was after the street. A big thing was made of the reopening, it had a big golden dome put on top, which was lowered down by helicopter, it was a big thing, it was written about in the papers. When we went to, when Honecker fixed the plaque on the building saying we're going to rebuild this, we happened to be on the platform with Honecker, and there's a picture somewhere of Marianne next to Honecker, which our cousins, who were in West Berlin, they didn't want to know, they won't have anything to do with East Berlin, they regard East Germany as an enemy. When we telephoned them, the telephone company had an arrangement between East and West Berlin, they had three lines to connect East and West Berlin, and I was fortunate in getting one of the lines because I wanted to tell my cousins that we were likely to be on the East German newsreel, news bulletin on television that evening, and they just didn't want to know, they didn't want to know.

RL: Have you ever visited Israel?

ROL: Yes.

RL: And how did you feel going there?

Tape 5: 19 minutes 16 seconds

ROL: Well, the first time, about fifteen, sixteen years ago, I have several relatives, both from my mother's and my father's side, and I decided to visit them both. And I had a friend in Jerusalem, who had stayed with us many, many years ago, as an exchange child, not that one of our children went over to Israel, but she came as a visitor. So I stayed three days with one set of relatives and three days with another and one day I spent going to Jerusalem and stayed with this person, and it was a lovely visit, and I hadn't seen these relatives for a very long time, although I corresponded with them. And I saw Jerusalem, I was very-. I have a Haggadah, a children's Haggadah, where there's a drawing of Jerusalem. This was made in the 1930s, long before Israel existed, or Palestine existed as a proper entity, and there's a boy on a sheep or a camel or something, blowing a recorder, and buildings in the background, purporting to be Jerusalem, the sun rising and in Hebrew, saying, 'Next Year in Jerusalem'. It was a very romantic picture, and when I took the bus from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, I stopped in a dirty bus station with people bustling around and the smell of petrol; it was not what I expected of Jerusalem at all. But I made up for it, I went to the Old Quarter, of course, and Yad Vashem, and I got a good enough impression, although the first impression was not conducive to what I expected. And then we went again. A friend of ours, the daughter of some good friends of my parents here, refugee people from Vienna, this friend of ours had three sons, one of whom became very ultra-orthodox and settled in Israel, at least semi-permanently, and married also an ultra-orthodox girl from America. And our friend rang us up and said, "Sam is getting married, would you contemplate coming?" And so we thought, 'Not many people are going to come from England for the wedding', so we thought we'd go, and we combined it, of course, with visiting relatives and friends. So we went to this ultra-orthodox wedding in Jerusalem, which was an eye-

opener, an experience in itself, which was very fascinating. I mean, women were separate, although, after the meal, there was an exchange of visits, women came over and men came over, visits to the other side, but it was quite an experience. Also the wedding ceremony.

RL: Was that different?

ROL: Well, I have seen the bride going round the bridegroom here in England but not very often, but there it was certainly done and, apart from that, the seven blessings were sung and various other prayers. I sing the seven blessings when we have a wedding in synagogue, which is very rare, we haven't had a wedding in years, but when it does happen, I sing the Sheva Brachot.

RL: When was the last wedding at the synagogue here?

ROL: Oh goodness, it was Sylvia Rothschild, who is a rabbi herself, and her brother is a rabbi, and her parents lived in Bradford. Unfortunately for them, they're no relation of the famous Rothschild family. They got married in our synagogue and that was probably twenty years ago. It's strange that in one family there should be two rabbis.

RL: Is that a refugee family?

ROL: Yes. He was a refugee from Germany, but the mother was born in Bradford. I can tell a funny story about her father, who died ten years ago. He moved into an old age home in Leeds, and both Marianne and I visited another lady in the old age home, and Esther's father, this old man, sat in the porch of the home. And I said, "Oh, hello, Mr. Bergsenbern, how are you? "I'm very well, thank you." "How have you spent your day?" He said, "A marvellous day". I said, "What did you do?" He said, "I went to a funeral". I said, "Oh, how's that?" He said, "Oh, a man came along, and gathered up ten men, and took us in a minibus to a funeral, and somebody said Kaddish and they gave us each half a crown and a cup of tea and brought us back. That was my outing for the day".

Tape 5: 24 minutes 37 seconds

RL: Is there anything else you would like to add that we've not touched upon?

ROL: I don't think so.

RL: You were going to sing for us the memorial prayer?

ROL: Yes.

RL: Before that, is there any message you would like to give?

ROL: Hillel said, standing on one leg, "Do as you would be done by", if I'm quoting him correctly. I suppose that's a good message for people. All the rest is commentary. Yes. We recently had the Holocaust Memorial Day in Huddersfield, in Bradford, and Leeds. And, in the previous two years, I sang El Mali Rachamim at all three, twice in one day, but this year, for some reason, I didn't sing it in Huddersfield, for which the organiser has already apologised. He realised his mistake. He said, "Next year, we will ask you again". So I sang it in Bradford and Leeds. In Bradford in the afternoon, in Leeds in the evening. Now I include in it, where it says in the middle, it says, "We pray for the souls of..." I mentioned the six million Jews, who perished, and the names of the two youngest of my relatives, who perished in Auschwitz. Shall I do that now? I'll have to get my cap.

Tape 5: 26 minutes 44 seconds

He stands up, sings the El Mali Rachamim in Hebrew.

Tape 5: 30 minutes 4 seconds**END OF INTERVIEW****PHOTOS****Tape 5: 30 minutes 10 seconds**

This is an invoice from my paternal grandfather's shoe-shop in Inowrocław. He was called Rudolf, after whom I am named. And below it is a photograph of his shoe-shop. It was taken in the first decade of the twentieth century. My grandfather died in 1911, so it must have been before then.

Tape 5: 30 minutes 50 seconds

This is a photograph of my paternal grandfather, Rudolf Librowicz, after whom I am named. He died in 1911. He had a shoe-shop in Inowrocław. And I must assume that this photograph was taken by the river in Inowrocław, and again it must have been taken in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Tape 5: 31 minutes 19 seconds

This is my four generations photograph. From left to right, the adults are my father, Hans Librowicz, in the middle, his mother, Berta Librowicz, and, on the right, her father, Louis Markus, and the baby is myself. I was born in 1926, and my great grandfather died in 1927. And the picture must have been taken somewhere in those years, and it was taken in the home of, presumably, my grandmother, in Berlin.

Tape 5: 32 minutes 8 seconds

This is a photograph of my parents, on the left my mother, Louise Librowicz, on the right, my father, Hans Librowicz, taken probably in 1925, soon after they married, and taken in Berlin.

Tape 5: 32 minutes 33 seconds

My father was a doctor in the First World War. On the left, the Iron Cross, which he got for some kind of bravery, which he never talked about; on the right is the medal, which everyone who fought in the war got for merely having fought. My father's name is Hans Librowicz, Doctor. The medals were awarded in Berlin, where he then lived.

Tape 5: 33 minutes 15 seconds

This is a family photograph taken in Berlin in about 1939. In the back row, from left to right: Alfred Stimming, orthopaedic surgeon, Artur Blumental, Elli Stimming who is married to Alfred Stimming, then two sisters, Else Markus and Hede Markus, and on the right, Werner Simon. Now in the front row is Evi Simon, who was married to Werner on the right; Hulde Gembitzky, who was one of the sisters of my grandmother, then Hanusch Markus, who is the mother of the two sisters in the back row, Else and Hede Markus, and the little boy in the centre is Wolfgang Stimming, the son of Elli and Alfred Stimming in the back row. Then there's Berta Librowicz, my grandmother, then there is Helga Stimming, the sister of Wolfgang and daughter of Elli and Alfred, and then my Great Aunt Eta. Now, in the background on the wall, are photographs of my great grandparents, they must be the parents of my grandmother, Berta.

Tape 5: 34 minutes 51 seconds

This was taken in the woods attached to the suburb of Berlin where we lived, called Grunewald. The translation would be "the green forest". On the left is myself, aged about eight or nine, and my sister, who is four years younger. My name is Rudolf, of course, Rudy, and my sister is called, well, she was then called Laura Elvine, she's now called Winnie. Now this Grunewald had a swimming bath, a swimming pool, where we occasionally went on a Sunday, and we got there one day and

there was a sign outside, 'Hunde und Juden nicht erlaubt': 'Dogs and Jews not allowed'. Note the order in which it was painted on: dogs first, then Jews.

Tape 5: 35 minutes 54 seconds

This is a class photograph of the first year of my elementary school in Berlin in 1932. On the right, the class teacher Fräulein Raage. On her right, and partly hidden by her, is myself, Rudy Leavor. Now the other Jewish boys in this class, they are in the front row: second from the left, Felix Frankfurter, now called Felix Franks, who now lives in London; in the front row, third from the right, Wolfgang Bloch, called Walter Bloch, who lives in Los Angeles, and just below the back row, on the left, there is a gap in the back row, and just below, to the right of the gap, is Michael Baumann, who lived just north of San Francisco but sadly died a few years ago. These are the three Jewish boys in the class.

Tape 5: 37 minutes 8 seconds

Of the four Jewish boys in the first year of the elementary school in Berlin one, Michael Baumann, sadly died a few years ago, but this was a reunion of the remaining three. Felix Franks, as he is now called, on the left; myself, Rudy Leavor, then Hedi Franks, wife of Felix, then Marianne, my wife, then Sidelle Bloch, the wife of, on the far right, Walter Bloch, they both live in Los Angeles. This was taken in Rutland, Leicestershire, United Kingdom, about five years ago.

I: Which would be the year?

ROL: The year? About 1999.

Tape 5: 38 minutes 7 seconds

This is Marianne, my wife; this was taken soon after we got married in 1955, in Bradford.

Tape 5: 38 minutes 21 seconds

This is a photograph taken on the occasion of Marianne's 70th birthday, it shows all our four children, their spouses and six of our grandchildren, our seventh grandchild was born some months after this photograph was taken. It was taken in Blackpool where we held the celebration, the year was 2003.

Tape 5: 38 minutes 54 seconds

This is Sophie Hannah Brown, the latest addition grandchild, born to Caroline and Rob, and this photograph was taken when she was two weeks old. It was taken in her home in Eastbourne just about a week or so ago. 2004.

Tape 5: 39 minutes 24 seconds

On the left is our younger son, Jonathan, who was purser on the cruise liner, QEII, at the time, meeting her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, who is on the right. The picture was taken on board QEII, about 1995.

Tape 5: 39 minutes 44 seconds

[Wide shot of Rudolf Leavor with cap and Torah]. This Sefer Torah was written specially for my father's Bar Mitzvah, which took place in 1903. The Sofer, or scribe, wrote the different parts of the Torah in his hometown of Bromberg, to the East of Inowrocław, and each time a parchment piece was ready, he would bring it across the border to my father's house, who would pay him out in gold coins, my father kept telling me over the years, and eventually all the pieces were ready and the Sofer sewed them all together and made a Torah out of it. My father read from the Torah at his Bar Mitzvah. We were fortunate enough to bring the Torah out with us when we emigrated, and I read from the Torah at my Bar Mitzvah in 1939 and our two boys read from this Torah at their Bar Mitzvahs. Anthony was born in 1959, so that was 1972, and Jonathan in 1975. And, as you can see, it's still in my possession.

Tape 5: 41 minutes 7 seconds